Due by 9am on Monday, November 21, 2016
Please email your paper to me as a .doc or .docx file with the subject "Phil 103: Paper #2"
750 to 1000 words (roughly 2-3 pgs)

Background

Consider the "Roughly Same Physical Brain" (RSPB) Theory of Personal Identity:

> (1) Person A, who exists at time T1, is the same as Person B, who exists at time T2, if and only if Person B's brain at T2 is *roughly the same physical brain* as Person A's brain at T1.

> (2) Brain 1 at time T1 is "roughly the same physical brain" as Brain 2 at time T2 if and only if
> > (a) Brain 1 and Brain 2 share 97% of the same physical cells or more or
> > (b) There is a chain of connections between Brain 1 and Brain 2 such that throughout each step of that chain, there is at least a 97% overlap in terms of the physical cells composing the relevant brains at the intervening steps

Step One

In your paper, you will first create a <u>Modus Tollens</u> argument with this *conclusion*:

> "Therefore, it is not the case that the RSPB Theory is true." This is equivalent to:
> "Therefore, not (the RSPB Theory is true)."

Here's the basic form your argument should take:

> (P1) If the RSPB theory is true, then Q.
> (P2) *Not* Q.
> (C) Therefore, it is not the case that the RSPB theory is true.

In Step One, your job will be to come up with something to fill in for "Q."

> •You should aim to find some way of filling in Q such that both (P1) and (P2) of your argument are at least somewhat plausible.

> •Indeed, <u>after</u> writing out your argument, spend at least one paragraph explaining and defending premise (P1) of your argument. Then spend at least one paragraph explaining and defending your premise (P2). Your task here is to convince your reader that (P1) and (P2) are both true.

> •In this section, you are offering an argument *against* the RSPB theory of personal identity. You are identifying an implication or consequence of that view, and suggesting that that implication or consequence is false (or implausible, or contentious).

> •Your "Q" could be some claim about an imagined example, or it could be some more general claim.

Step Two

Having made this initial argument against the RSPB theory, the second task is to raise problems for your argument.

So, for this step, imagine that you are Professor Brain, a proponent of the RSPB theory. Since Modus Tollens is a valid argument form, you will need to argue that one of the premises—premise (P1) or premise (P2)—is false. Otherwise, there is a sound argument against your view!

In this section, write one or two paragraphs arguing against either premise (P1) or premise (P2) of the argument that you constructed in Step One. You can offer a formal argument here, complete with numbered premises, or your argument can be more informal, although you should still make it as convincing as possible.

Step Three

Now, forget all that you just did in Step Two.

You are still Professor Brain, but instead of trying to respond to the argument by arguing against (P1) or (P2), instead respond to the argument by _modifying_ the RSPB view in some way, so that Q (whatever you have focused upon) is no longer a problem, because the new view, RSPB(revised), does not imply Q.

In other words, develop a revised view so that this new first premise, premise (P1*), would be false:

(P1*) "If RSPB(revised) theory is true, then Q."

So the initial Modus Tollens argument doesn't get off the ground against RSPB(revised).

You should write at least one paragraph explaining the modification to the view and how it no longer has the bad connection to/implication of Q.

Ideally, your RSPB(revised) theory will be in something of the same spirit as the original RSPB theory.