

Third Meeting: The Mystery of Death; The Survival of Death

The Mystery of Death

The Mystery of Death: Even making use of the concept of life, we cannot find an analysis of the concept of death that is free from counterexample.

Support for the Mystery of Death

“The Standard Analysis”: death is the cessation of life.

D1: x dies at t =df. x ceases to be alive at t .

Suspended Animation

Argument Against D1: “Case One” (p. 62)

D2: x dies at t =df. x ceases permanently to be alive at t .

Argument against D2: “Case Two” (p. 63)

a property P is *intrinsic* =df. if x and y are perfect duplicates, then x has P iff y has P .

Intrinsic Properties

being round
having mass of 5 k.g.
being made of copper
being green (?)

Extrinsic Properties

being owned by Heathwood
being in Massachusetts
having been made by the U.S. Mint
being a genuine dollar bill

Feldman’s Argument Against D2

1. The property of being dead is an intrinsic property.
2. If the property of being dead is an intrinsic property, then perfect duplicates cannot differ with respect to being dead.
3. If perfect duplicates cannot differ with respect to being dead, then the twins in Case Two, during their first year of suspended animation, do not differ with respect to being dead.
4. If the twins in Case Two, during their first year of suspended animation, do not differ with respect to being dead, then D2 is false.
5. Therefore, D2 is false.

Fission and Fusion

The case of Alvin

The Transitivity of Identity: For all things x, y, and z, if $x = y$, and $y = z$, then $x = z$.

E.g.: If the author of *Huck Finn* = Mark Twain, and Mark Twain = the author of *Tom Sawyer*, then the author of *Huck Finn* = the author of *Tom Sawyer*.

Persson's Objection

D6*: x dies at t =df. at t, x loses the capacity to live because enough of the life-capacities of the constituents of x which composed the capacity of x to live are then lost.

The Survival of Death

“Will I survive my death?”

Weirob's Question: “Is it even possible that I will continue to exist as a conscious being after I die?”

Exact Similarity vs. Numerical Identity

x is exactly similar to y =df. x and y have all the same features.

x is numerically identical to y =df. x and y are the very same thing.

Miller's Soul Hypothesis.

Weirob's argument against Miller's Soul Hypothesis (Asher Gumbiner to present)