

10. Personal identity, Part I: Identity across space and time and the soul theory

What would it be for a thing like soul to survive the death?

Soul theorist

You will survive the weekend as long as your Soul is still around.

Soul theory

The key to personal identity is having the very same same soul.

What if a deity takes your Soul out of your body whilst you are asleep, and replaces it with another Soul, but gives that Soul all of your memories, beliefs, desires, intentions. Would it be the same person?

Soul view

No, it would be a different person, but there would be no way at all he could know that! In fact, even if your Soul was swapped in such a way every hour of every day you still won't know!

John Locke

We can't take seriously the suggestion that there is no way at all to tell whether it was still me from one hour to the next! It is just not plausible! It's not incoherent but implausible. Even if Souls do exist, they may not be the key to personal identity.