



Is identity necessarily a one-to-one relation?

A presentation by Kai Collins



What does identity being a one-to-one relation entail?

- What is it?
- Physical
- Psychological
 - ◆ 'For since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and 'tis that that makes everyone to be what he calls self; and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things; in this alone consists *personal identity*' (Locke, 1997, p.302)

Parfit, Wiggins & Fission

- 'Wiggins thought experiment
 - ◆ 'My brain is divided and each half is housed in a new body. Both resulting people have my character and apparent memories of my life. What happens to me? There seem only three possibilities: (1) I do not survive (2) I survives as one of the two people; (3) I survive as both' (Parfit, 1971, p.5)
- The 3 options
- The problem of psychological continuity
 - ◆ 'Each of my two streams of consciousness seems to have been straightforwardly continuous with my one stream of consciousness up to the moment of division.' (Parfit, 1971, p.6)
 - ◆ 'The two 'products' each have all the attributes of a person. They could live at opposite ends of the earth...It would become intolerable to deny they were different people' (Parfit, 1971, p.7)
- Does Wiggins thought experiment succeed in proving identity as a one-to-one?
 - ◆ 'Identity is a one-to-one relation. Wiggins case serves to show that what matters in survival need not be one-one' (Parfit, 1971, p.8)

Teletransportation

- Parfit's thought experiment (mars)
 - ◆ 'When I press the button I shall lose consciousness, and then wake up at what seems a moment later. in fact I shall have been unconscious for about an hour. the scanner here on earth will destroy my brain and body, while recording the exact states of all of my cells. it will then transmit this information by radio. travelling at the speed of light, the message will take three minutes to reach the replicator on Mars. this will then create out of new matter a brain and body exactly like mine. It will be in this body that I shall wake up.' (Parfit, 1984, p.199)
- The Branchline case
 - ◆ 'wait a minute' I reply 'If I'm here I can't *also* be on mars' (Parfit, 1984, p.199)
- Contradictions in the two examples
- Psychological continuity

Conclusion

- Summary of arguments
- My opinion
- Questions

Bibliography

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