

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Personal Identity

Announcements

2

- 1. Thursday is the midterm exam
 - ▣ Please read the Exam Procedures announcement
- 2. My office hours on Thursday, June 29th are cancelled
 - ▣ Wednesday, June 28th office hours: 2:00-3:30pm
- 3. Reading for Tuesday, July 4th: Marya Schechtman, “Personal Identity and the Past”
 - ▣ Download from JSTOR
- 4. I’ve posted *Shaun of the Dead* on Canvas
 - ▣ Second paper topic concerns the character of Shaun’s mother
- 5. Your papers will be graded by Thursday and be available for you to pick up in tutorial or in your TA’s office hours.

Theories of Personal Identity

3

- 1. The Bodily Criterion
- 2. The Soul Criterion
- 3. The Memory or Consciousness Criterion
 - ▣ John Locke
- 4. The Psychological Continuity Criterion
- 5. The Narrative Criterion
 - ▣ Marya Schechtman

Personal Identity

4

The Bodily Criterion of PI

- A person P2 at T2 is the same person P1 at T1 if and only if P2 has the same body as P1 had.
- Persistence through time consists in retaining the same functional organization
- Advantages of this view:
 - ▣ Consistent with ordinary experience
 - ▣ Addresses epistemic concern

Bodily Criterion of PI

5

- Locke: Retaining the same form is what it is for a *human* to persist over time (*Essay*, II.27.6)
- Locke: “Human” and “Person” are different concepts and so have different standards for identity (*Essay*, II.27.8)
 - ▣ A human is a living *homo sapien* organism
 - ▣ A person is “is a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing, in different times and places,” (II.27.9)
- If there is a difference between personal identity and human identity, then...
 - ▣ Someone can count as human without being a person
 - ▣ Something can count as a person without being a human, (see Locke’s Rational Parrot example, (II.27.8)

Objection to the Bodily Criterion

6

- Imagine that Brown's brain is transplanted successfully into Robinson's body (Sydney Shoemaker, 1963)
- We now have Brownson
 - ▣ Robinson's body
 - ▣ Brown's characteristics, memories, traits, etc.
- Who is this person?
- Shoemaker: Brownson is Brown
- If this is correct, then the Bodily Criterion of PI can't be correct

Personal Identity

7

The Soul Criterion of PI

- A person P2 at T2 is the same person P1 at T1 iff P2 has the same soul (or mind) as P1 had
- Descartes: Given that the mind is indivisible, I know I will persist through time

Locke: Must we accept substance dualism in order to make sense of PI?

8

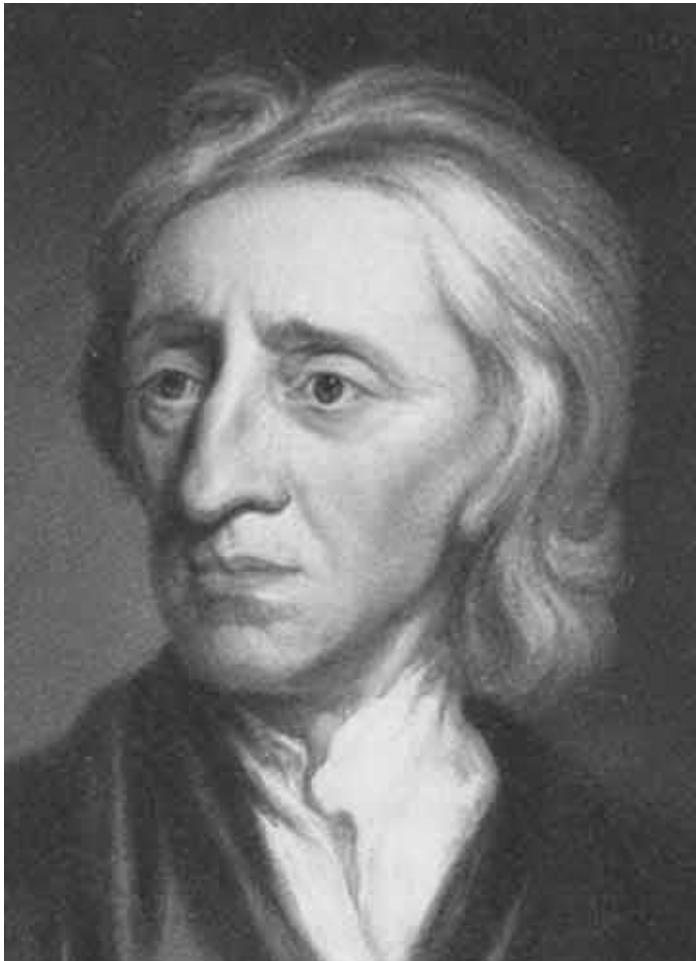


“All the great ends of Morality and Religion, are well enough secured without the philosophical Proofs of the Soul's Immateriality; since it is evident that he who, at first made us beings to subsist here, sensible intelligent Beings, and for several years continued us in such a state, can and will restore us to a like state of Sensibility in another World, and make us there capable to receive the Retribution he has designed to men, according to the doings in this life,” (Essay IV.2.6)

