

Second Writing Assignment

Assigned in class 1 of week #4, due two days after class 2 of week #5 (one day after the recitation section of week #5).

Preliminary Definitions

A person P survives some event E just in case P exists before E occurs, and when E is over, there exists some person who is (numerically) identical to P.

Teletransportation is the process described by Parfit on p. 199 of *Reasons and Persons*.

The Assignment

Question: Does a person survive entering the teletransporter?

Briefly explain how a proponent of, respectively, the Cartesian, Body, Brain, and Psychological criterion (i.e. Parfit's Narrow Psychological Criterion) of personal identity would answer this question. What about a proponent of Parfit's Widest Psychological Criterion (p. 207)?

What is Parfit's own answer to this question?

[Total so far: 1 1/2 - 2 pages]

Suppose you are now offered the choice between stepping into the teletransporter, and taking a more conventional, but much more expensive and time consuming, spaceship to Mars.

According to Parfit, it would be irrational of you to take the spaceship. Explain why Parfit thinks this, and assess what you consider to be his strongest argument for it. Would you take the spaceship? Why or why not?

Remember: Give reasons for your answers. It might be worth looking over Jim Pryor's [Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper](#) and the handout on arguments before you begin writing.

Roughly five double-spaced numbered pages. No late papers will be accepted unless you have a very good excuse, such as illness.

No footnotes, no quotations (although you may use bits of terminology from the readings or the handouts, as appropriate).

See the Assignments section of the syllabus for further guidance.