

Typhon's choices

The Urth list — 4 messages, 4 voices, 06 Sep 2003

<https://urth.darkrealm.vip/thread/urth/4204>

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Michael Andre-Driussi — 06 Sep 2003, 17:32

Andrew quoted Roy and wrote:

All this casual talk of cloning that's been going on lately from various quarters strikes me as improbable, given what we know of Typhon. He wanted to live forever--and he wanted to do it with the same face he started out with. If cloning had been a workable option available to Typhon, why didn't he use it, rather than resort to the bizarre choice of having his own head cut off?

Another gap between New Sun and SS/LS. IMO it would be odd if the Typhon of SS/LS could not clone humans, given the apparent level of genetic technology at his command. And as Roy says, if the Typhon of NS could clone, and given that he can download personalities, a head transplant doesn't seem like the best solution to his problem.

While I'm not myself so interested in "this casual talk of cloning," and thus do not want to be seen as defending it, still, the point of Roy and Andrew that Typhon could have used a clone with a personality implant/download misses what I think is the critical criteria for Typhon the original biological individual: the continuity of experience.

Damien Broderick covered this quite well in THE SPIKE. In my own form of it, I say: the new form has to be a transfer of the old form, not just a "perfect copy." That is, the old form (Typhon software) must transfer, as if pouring wine from one wineglass (body) to another wineglass (body). Otherwise, in my crude way I continue, one might as well write one's name on a card, tape this card to a dog, say "There I go!" and then shoot one's real self--for all the good that a lack of continuity of experience will do for the old form.

Personality download/body hijacking =is= an option for the computer bound gods of Mainframe because their "originals" are uploads, scans from biological people, scans that have a life of their own.

Having one's head surgically grafted onto the hulking body of a slave (note: body upgrade here) is unambiguously a continuity of experience for the old form. One need not waste even a sentence to explain how this "Mona Lisa" copy is the real "Mona Lisa": it is the "Mona Lisa," period.

=mantis=

Roy C. Lackey — 07 Sep 2003, 05:13 · follows Michael Andre-Driussi

mantis wrote:

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the original biological individual: the continuity of experience.

[snip]

Having one's head surgically grafted onto the hulking body of a slave (note: body upgrade here) is unambiguously a continuity of experience for the old form.

If Typhon never lost consciousness during the operation, then I could agree. But I think it's almost 100% certain that he lost consciousness at some point, if not from anesthesia, then the decollation itself. If he never regained consciousness he would never know it. If he did regain consciousness, hours or days later, then from his point of view it wouldn't matter if he did so in a head grafted onto an unwilling slave's body or into the fresh body of a clone. Either way, there is just as much personal "continuity of experience" as anyone has when they wake from sleep or a knock on the head.

You will object that, in the case of cloning, the original Typhon would still be alive and wouldn't want to die. That's not necessarily the case. That body was failing anyway, and it would have been Typhon's own choice to make the transfer in the first place. He wouldn't have been an unwilling victim. Even if he had second thoughts after the transfer--too bad. The original Typhon was a megalomaniac, but he was also intelligent and ruthless. The clone would be the same. I don't see Typhon having any qualms at all about having his original self killed; he would know that he could have no more dangerous a rival. He could even have arranged for the scan to be fatal, as it was in 5HC.

-Roy

Andy Robertson — 07 Sep 2003, 06:31 · follows Roy C. Lackey

----- Original Message -----

From: "Roy C. Lackey" <rclackey at stic.net>

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But I think it's almost 100% certain that he lost consciousness at some point, if not from anesthesia, then the decollation itself.

Well, even deep anaesthesia does not turn your brain off completely.

But basically I think Typhon would not submit to havng his identity/soul/ka uploaded into a machine and squirted down into a clone for the simple reason that he could trust no-one and could never allow himself to be helpless.

In fact, now you have said it, I bet that he underwent the transplant op fully conscious and with his tongue wrapped round the trigger of some failsafe device that would have killed the surgeons if he died or even became unconscious.

The thought of a story from the POV of one of these surgeons floats into my mind.

They say Wolfe reads this list, but how could he possibly be influenced to write such a story? Not by direct request.

Time to go and prepare my sacrificial knife . .

hartshorn

Josh Geller — 07 Sep 2003, 08:49 · follows Andy Robertson

On Sat, 2003-09-06 at 23:31, Andy Robertson wrote:

They say Wolfe reads this list,

They may.

But Wolfe said to me that it was probably a good thing that he didn't.

That was last year.

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