

A Bayesian analysis of life after death

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Executive summary

The target is conscious experience with a nontrivial causal or psychological continuity relation to the earlier life. It is broader than strict numerical identity, unchanged autobiography, or eternal immortality. Mere information storage or an unrelated duplicate does not qualify.

Brain dependence remains the strongest conventional evidence. Participatory simulation and some consciousness-first interfaces can predict substantial dependence without making the brain the ultimate producer of the subject. The paper's probabilities remain disputed judgments about those architectures, not measured survival rates.

The reproducible low-preservation benchmark is 46.56%, reported as about 47%. Its direct empirical update is modest; selected corroborated NDE reports receive the author's declared 1.20 allowance within a discounted evidence ledger. NDE evidence does not establish survival after irreversible death.

The Bostrom-Yampolskiy interview motivates an explicit generated-mind preservation branch. The model had assigned generated minds the same 2% continuation conditional as nonsimulation local production. Separating the branch gives:

Generated-mind continuation	Overall continuation	Status
2%	46.56%	Low-preservation benchmark
25%	48.79%	Sensitivity scenario
50%	51.20%	Sensitivity scenario
75%	53.62%	Sensitivity scenario

The result crosses one half at about 37.55% generated-mind continuation, holding other inputs fixed. No new preferred conditional is adopted: the interview identifies a mechanism but does not measure its prevalence. Consequently, a below-half conclusion is not robust to plausible model expansion; neither is a majority-survival conclusion established.

Uploading and branching also require separating a conscious successor's welfare from proof that the original subject continues. The main result is an inspectable model with explicit dependencies and alternatives, not a model-independent probability floor. More skeptical architecture weights can produce much lower estimates.

Source: Bostrom, Nick, interviewed by Roman Yampolskiy (2026). "Superintelligence Author: We May Already Have AGI | Nick Bostrom." The Roman Forum with Roman Yampolskiy, YouTube, October 16. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m880ajt5sNM>. Interview discussion; conceptual claims and reported judgments, not an empirical calibration dataset.