

AN EXPLANATION OF THE IMMATERIAL SOUL THEORY

2 The self as an immaterial soul Suppose that we have a theory of the nature of the self which says that I am some thing x. We could fill in 'x' with Why this is a non-starter for attempts to explain the possibility of immortality.

Descartes, R. If one is punished for doing something which one does not remember doing, it is equivalent to being created miserable. Author Information. It should be a theory which makes sense of the anticipation of events happening after my death. But while the soul theory may be currently out of fashion, it boasts prominent historical and contemporary adherents see, e. These arguments, though very interesting, are numerous and complex, and so they will not be discussed here. Stoothoff, and D. Though there are many questions regarding personal identity for a review, see, e. Just take any body, say a pencil or a piece of paper, and break it or cut it in half. This one argument would be enough to show me that the mind is completely different from the body. Really there is no right answer, and it all depends on the point of view that you hold. In this way, a clear understanding of the geometrical nature of bodies can be achieved and better explanations obtained. If the doctrine of reincarnation allows the soul of a man to be reborn in the body of an animal, such as a hog, if we knew that the soul of a man was in one of our hogs, it would require us to call the hog a man. Kim, J. Clarke sought to show that from our ideas alone it would be possible to show that matter thinking would involve a contradiction. What is interesting about this formulation is how Descartes reaches his conclusion. On the one hand, Descartes argues that the mind is indivisible because he cannot perceive himself as having any parts. The problem raised here, by contrast, is that there are no criteria for soul identity and that consequently souls cannot explain personal identity, even if souls were relevant to it. Therefore, the mind is completely different from the body. New York: Cosimo. Either way, properties are the things in virtue of which objects can be said to change 13 One might think that this hylomorphic view is inconsistent with the central assumption that I make that souls are nonphysical, but it is not. The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, trans. Indeed, the problem for the soul theory is deeper than that.