1. Dr. Science has a new invention. He calls it the “resurrectmatron.” To demonstrate it, he calls for a volunteer from the audience. The volunteer steps into the resurrectmatron, and is ground into little tiny pieces immediately, with the exception of one cell. These pieces are made into a sort of soup. The volunteer’s genetic code is read from the one cell, and the cell is induced by the resurrectmatron to divide. The cell divides over and over, guided by the genetic code that it contains. The cell feeds only off of the soup that the person was ground up into. After only twenty minutes, a person steps out of the resurrectmatron who looks exactly like the person who went in. Further, the person who steps out is made entirely of the exact same atoms as the person who stepped in.

“Voilà!” says Dr. Science. “With this machine, I can kill a person and bring that exact same person back to life!” Is he correct? Why or why not?

1. After society rejects the resurrectmatron, Dr. Science builds a death ray. The death ray works on the following principle: when its beams strike a person, that person becomes ever so slightly itchy. This always causes the person to move to a slightly new position.

“And voilà,” says Dr. Science. “At one moment, there was a person in position A. And then there is a person in position B. They are different people, since they have different attributes. So the person who was at position A no longer exists, and my death ray has killed them!”

Is Dr. Science correct about this? Why or why not?

qualitative identity (and qualitative *similarity*):

quantitative identity (or “numerical identity”):

to persist:

theory of personal identity:

**Why does quantitative identity matter?**

1. Brian is trying to plan for the future. He is thinking about putting away money in a retirement plan. If he did, he would not be able to spend that money now, but in the future he would be able to spend it. Brian gets a phone call from Matt Smith, another philosopher. Matt points out that he and Brian have a great deal in common. They grew up in the same suburb at the same time, had a surprising number of similar experiences growing up, have many of the same philosophical interests, and so forth. Matt says, “Brian, you have more in common with me now than you do with 70-year-old Brian. If you are going to give up some of your money now, don’t put it in a retirement account. Give it to me instead.” Would there be something prudentially irrational about following Matt’s advice?
2. Julia is going to throw a party. Julia is deliberating about whether to throw the party at her apartment, or to break into Lizzie’s apartment and have it there (Lizzie lives next door in an identical apartment, and is out of town for the evening). Julia says, “Well, no one would have any more or less fun at either place. And either I’ll have to deal with the clean up, or Lizzie will, and both of us will dislike it to the exact same extent. So the net result – the good minus the bad – is the same either way.” Assume that she is correct about how much fun the party will be and about how much she and Lizzie will dislike cleaning up. Julia decides to flip a coin to decide whether to have the party at her place or Lizzie’s. Is there something inappropriate about this?

psychological similarity theory of personal identity:

psychological continuity view of personal identity: