

Name _____

Date _____

Class Sec. _____

Homework – The Case of Lumpl and Goliath

Instructions: Use the attached reading on the next page to answer the questions below. Please answer in complete sentences. Make sure to explain your answer for full credit.

1. What is the relationship between *cause and effect* and *change*? No, this isn't directly written in the reading—you must think about it! Use your own words to explain how the idea of cause and effect connects to the idea of change.
2. What makes Lumpl and Goliath seem like they are the same object? Do those shared features matter when we're deciding if they are truly the same thing or not? Explain your thinking.
3. According to Perdurantism, what does it mean to say something is "four-dimensional...stretch[ed] across time like a long loaf of bread"? Explain.
4. [Use your notes] What is the dimensional difference between Endurantism and Perdurantism? Explain.

READING ON THE NEXT PAGE

On Change and Identity: Lumpl and Goliath

In metaphysics, identity is defined as whatever makes an entity recognizable. All entities have specific characteristics and qualities that allow one to define and distinguish them from other entities. As Aristotle states in his law of identity, to exist, an entity must have a particular identity. In discussing what the identity of an entity is, two very important concepts arise: change and cause.

Many identities can appear to be unstable. Houses can fall apart; eggs can break; plants can die; etc. However, these identities are not unstable; these objects are simply being affected by causation and are changing based on their identities. Therefore, identity needs to be explained based on the entity's building blocks and how those interact with one another. In other words, the identity of an entity is the sum of its parts. One can describe a house by describing how the different parts of wood, glass, and metal interact with one another in a specific way to form the house, or one can define a house's identity based on its formation of atoms.

To alter an identity, a change (caused by an action) needs to occur. The law of causation (cause and effect) states that all causes have specific effects based on what the things is.

Currently, three main theories discuss the issue of change:

- 1 **Perdurantism:** This is the notion that objects are four-dimensional. According to perdurantism, objects have temporal parts (parts that exist in time), and at every moment of existence, objects only partly exist. So, for example, there would be a series of stages for the life of a tree.
- 2 **Endurantism:** This is the notion that objects are the same and whole in each moment of the objects' history. Objects exist wholly in an individual present without the necessity of time. Objects depend only on spatial properties.
- 3 **Mereological Essentialism:** This notion explains that parts of an object are essential to that object. Therefore, the object is not able to persist if any of its parts change. According to mereological essentialism, when a tree loses its leaves, it is no longer the same tree. Because metaphysics touches on our existence and what it truly means to be in the world, it touches on a wide variety of philosophical issues. And it is for this very reason that metaphysics is often considered to be the foundation of philosophy, or "first philosophy."

The Curious Case of Lumpl and Goliath

Imagine you walk into an art studio and see a sculptor working with a fresh lump of clay. While she works with it, she jokingly calls the lump of clay 'Lumpl'. **Lumpl** is exactly what you can expect from reading this—it's a lump of substance with no definitive form other than what it is composed of: clay. She carefully molds the clay into a beautiful statue. The statue is tall, powerful-looking, and she decides to name it **Goliath**.

Lumpl and Goliath are made of **exactly the same material**—every molecule that makes up Goliath was already part of Lumpl. Arguably, they both came into existence at the same moment. They both exist in the same place, at the same time. Imagine someone smashes the statue and the clay is thrown away; you might say they both get destroyed at the same time.

So, are Lumpl and Goliath the same thing? Or are they two different things in the exact same place?

Same Stuff, Different Rules

One reason people might think they're the same is that nothing seems to separate them. If they have the same material, the same shape, and the same history... what's the difference?

But then the sculptor says:

"If I had squished the clay into a ball instead of shaping it into Goliath, Lumpl would still exist, but Goliath would not."

Whoa—so Lumpl could survive being reshaped, but Goliath couldn't?

Let's think about what each one must be to still exist:

- Goliath must be statue shaped. If you mess with his shape, he's no longer Goliath.
- Lumpl is just a piece of clay. It can be shaped into a statue, a ball, or even a pancake, and it's still Lumpl.

Endurance Response

Endurantists believe that objects are **fully present at every moment** they exist. Endurantists think of objects this way too—not stretched across time, but individual whole and complete in every moment.

So, when endurantists look at Lumpl and Goliath, they see two different things that just happen to be in the same place at the same time. One is a lump of clay, and the other is a statue. Even though they are made of the same material and exist at the same times, they're not the same object—because they're different kinds of things.

Perdurant Response

Perdurantists believe that objects are not just what we see in the moment—they are four-dimensional, meaning they stretch across time like a long loaf of bread. Just like a loaf has slices, objects have time-parts—a birthday part, a school part, a future part, and so on.

So, when perdurantists look at Lumpl and Goliath, they see two objects that are made of all the same time-parts—they came into existence at the same time, had the same shape at every moment, and disappeared at the same time. That makes them the same object.

In this view, Lumpl and Goliath are really just one big 4D object seen from two different angles: one as "a lump of clay," and one as "a statue." Because their entire history through time is the same, there's no reason to say they are different.

But there's still a tricky issue: Goliath seems like he *has to* stay statue-shaped to exist, while Lumpl (just clay) could have been shaped differently. This leads to a challenge: How can they be the same if they seem to have different traits?