Is an account of identity necessary for bioethics? What post-genomic biomedicine can teach us

Abstract: Is a theory of identity necessary for bioethics? In this paper I investigate that question starting from an empirical explication of identity based on post-genomics, in particular on epigenetics. After analysing whether the classic problems a theory of identity has to cope with (fictional transplants; conjoined twins; and definition of death) also affect the proposed epigenetic account of identity, I deal with three topics (the assumption of moral responsibility; decision maintenance in the case of advance directives; and the attribution of value to human beings at given developmental stages) to offer an insight on the relationship between that account and bioethics.
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