Locke

9

| | The Source Question: How do we acquire beliefs, ideas, concepts, etc.? | The Justification Question: What justifies a belief, concept, idea, etc? |
|--------------------------|--|---|
| Rationalists (Descartes) | Psychological rationalism: Some are innate (e.g. the Idea of God) | Epistemic rationalism: A significant part of our knowledge is derived from <i>a priori</i> reasoning (e.g. The Wax Example) |
| Empiricists (Locke) | Psychological empiricism: All ideas come from sense experience, none are innate | Epistemic empiricism: Nearly all knowledge is derived from <i>a posteriori</i> reasoning |



Locke on the Human Condition

- “We are here in a state of mediocrity, finite creatures, furnished with powers and faculties very well fitted to some purposes, but very disproportionate to the vast and unlimited extent of things,” (Journal, 1677).

Locke on Kinds of Knowledge

11

- Knowledge is the “perception of the agreement, or disagreement, of any of our ideas, (*Essay*, IV.I.2).
- 1. Intuitive knowledge
 - ▣ To perceive that white is not black (*Essay*, IV.II.1)
- 2. Demonstrative knowledge
 - ▣ To perceive that the sum of the interior angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles (*Essay*, IV.II.2)
- Both of these kinds of knowledge are certain
- 3. Sensitive knowledge
 - ▣ Knowledge of the existence of external objects represented by our ideas (*Essay*, IV.XI.1)

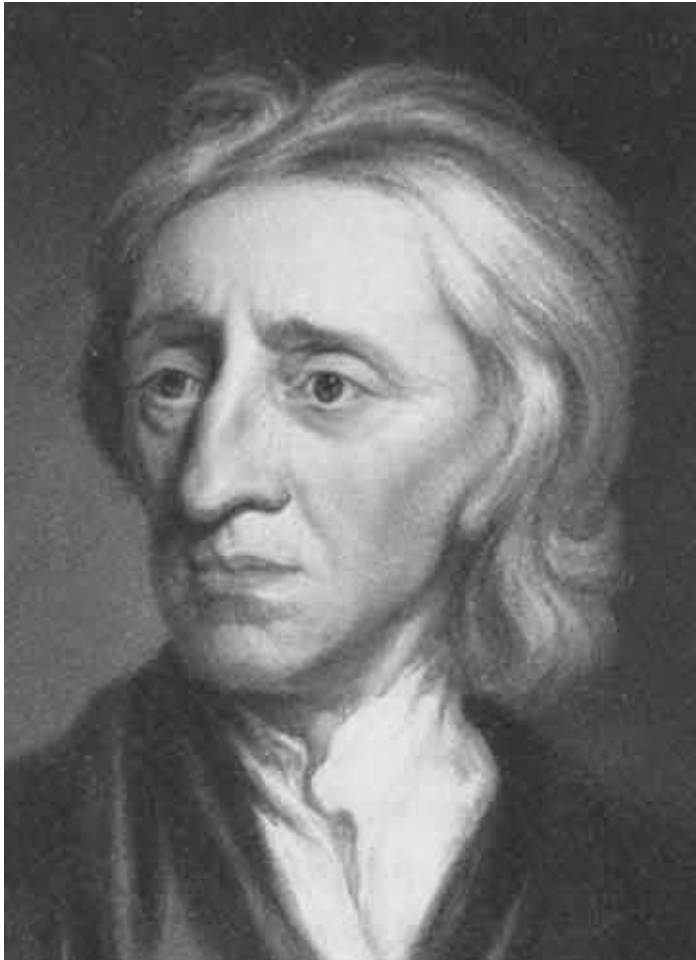
Locke's replies to the Weak Sceptic

12

- 1. We receive ideas “that give us notice” of objects (IV.XI.1)
- 2. Senses are generally reliable (IV.XI.2)
 - ▣ Otherwise, we would be dead by now (IV.XI.8)
- 3. Sensory knowledge isn't as certain as intuitive or demonstrative knowledge, but it “deserves the name of Knowledge,” (IV.XI.3)
- 4. We must be content with probable true belief about objects, rather than certainty (IV.XI.9)
- 5. It is “vain” to expect certain knowledge “in things not capable of it,” (IV.XI.10).

Locke's responses to the Soul Criterion

13



- 1. We don't know for certain whether we have immaterial minds.
- Locke: Substance dualism is *probably* true (*Essay*, II.27.25)
- God could have “superadded” the power of thought to matter (*Essay*, IV.3.6)