

Ensouled Identity: Deconditioning Philosophy and Unconditioned Theology

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Summary: *The nature of personal identity is ultimately theological in nature. Through a survey of some of the recent philosophical evidence for the soul (in the analytic philosophical tradition), the following lays out reasons for why personal identity is accounted for by a soul because of the nature of phenomenal consciousness as essentially descriptive of persons. Yet, this conclusion is buttressed by theological reflection on personal origins and the end of life. Through a guided reflection on the origins of persons and the end of life (through the lens of dementia case studies), further suggested information about the person as a substance of consciousness reveals more than what is uncovered through philosophical or scientific analysis alone. In this way, and building on Priest's recent work, the following is a sketch of personal identity as ensouled identity that moves beyond what Priest calls the 'conditioned' mode to the 'unconditioned' mode of theology.*

Keywords: *conditioned mode; phenomenology; physicalism; dualism; theology; qualia; incarnation; dementia.*

Introduction

When considering human personhood, materialism is, as they say, all the rage these days, but it both limits discussion about the nature of personhood and renders theology, as it has been conducted in most of history, irrelevant to the discussion of what it means to be a human and a person. And, yet, if dualism is true then it opens afresh not only a reconsideration of God, but it opens methodological or

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modal possibilities that have otherwise been disguised, suppressed, or ignored. In the present article, I defend dualism of human persons as a way of deconditioning, which I argue opens the door to theology as an informing source of the human person (i.e., the unconditioned). The present project, then, is an exploration in interdisciplinary theology and philosophy by advancing dualistic philosophy and methodology. The present paper not only delineates a distinct method but constructively builds on the ‘deconditioning’ mode found in the writings of Stephen Priest through the lens of the materialism/dualism debate and shows how theology addresses two common problems for dualism.

In his insightful article addressing different modes of thinking, Stephen Priest articulates different notions of analysis from conditioned thinking, deconditioning, to finally unconditioned thinking. And, it is here that we find one of the deepest problems of philosophy which philosophy cannot solve but it must submit to theology. As Stephen Priest states:

It is your own particularity as you which is most difficult to explain about you. This own-most particularity not only exceeds any empirical identity and difference but is not even exhausted by this very human being’s having the modal properties of being self-identical and numerically distinct from any other. The fact of someone’s being you cannot be generalized. You escape the language of anonymity. You are the opposite of anonymous (Priest 206).¹

In the spirit of Priest, I will explore the rationale of the conditioned and unconditioned soul as the core of personal identity. In this way, I will expand on some of the concepts Priest uses and employ them slightly differently as I consider an argument for conditioned thinking of the self as soul (i.e., an immaterial substance) that takes us into deconditioning and as far as possible toward building a bridge to a theology of personal identity. In this way, the present contribution builds on the insightful and useful work of Priest’s modes of thinking through a consideration of persons as primarily ensouled beings.

What I will suggest is that the bridge employed will not only supply a link between philosophy and science, but ultimately theology. But it is not the bridge of the usual sort employed in science and religion discussions, but one that finds its ultimate expression not in general properties of causation, teleology, emergence or even the mind, but in God-self. Whilst the approach here has similarities to the view that

¹ Also see Gelertner, 107. Gelernter develops the notions of the up-spectrum and down-spectrum of consciousness as pointing to something like a soul (that is beyond matter) and distinct types of knowledge that come from different domains of inquiry.

mind is fundamental and the general features of the mind are pointers to something transcendent, it is the particularity of souls that come first.

Context

Recent approaches to theological anthropology (particularly concerning identity) are beholden to what Stephen Priest calls the 'conditioned' mode and there is a need for deconditioning that moves us toward an unconditioned mode of conception. Materialism, emergentism, science and analytic philosophy present us with what Stephen Priest has categorized as instances of the 'conditioned' mode. His de-conditioning and unconditioned modes are reflected in the Cartesian tradition of substance dualism.

Very little has been done to advance deconditioning and the unconditioned mode of thinking about personal identity. Developing deconditioning through a particular brand of dualism advances this discussion, but also raises two problems. The first problem is that it is difficult to determine when ensouled identity occurs. I suggest that theology, revelation aids in determining the timing of ensoulment. Second, the dualistic method advanced (that requires a phenomenal and physical distinction) renders it difficult to determine how science and religion relate.

1. Conditioned, De-Conditioning, and Unconditioned

Stephen Priest defines the conditioned and the unconditioned in the following.

There is a distinction to be drawn between conditioned and unconditioned philosophy. Unconditioned philosophy entails ultimate explanation of how philosophical problems may be formulated. Conditioned philosophy is the attempt to solve philosophical problems without disclosure of their fundamental possibility. A philosophical problem is one we have no method of solving. (Priest 295)

Conditioned thinking has different senses. It can mean necessary condition, a state of being, or a shared idea that is speakable (as a condition of etymology and communication). Conditioned thinking is directed, and controlled by a pattern or a school of thought. It is to itself and works according to rules of the 'game'. In other words, schools of thought function according to a grammar that, at times, disguises a portion of reality for the purposes of progress in one domain by strict rule following to arrive at some determinative content. It presumes the condition of which it cannot peel behind. It is the peel that is interesting. It lives in the peel, but pressures the existence of the peel. The nature of things that disclose an alternative reality are not seen, ignored, or incapable of being seen by conditioned thinking.

Conditioned thinking can be dependent on social constructions, and they can also function as premises within an argument, but also features that give description to a thing. For a summary of some of the features of the conditioned mode that will inform the discussion about de-conditioning, see the following.

The conditioned mode is directed by a school of thought. Those who are conditioned by a school of thought follow patterns. They work with specific rules that govern their thinking toward particular ends. As with communities, schools of thought exhibit patterns and functions. Two characteristics represent different schools of thought. One, progress is made by following the 'rule'. Two, by following a pattern and a set of rules, one will, arguably, methodologically disguise other portions of reality.

Means to end thinking: means-to-end thinking, while important and helpful in some contexts, sharply contrasts with the existential reality of one's own existence. For example, when we are lost in regret or fear for the future. Accordingly, we are always on the way, we are not fully present. In which case, a portion of the existential reality is disguised. Noticing this 'all,' this 'here,' and this 'now,' is necessary for the disclosure of the soul, the person, and the relationships involved in experience.

Third-person thinking is public knowledge and often characterizes the physical. It is a common way of differentiating the physical/material from the immaterial, consciousness, and experience. As it is distinct from first-person thinking and perceiving about the world, a conditioned pattern can rule out the information from first-person perspectives. A conditioned pattern that takes a third-person approach misses the first-person predicates. The first-person is not reducible to the third-person. The two are irreducible.

Object-thinking is another common feature. What is often advanced by a set of literature in dualism, idealism, and the phenomenological is the problem of getting the subject from the object. This might also be thought of as part-whole thinking common to discussions about persons, selves, and consciousness. Some concern themselves with parts in relation to wholes, their properties, states etc, which is an example of object-thinking. But, this, arguably, misses what is most valuable—namely the subject and the first-person perspective.

Focusing on general patterns, general features, which is common to the natural sciences is another characteristic. A hyper-sensitivity to generalities will miss the particularities of persons, minds, and subjects. The natural sciences condition one to focus on predictive patterns, regular laws, and testable conclusions. A systematic conditioning of the mind to observe generalities will disguise the subject, the particular—the thing that is not anonymous.

Rightly, in my assessment, Priest narrows the focus to philosophy of mind and describes dualism, idealism, theism, and fundamental theology as deconditioning philosophies of thought that break from the patterns that are governed, controlled and limiting in perspective to a condition (e.g., as with various physicalists that are conditioned on the third-person perspective and consistently ignore the first-person perspective by reducing it to the third or attempting to explain it in light of the third) as they are not limited to the rules strictly followed according to naturalism. Other philosophies or theological doctrines like agnosticism, pantheism, Buddhism, solipsism break from the conditioned patterns of thought found in scientific approaches and move beyond them to something unconditioned by opening up space beyond their constrained ways of thinking.

Conditioned and unconditioned philosophies rely on metaphor. Conditioned according to Priest yields that those »think of themselves as making progress« while Unconditioned try to drill down to the »primordial«.

What I will lay out in what follows is taking a conditioned philosophy in analytic philosophy to reach the limits of analytic thinking by arriving at dualism, but rather than any ole' dualism a specified version of dualism that demands that we understand the soul (i.e., a mind, immaterial substance) as the pointer to God or the Divine or some such Being. This is an example of breaking with the conditioned thinking found in science, materialism, and even analytic philosophy by pushing to its limits. The limits in scientific thinking concerning generalizable, universalizable regular lawful thinking move beyond the generable soul to the particular soul of which God is present to us in our understanding of the origins of persons—call this creationist-dualism. Expanding our definition of personal identity requires deconditioning in another direction from revelation. By considering a set of phenomena often detailed in empirical studies not only does it provide evidence for the fact of the soul, but it provides a rich set of sources for theological reflection on personal identity. You might think of these as pieces of science-engaged theology, but I think it would be better to call them theologically-engaged science because it is a theologically guided reflection about the empirical data in question. This means that the soul is not only suggested by the empirical data (i.e., science-engaged theology), but the revelational lens discloses new features of the empirical pointing to the soul's transcendence beyond what we normally concern ourselves (i.e., theologically-engaged science). I will say more about that below.

Superficially, you could think of this as three arguments for the soul (one philosophical and two theological). But, at a deeper level, the latter two unveil the realities of the soul and disclose information not found in analytic philosophical investigation.

1.1. ENSOULLED IDENTITY: A NATURAL THEOLOGY OF PERSONHOOD AS IRREDUCIBLE (OR PRIMITIVE) SUBJECTIVITY

For the sake of exploring arguments for deconditioning, I will look briefly at examples of conditioning, as described above. There is commonly a reference given to scientific image, which is an explicit example of the 'conditioned' paradigm. The scientific image of persons is often an instance of a strict physicalist view of persons construed as parts, objects, and the product of general patterns found in nature. It is this approach that assumes a naturalistic world of regular lawful events as the explanatory framework for considering persons. The scientific image is often associated with the third-person perspective and the deliverances of the empirical method. Strong physicalists, naturalists, and those famed 'new atheists' are apparent examples of the conditioned mode and help us to see the contribution from Priest concerning the need for deconditioning.

Defenders of strong physicalism take the 'hard problem' of consciousness (famously named by David Chalmers) in a way that minimizes the distinctions of mental events from physical events. In doing this they attempt to eliminate the problem by identifying consciousness with matter (i.e., identity physicalism), reducing it to physical parts (i.e., reductive physicalism, e.g., neurons firing as that which conscious properties reduce), or eliminating phenomenal qualia altogether (i.e., eliminative physicalism). These are examples of the 'conditioned' paradigm because they, arguably, train the eye to ignore, disguise, or eschew consciousness. 'New Atheists', themselves, are a mix of scholars, public thinkers and scientists committed to strong physicalism and naturalism.

The most prominent examples include Richard Dawkins, Daniel Dennett, Sam Harris, and Sean Carroll. These representatives reject the notion of a mental substance or soul (i.e., a substance distinct from the body) as an idea not worth taking seriously in our scientific age. Sean Carroll treats the soul as a nonsensical idea (in light of the empirical sciences). In one place he suggests just this. He states: »When we disagree it's with the kind of respectful dialogue that should be a model for disagreeing with non-crazy people. But here he couldn't be more wrong.« Furthermore: »Claims that some form of consciousness persists after our bodies die and decay into their constituent atoms face one huge, insuperable obstacle: the laws of physics underlying everyday life are completely understood, and there's no way within those laws to allow for the information stored in our brains to persist after we die.« (Carroll) Similarly, Developmental Psychologist at the University of Bristol, Bruce Hood describes the soul-idea or the self by claiming: »It seems almost redundant to call for the retirement of the free willing self, as the idea is neither scientific nor is this the first time the concept has been dismissed for lack of empirical

support.« (Hood 147) In all these instances, there is, argues Priest and others, a limiting of what we know about consciousness, the self, or persons in terms of what we can detect from the natural sciences.

Two prominent representatives of strong physicalism include the famous scientist Francis Crick and the philosopher Owen Flanagan. Francis Crick thinks the soul, i.e., mental substance, is an absurd idea because of what the natural sciences apparently tell us. He says: »You, your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will, are in fact no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve cells and their associated molecules.« (Crick 3) Owen Flanagan is on a mission using the natural sciences. Flanagan believes it is the job of the natural sciences to excise the soul (or any old language it represents) out by using an ordered, disciplinary process of the rigorous scientific method—what he takes to be a sure way of knowing (i.e., often referred to as scientism). He says, »desouling is the primary operation of the scientific image.« (Flanagan 3) They implicitly advocate a position called eliminativism, which takes it that the common-sense or folk psychological positions of beliefs, desires, experiential consciousness do not exist. The sciences, in other words, do not permit the existence of them and through systematic objective study we can rid ourselves of outmoded ways of thinking. Both Crick and Flanagan represent, then, explicit examples of the ‘conditioned’ mode at work through a systematic exclusion of consciousness.

It is not only the ‘New Atheists’ or the strong physicalists that represent the ‘conditioned’ paradigm. Religious philosopher, Nancey Murphy, represents similar trends in her advocating for non-reductive physicalism as a scientifically respectable option that excludes a need for a mental substance. Through an adoption of a language that sticks closer to the sciences, we can systematically adopt a more objective frame toward minds and persons. Nancey Murphy argues that by using neuroscience we can now explain much of the world and the self without recourse to older modes of thinking that utilize the language of the soul. Accordingly, she maintains that the mind (as a distinct entity or substance) is no longer necessary. She commits to this project in several places, including the following:

While body-soul dualism is a hot topic now in conservative Christian circles in the United States, the debate over dualism versus physicalism is thought to be settled by scholars in a variety of fields.... [B]iblical scholars called body-soul dualism into question beginning a century ago (but given the current popularity of books for and against the soul, they apparently neglected to inform their congregations!). The concept of the self has long served as a replacement for the soul in a number of disciplines, such as psy-

chology, and in ordinary language as well. No significant neuroscientist has been a dualist since the death of Sir John Eccles. (Murphy 79)

But, not only are these ways of reasoning, arguably, limited and represent the conditioning Priest articulates, they effectively rule out the nature of consciousness and lack the explanatory resources to make sense of it. Through the lens of phenomenology and using tools of analytic philosophy we can arrive at an understanding of personal identity that is primarily identified with a soul because persons are not identified with any garden-variety physical object or any physical alternative that would fall under what is directly studied in the natural sciences (especially as they are based in physics). By a soul, the defining property is the immaterial nature signified by the fundamentality of qualitative experience, which, at a minimum, yields property dualism (where knowledge of the physical is derived from phenomenal/experiential knowledge). In what follows, I will develop an argument for what some have called epistemic dualism or phenomenal dualism by highlighting what is lacking in the conditioned mode above. This, then, represents a kind of deconditioning that takes us into the domain of the soul (i.e., a mental substance).

One way to understand the soul: the soul is basically a substance of an immaterial sort or a nonmaterial sort (known as a substance of phenomenal consciousness). In other words, it is fair to say, along with Rene Descartes and the Cartesian tradition, that the soul is basically the mind, but what is important about both terms is that they sufficiently refer to an immaterial substance. Souls or minds are distinct from bodily substances. They are carefully distinguished by the types of properties they bear. One is mental, thinking, experiencing, and a felt thing, and the other is known only indirectly by the experiencing subject. The following is, first, a summary of the issues related to a physicalist understanding of phenomenal consciousness (often called the hard problem of consciousness) as exemplifying the 'conditioned' mode, which we experience deconditioning when taking mental properties seriously.

Another way to distinguish between the substance (i.e., a property bearer; the countable thing that instantiates the sorts of properties in the world that subjects experience) of souls and bodies, is by way of this term we have just used—the experiencing subject. Souls are subjects of experience. They are the bearers of properties that experience themselves and others including material things. They are first and foremost subjects of consciousness, which is, arguably, a precondition for experience (unless you take it that a thing could be a consciousness without an experience, but it's not clear what that would be). Consciousness just is the stuff of experience. It is a certain type of relation between a subject that is aware and that which is distinct from it. Maybe it is possible that a soul could have knowledge that

is prior to experience, but it is not clear that that knowledge would be consciousness that exists without experience. The two seem inextricably linked such that when we describe the nature of experience we are describing consciousness. The two go together. Without one we are lost in a sea of not knowing how to describe consciousness and where to begin. Consciousness, once again, seems to be just experience. When we describe what it is to be conscious, we are describing the world of experience for us. We are describing the world according to what it is like to have an experience of some such thing that is extrinsic from us or that which is intrinsic to us (Fumerton).²

By describing consciousness, we do so by talking about things but not about things that are out there, at least not directly, but by talking about the contents of our own minds that experience. We talk about what it is like to experience our own thoughts, our own feelings, the objects within our purview of the world around us. This is certainly the first, and possibly the most obvious feature descriptive of consciousness. It is something that we are directly aware of when we are moving through that conscious experience. It is properly basic to the nature of the stuff that characterizes the objects in the philosophy of mind.³ For this, quite apparent reason, it is not apparent that it is a natural object or the object of study in physics. It is something entirely different. Without it we would lack knowledge of that which is known empirically.

This leads to two other characteristic properties of the subject of experience—what I have in short called a soul, i.e., an immaterial substance. A second feature or what some will call a mark of the mental is that it bears the feature of access. What this means is that there is a unique feature, capacity of minds in relation to the items within their mental purview that are able to be grasped by the mind that owns the thoughts and experiences instantiated by that mind. In other words, they are directly accessible by the mind in question. The soul or mind also bears a unique relation between itself and other objects in the world. This is a third feature that is relevant to characterizing the substance of experience.

² Fumerton lays out a survey of the dualistic literature and works through the variant physicalist options on offer that do not explain either facts: private access or intentionality let alone the fundamental distinction of phenomenal qualia. This is often called the hard problem of consciousness, a problem that is well received as a fundamental problem for physicalists. While some physicalist positions like functionalism may be the best route for a physicalist, it fails to account for the fundamentality of qualia that is private in nature and not public in nature. And, it is by this phenomenal knowledge that we come to know physical things, derivatively.

³ I am using the term 'stuff' loosely and not intending to affirm 'stuff' as a metaphysical category.

The substance of experience bears an intentional relation to other objects in the world. The intentional relation is unique in that it is a relation about something. It is a thought directed at something that is capable of talking about it because of the intentional structure it has, namely the thought of thinking about a physical object (Siewart).

There exists a long and established discussion about the fundamental mark of the mental as being either private (or privileged) access or intentionality. But, for the sake of the discussion here I will not explore this distinction in detail because it seems apparent that these are essential marks of the subject of consciousness. With that said, it may be that say animals have consciousness but are not able to communicate that fact nor are they capable of discriminating between the nuanced features of access and intentionality, but, nonetheless, they seem to experience the world and bear what are called qualia (i.e., qualitative experiences descriptive of consciousness states or events). That said, there does seem to be an important tradition (i.e., the introspective tradition) for which I will refer for the sake of the argument because it appears that there is another feature (i.e., transparency of the mental) that undergirds the other features and sets apart the mental as that which is distinct from the physical, i.e., bodies that are physical objects understood atomistically (namely in terms of loosely and externally coordinated physical parts) or as holistic states (namely the view that the parts are conjoined in a way that comprise a new thing with some new feature as with a H₂O, which is explained by the parts and makes sense in light of the unique relation of the parts of oxygen and hydrogen). I have elsewhere spelled out this feature and given a systematic assay that helps delineate different aspects of the subject of experience so that we can arrive at a clear and sufficient knowledge of a soul (*The Creation of Self* 72-83).

Call this the transparency feature of mental or experiential items that exists in what is called the introspective tradition of the mental. Here are some helpful definitions that help facilitate the distinctions between physical things or properties and mental things or properties. Using these distinctions, I will argue that the 'conditioned' mode, as represented above, systematically leaves these characteristics out of the picture of subjects (what I call the S-set). When recognizing this S-set, we experience a deconditioning of the mind, which opens afresh the door to the unconditioned mode considered in the next two sections.

TT=Transparency thesis: phenomenal consciousness reveals the nature of the mind.

FPP=First-person perspective: some knowledge about the physical world from secondary properties are given to the mind. I can think about them.

S=Subject of conscious experience:

private (that which is accessible by the subject of conscious experience)

inner (that which is internal not external or spatially located)

self-presenting (a property that is directly available, accessible, or aware to me)

intentional

*Some subjective states of consciousness have this s-set.

ETT=Extended Transparency thesis: qualia implies a more fundamental feature that characterizes the subject of conscious experience.< (*The Creation of Self* 72-83)

I will explain each of these in turn. It is important to highlight the nature of the mind as something that is distinct from the body, both locally (in terms of individual minds and bodies) and globally (in terms of the cosmos and its mental implications), but here we are focusing on the local relationship between the soul and the body of individual human beings. The distinctive mark may be that phenomenal properties (i.e., quale, or qualia of consciousness) are direct and immediate to the subject of that consciousness. This is known through the FPP, or the first-person perspective. And, knowledge of the physical world is known via these phenomenal properties, but it is clear from our FPP that there exist two distinct types of properties—qualitative and those that are represented through the qualitative. One is clear or transparent, direct and the other is distinct in one's perspective. We know these properties because they are immediately available within the field of awareness that we call consciousness, and this is instantiated by a particular consciousness or the FPP. The FPP is a unique property of the mental that is contrasted with the third-person perspective that is shared or public in nature of those properties that are available to all perceivers. This FPP is apparent without argument and holds primacy of place in knowledge. It is distinct in that I can take hold of the thoughts, items of the mind, or expericiables and think about them. I can introspect, in other words. These are dependent on a subject of consciousness, and I will argue in a moment that *that* subject is a substance and not just a property-bundle, and further a distinct type of substance is entailed—which is what seems to follow upon closer inspection of our mental lives, the ETT.

The first thesis that needs to be argued for is that property dualism follows from an appropriate ascertaining of the facts of phenomenal consciousness. Based upon the phenomenal description given already that much seems apparent if we are to take our phenomenal consciousness, i.e., mental properties, seriously. But, many philosophers of mind do not take the mind seriously, and often give a quick pass

over the fact of features like the FPP, qualia, phenomenal consciousness and other entailed properties briefly discussed (e.g., transparency, intentionality, and private/privileged access). But, we should take the intuitions of the minds seriously if we are to make sense of anything else for it is on this basis we can make sense of knowledge of the physical world as entailed by it. This is where property dualism comes in because there are two types of properties immediately perceived when we think about our own consciousness.

Why think this? No physical things have this s-set unless we assume functionalism or illusionism regarding the mental as with someone like Keith Frankish but that would mean eliminating them. Some of have suggested that the S-set properties are not identical to the material, but are loops within the material like a stored memory within a particular computer that can only be functionally accessed by that particular computer (but then something like functionalism would be true and the fundamentally distinct property would be a function and the power of introspective knowledge which gives rise to other knowledge would be reductively explained).

