

We give a plausible mechanism for how awareness can continue (indeed *must* continue) after death.

1. From NDEs it is widely reported that awareness goes on after ‘physical death’. Strictly speaking, this is repeatable and falsifiable, and so is part of the scientific cannon. If these reports are veridical, there is a question. In such a state the neurons in the brain have stopped sending and receiving electrical and chemical signals. So what would be the physical substrate that 1st-person awareness is correlated to (‘correlated’ given Dualism, though this argument is consistent with other theories)?

But that’s easy: even when the neuron-level processes have stopped there is still the quantum-level interactions and ‘jiggling’ of the atoms and molecules going on. It is thus a good hypothesis that (pure) awareness is correlated to these quantum-level processes.

2. These processes might be amenable to characterization by their information (this argument is consistent with, but does not require, IIT).

3. And here’s the point: in quantum mechanics *information is never lost*.

4. It follows that the awareness that was correlated to that information before death *must remain correlated to that information after death* (physical death).

5. This remains so as the information interacts with ‘adjacent’ quantum systems, expands out into the body and skull around the brain, then as it expands out into the casket around the body, then as it expands into the dirt around the casket, then as it expands out into the earth below that dirt and the atmosphere above that dirt, and as it then expands out into the quantum fields beyond the atmosphere.

Thus awareness goes on and its substrate expands endlessly out into the universe.

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