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Published: Feb 28, 2024 written by Natalie Noland, BS Politics, Philosophy, and Economics If there is one constant throughout history, it is our species continual attempts to explain the universes greatest mysteries: life, death, and the afterlife. From ancient myths and the birth of religions to individual journeys of purpose and frequent quests of self-discovery, humans regularly grapple with these big ideas. Scholars, and philosophers especially, have always tasked themselves with finding answers and meaning in the complex concepts. Socrates, an influential thinker from the fifth century BCE, was one such person. Socrates Was an Influential PhilosopherDepiction of Socrates in a manuscript by Al-Mubashir ibn Fatik. Source: Wikipedia A philosopher from Ancient Greece, Socrates was well known but not always well loved throughout Athens for his distinctive teaching method, often inflammatory questions, and constant challenges to society. He taught many students using his famous Socratic Method and has become known as one of the founders of Western philosophy. His works have influenced many branches within the field, including ethics, politics, and metaphysics, and the Socratic Method is still used in modern classrooms. Though Socrates is quite popular today, his teachings drew the negative attention of his local government, and he was executed for supposedly corrupting the youth with his questioning of traditional values. Unlike other influential philosophers, Socrates didnt leave behind any writings of his own. Instead, his students especially Plato wrote about his beliefs, which is how we know about his philosophies of life, death, and the afterlife. Life Is for LearningView of Athens from Hadrians queduct on the piedmonts of Lycabetus Hill (c. 1803) by Cassas Louis-Francois. Source: Wikimedia Commons The unexamined life is not worth living (Socrates defense at his trial, as discussed in Platos Apology). Like many philosophers, Socrates was concerned with how to live the best life possible. He contemplated topics such as justice and virtue, searched for answers with his students, and grappled with what it meant to be good. He dedicated his life to discussing the meaning of life, and he came away with an answer. For Socrates, it was all about constant learning; he believed wisdom was the key to living a good life. Socrates perceived life as a chance to acquire wisdom. One should always question everything their beliefs, values, assumptions, and actions. It is only through critical examination that people can gain the wisdom necessary for virtue. Importantly, Socrates believed that the quest for wisdom was never over. It isnt possible to know everything, and the true journey to wisdom throughout ones life begins the moment this is recognized. Death is Just a TransitionDance of Death, Leaf from the Nuremberg Chronicle, by Michael Wolgemut, 1493. Source: The MET Museum There is a change and migration of the soul from this world to another (Socrates discussing death in Platos Apology). Socrates viewed death as a transformational period that is natural in all ways and nothing to fear. He argued that philosophers, especially those like him who have dedicated their lives to the pursuit of knowledge, are in the best position to face death because he believed thanatophobia stems from worries about the unknown, not death itself. Philosophers are wise enough to know that death is not the end but rather a time of change when the soul can be liberated from the confines of the human body and return to its natural state. In Platos Phaedo, Socrates ideas about the soul are tied to Platos Theory of Forms the idea that the material world is a (flawed) reflection of a higher, non-physical world. While ones soul is in their body, it is a fractured reflection of its true potential; only through the transition of death can the soul achieve perfection. The Afterlife is ForeverFunerary Vessel with a Underworld Scene, made in Apulia, 360/340 BCE, via Paul J. Getty Museum The soul, whose inseparable attribute is life, will never admit of lifes opposite, death (Socrates discussing the soul immortality in Platos Phaedo). If death is not the end, then what is? Well, there isnt really an end, at least according to Socrates. The philosopher taught that the soul is immortal it existed before life and will continue to exist after death. Physical bodies are simply prisons; they hold souls captive, using them throughout life. All bodies wither away, though, and once death releases the soul, it is free to return to where it originated. While Socrates doesnt explicitly discuss what, exactly, this origin point and eventual afterlife might look like, he did believe that good things are waiting for those who have lived a good life. Though his discussions on the topic are far more abstract than the modern-day views of heaven and hell, Socrates remained positive and argued that people who have lived a virtuous life will likely have an easier journey into the afterlife than those who havent. Darrell Arnold Ph.D. (Reprinted with Permission) is philosophys most famous martyr. Yet he wasnt the first tried in the courts of Athens. The Decree of Diopetes allowed for the persecution of those who failed to respect (nomizein) things divine or teach theories about the heavens (OCD). It had been used against Anaxagoras, who challenged traditional views of gods and taught the heavens were merely burning stones. There is also evidence that Diogenes of Apollonia was accused (Laks, 7). Numerous other thinkers and statesmen were also sentenced to death for various reasons around this time: Socrates is only the most famous of others to be executed for impiety (Johnson, 152). The rigid legal system was a sign of the crisis in religious and moral traditions at the time, and the fear of those governing. The legitimation of morality in Athens, like the legitimacy of religion, was viewed as under threat. The Presocratics along with the Sophists and some other thinkers were seen as a threat to the civil order. Here religion was not a private affair. There was a civil obligation to participate in religious rites. It would have been widely accepted that the gods may punish the city for the impiety of its members. There would have been a strong desire among many to prevent the teaching of new ideas about the gods and to halt any questioning of traditional ethics. New teachers of all sorts were suspect. Socrates and Xenophon both make straights to distinguish Socrates from the Sophists and the Presocratics, the philosophers of nature like Anaxagoras, who Pericles had invited to Athens. This is writ large in The Apologyand Platos general narrative about Socrates. AristophanesThe Clouds, however, told a different story, one that would have been familiar to many at Socrates trial. Aristophanes thought that the material world is of great concern to many in Athens. To this fact that Socrates had attracted to him members of the Thirty Tyrants who were had early staged a bloody coup of the Athenian government and harbored some of the strongest critics of the Athenian Democracy. Critias, his former student and the cousin to Platos mother, had led the group. Charmides, a close associate, was Platos uncle (Johnson 145ff.). Socrates had also, no doubt, regularly embarrassed many of the leading figures of the city and not unlikely on his journey to trial he couldnt justify himself. The Athenian Oracle, too, was a party to Socrates. Socrates displays his typical irony here, of course, is that the Oracle is deeply sincere in its quest (which he is fulfilling) in his now being tried by his friends. The jury, according to The Apology, consisted of 500 citizens of Athens. The trial of Socrates displays his typical irony here, of course, is that the Oracle is deeply sincere in its quest (which he is fulfilling) in his now being tried by his friends. The jury, according to The Apology, consisted of 500 citizens of Athens. The trial of Socrates displays his typical irony here, of course, is that the Oracle is deeply sincere in its quest (which he is fulfilling) in his now being tried by his friends. The jury, according to The Apology, consisted of 500 citizens of Athens. The trial of Socrates displays his typical irony here, of course, is that the Oracle is deeply sincere in its quest (which he is fulfilling) in his now being tried by his friends. 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theravages of senescence, and remain healthy and mentally competent, couldnt we avoid becoming jaded with life by gradually varying our interests over time, adding to and perhaps replacing some of our categorical desires, again and again? Several theorists including Nagel (1986, p. 224, n. 3), Glover (1977, p. 57), and Fischer (1994), have argued that the lives of superniors need not become dull and tedious. Williamss view is that it is not possible to make eternal life desirable (which claim is not identical to the claim that eternal life would inevitably be bad for us). Varying my categorical desires will not work, because, to be desirable, the endless life I design for myself must meet two conditions: (1) it should clearly be me who lives forever, and (2) the state in which I survive should be one that, to me looking forward, will be adequately related, in the life it presents, to those aims I now have in wanting to survive at all. (1973, p. 83) If I replace my categorical desires, I fall afoul of at least one of these conditions. Life under the future desires is detached from life under my current categorical desires. Moreover, the desires I give myself in the future will be elements of a character that is very different from my current character; replacing my current character with an entirely different one later in life makes it far less clear, Williams appears to think, that the individual living that later life is me. The degree of identification needed with the later life is absolutely minimal. (1973, p. 85) Williamss claim that immortality cannot be made desirable remains controversial. It is not obvious that eternal life is undesirable if it involves changing our categorical desires and characters (insofar as our characters are defined by the desires). Nor is it obvious that such changes would be beneficial. Williams thinks that the individual who is changed in this way will not clearly be the same person as before, but he stops short of saying that it clearly will not be the same person (indeed, he defends a bodily continuant criterion for identity in *The Self and the Future*, pp. 4663, so he presumably thinks that a person does survive changes of desires and character). Concerning Williams second condition, his view is that if we replace our characters and desires, there is nothing left by which he can judge whether future life is desirable (1973, p. 85). Yet it seems reasonable to take the view that it would be good for me to develop and fulfil desires in the future desires I now lack. Many of us would welcome the prospect of gradually transforming our interests and projects over time. The gradual, continuous transformation of our desires and projects does not end our lives, or existence. It is distinct from, and preferable to, annihilation. If we could live endlessly, the stages of our lives would display reduced connectedness, yet remain continuous, which is a property that is important in the kind of survival most of us prize. Even after drinking from the fountain of eternal youth, we would tend to focus on relatively short stretches of our indefinitely extensive lives, being animated by the specific projects and relationships we have then. However, sometimes we would turn our attention to long stretches of life, and then, pausing continuity, we might well phase in new and worthwhile undertakings that build upon, and do not wholly replace, the old. (For further discussion of the desirability of eternal life, see Overall 2003, Bortolotti 2009, Sims 2011, Luper 2012b, Alcock 2016, Lepen 2016, Chisholm 2016, and Fischer 2016.) Even if death is usually bad for us, it might not be bad for us, if we prepare ourselves suitably. This might be possible if some form of preferentialism is true, and, by altering our desires, we could cease to have any interests that dying would thwart. For there might be able to thanatize our desires, in this sense, we might abandon all desires that death might thwart. And, these are desires we can satisfy only if we live on for a few days, but also desires we cannot possibly satisfy within the span of a normal lifetime, and the desire for immortality itself. Instead of desiring that some project of mine succeed, which is a desire that might be thwarted by my death, I might instead adopt an conditional version of this desire, namely: should I live on, let my project succeed. If all goes well, thanatizing would insulate us from harm from death by leaving us with no interests with which dying interferes. Unfortunately, this strategy will backfire. The main problem is that death can interfere with desire fulfillment not just by falsifying the objects of our desires but also by precluding our having desires (Luper 2013). So even if we resolve, from now on, to limit ourselves to desires whose objects cannot be falsified by death, we are still vulnerable to the harm death will do us if it precludes our having and fulfilling desires. Hence thanatizing would force us to avoid having any desires whose fulfillment would have benefitted us, and to deny ourselves such desires would be as bad for us as the harm we are trying to avoid. However, the core idea of adapting our desires is useful, if not taken to an extreme. It is prudent to avoid taking on goals we cannot possibly attain, and hence prudent to eschew projects that cannot possibly be completed during the course of a normal lifetime.

What is the philosophy of socrates. Death socrates. Socrates death reason. What did socrates believe about death. Socrates uitleg. Human socrates.