Exercise walk-through

1.2
Being human: freedom, and mind and body

International Baccalaureate · IB Diploma · Philosophy · SL

Personhood

- **Personhood** is a moral idea, not a biological one.
- A **human** is a member of our species; a **person** is a being with certain abilities: consciousness, reason, self-awareness, communication, moral responsibility.
- The two groups may not match exactly.
- Some philosophers argue that great apes or future AI might be persons; others ask whether newborn babies or people in a coma meet the criteria.

Answering a Section A question

- Issue: does **personal identity** depend on **psychological continuity**?
- Positions: the **body theory** (same person, same body); Parfit's psychological continuity (identity weakens as character changes).
- Objections: the body theory ignores what we care about in a person; Parfit's view makes identity vague.
- Conclusion: the case supports Parfit; the person is partly, not wholly, the same, and we should judge their new behaviour with care.

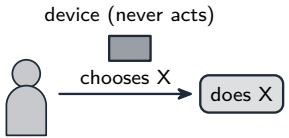
Sources for this lesson

- International Baccalaureate, *__Philosophy__ guide* (first assessment 2024) and subject brief.
- J. M. Harlow, "Recovery from the passage of an iron bar through the head", *Publications of the Massachusetts Medical Society* (1868).
- J. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (2nd edition, 1694), book II, chapter 27; T. Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man* (1785).

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Distinguish **hard determinism** from **compatibilism**. [2]

2.2 Explain how Frankfurt's example challenges the idea that freedom needs the ability to **do otherwise**. [3]



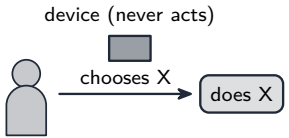
Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Distinguish **hard determinism** from **compatibilism**. [2]

2.1

hard determinism: all choices are caused, so free will does not exist; compatibilism: all choices may be caused, but we are free when we act on our own desires without force

2.2 Explain how Frankfurt's example challenges the idea that freedom needs the ability to **do otherwise**. [3]



2.2

the man chooses X by himself; the device never acts; but he could not have done otherwise, because the device would have made him do X; we still judge him responsible, so responsibility, and perhaps freedom, does not need the ability to do otherwise

Exercises 2.3·2.4

2.3 Explain Descartes' **substance dualism** and the **interaction problem**. [4]

2.4 Evaluate **functionalism** as an answer to the question "Could a machine have a mind?" [6]

Exercises 2.3·2.4

2.3 Explain Descartes' **substance dualism** and the **interaction problem**. [4]

2.3

dualism: the mind is a non-physical, thinking substance, separate from the physical body; Descartes argued he could doubt his body but not his thinking mind; interaction problem: physical causes need physical contact or force; so it is unclear how a non-physical mind could move a physical body, as Elisabeth of Bohemia asked

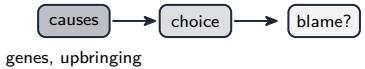
2.4 Evaluate **functionalism** as an answer to the question "Could a machine have a mind?" [6]

2.4

functionalism explained: mental states are defined by what they do; so a machine with the right functions could have a mind; strength: explains why different creatures, e.g. octopuses and humans, can both feel pain; objection: Searle's Chinese Room: following rules is not understanding; objection: qualia: function may leave out what experience is like; a reasoned judgement

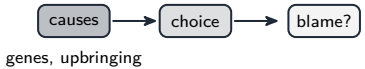
Exercise 3.1

3.1 *(Core theme style.)* "If our choices are caused, we cannot be held responsible for them." Discuss. [15]



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3.1

Mark with the markbands: [13-15] clearly focused on the question, clear explanation of the philosophical issue, relevant philosophers and arguments used accurately, counter-arguments evaluated, well-developed critical analysis, different perspectives evaluated, a reasoned conclusion; [10-12] focused, mostly accurate knowledge, analysis with some evaluation; [7-9] some focus, relevant knowledge, mostly narrative or description with limited analysis; [4-6] little focus, limited knowledge, mostly narrative; [1-3] little understanding of the question. Points that may be included: explains determinism and the claim; hard determinism supports the claim: choices come from genes, upbringing and circumstances we did not choose; implications for punishment and praise; libertarian reply: some choices are not fully caused; problem of randomness; compatibilist reply: responsibility needs acting from one's own desires without force (Hume); Frankfurt's example: responsibility without alternative possibilities; Strawson's "reactive attitudes": blame and gratitude are part of human life whatever the metaphysics; real-world link, e.g. reduced responsibility in law for mental illness; evaluation of the strongest view; a reasoned conclusion