

Persons

Lecture 3: Remnant persons

1. Imaginary brain transplants Do you go with your brain or stay with your body?

2. Johnston's criticism of the 'method of cases' The method places real and imaginary on a par. Or: the ordinary and the fringe? If the 'method of cases' is unreliable, then does conceivability not entail possibility?

3. Remnant persons

In the next reign of terror the guillotine returns, but in an even more gruesome form. The aristocrats, otherwise known as the "one percenters," are placed faced down with their heads leaning over a platform. A huge metal block falls from twelve feet above the platform, and completely obliterates the victim's body from the head down; the head flies forwards, and is caught by an official who quickly attaches it to a medical device which keeps it alive and functioning. The crowds execrate the head for the next few days, until it dies off. (Johnston 2016:112-3)

S is a remnant person at time t iff (i) S is a person but not an organism or a thing constituted by an organism, and (ii) this condition results from cutting away a portion of a normal human person. Creation principle: You cannot create a person just by cutting away sustaining tissues. Hence, S must have been there all along. Animalism implies there are two people where you are!

4. How can the animalist respond? 'Accidentalism' (phase animalism); 'Remote Thought Hypothesis'; 'Brain Eliminativism'

5. What does 'being an animal' really amount to? The remnant person problem arises because the Animalist advances an identity claim. What if 'we are animals' just because we happen to fall under the sortal concept *animal*? Does this claim amount to endorsing a constitution view of persons?

6. Is there a problem with *remnant brains*? If you can cause a brain to constitute a person merely by cutting away sustaining tissues, then is this as mysterious as the view persons can be created by cutting away sustaining tissue?