

## Criteria of Personal Identity

### 1 The physical criterion

“(1) What is necessary [for personal identity over time] is not the continued existence of the whole body, but the continued existence of *enough* of the brain to be the brain of a living person. *X* today is one and the same person as *Y* at some past time if and only if (2) enough of *Y*’s brain continued to exist, and is now *X*’s brain, and (3) this physical continuity has not taken a ‘branching’ form. (4) Personal identity over time just consists in the holding of facts like (2) and (3).”<sup>1</sup>

### 2 The psychological criterion

“(1) There is *psychological continuity* if and only if there are overlapping chains of strong connectedness. *X* today is one and the same person as *Y* at some past time if and only if (2) *X* is psychologically continuous with *Y*, (3) this continuity has the right kind of cause, and (4) it has not taken a ‘branching’ form. (5) Personal identity over time just consists in the holding of facts like (2) and (4).”<sup>2</sup>

“*Psychological connectedness* is the holding of particular direct psychological connections.”<sup>3</sup> E.g. between an original experience and a subsequent memory or between forming a plan and recalling it when putting the plan into action.

“*Psychological continuity* is the holding of overlapping chains of *strong* connectedness.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons* (1984), p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, p. 207.

<sup>3</sup> Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, p. 206.

<sup>4</sup> Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, p. 206.