In fact, there is no conceivable way of making sense of these S-set properties as being identical to the material body or finding their way back to the material. Just consider the fact of material things. Descartes argued for a not too unintuitive idea that physical things bear the essential property of spatial extension, but, at a minimum, they are properties had by a thing that is spatial. Thoughts about them however are distinct from them and do not make sense as actually occupying space, at least not in the way that material parts occupy space. What would it mean for a thought to occupy space? Can it be measured through quantitative analysis using a geometric measurement, a mathematical symbol? Apparently not. Thoughts and experiences bear a qualitative property not to be confused with the quantitative measurement that is found when doing a brain scan of neurons firing that can be measured and might be said either to correlate with experiences or even provide a causal trigger for those experiences.

Richard Fumerton has argued this conclusion in his fine treatment, *Knowledge Thought and the Case for Dualism*,

I have argued that there is no denying the fact that there are phenomenally given properties that resist classic reductions to physical properties. Moreover our phenomenological acquaintance with such properties gives us both propositional knowledge that such properties are exemplified and also the capacity to represent directly such properties are exemplified and also the capacity to represent directly such properties in thought. I have conceded that there is an odd sense in which one might still find room for such properties within a physicalist world view. The reconciliation will not

be attractive to most physicalists for it gives epistemic and conceptual priority to the phenomenal. But there is the epistemic possibility that the very phenomenal properties that the physicalist wants to reduce to paradigmatic physical properties are (1) the realizers of the dispositional properties that define for us physical objects and their properties, (2) properties that are co-exemplified by the same processes that exemplify intrinsic physical properties (whatever they are), or (3) properties exemplified by the state of affairs that it is the exemplification of those intrinsic physical properties (whatever they are). (Fumerton 257-8)

Considering paradigm cases of physical things, i.e., bodies, we have various descriptions given to us from physics, biology, but what is clear is that there are distinctions between the two sets of property-bearers and one of them fails to have an S-set. Even the most common explanations from physicalists—causal theories, leave some feature left unaccounted for. Causal Theories mislead as they do not establish identity of properties (phenomenal do not = non-phenomenal or physical properties). Causal theories, arguably, go both ways. This leads Fumerton to consider the notion of substance despite the fact that this rubs against his radical empiricism. I will argue for the substance of experience below.

For even if there is space for a physicalist to account for the intrinsic properties of consciousness, the option would render it a queer physicalism that would leave us in a precarious agnostic position regarding the physical properties that are the realizers of the phenomenal. This seems not only unlikely, as Fumerton argues, but also seems to undercut the fundamental knowledge we do have that renders possible knowledge of physical things—and what we do know about physical things doesn't map onto what we find when we introspect about the knowledge from phenomenal consciousness. But, very quickly, we should find that our knowledge of phenomenal consciousness leads us to not simply property dualism, but substance dualism—something Fumerton runs up against but is reticent to bite the bullet on a substance that would explain not only fundamentally distinct properties of phenomenal qualia.

For the sake of clarity, I have laid out a series of definitions below.

SD=Substance Dualism: every person/subject who has experiences is an immaterial substance. An Immaterial substance is: (1) essentially the person, (2) foundational to the mental or conscious life, (3) does not have many of the properties characterizing physical/material things. OD='Obscure dualisms': those views that give primacy to the mental, yet either deny the transparency thesis or advance a position that implies a non-transparency thesis. Under this title, I include the following:

pan-experientialism; micro-psychism; pan-psychism; hylomorphism; absolute monism.

HN=human nature or the essence of what it means to be human is an abstract object. In the case of humans as soul-body compounds, we address what it means to be a soul-body compound in relation to the nature of human beings.

HO=human origins. HO supplies a story for how it is that an individual HN comes into existence through a process.◀ (*The Creation of Self* 73)

With these distinctions in place, let's consider an argument native to the introspection tradition in favor of substance dualism, which continues the deconditioning of the mind from a fixed reflection on objects, generalities, parts, and means-end reasoning captured in the conditioned mode. Here is an argument:

1. The transparency thesis of phenomenal experience is directly available and accessible to the FPP.
2. Only a primitive 'S' particular (i.e., subject of conscious experience) accounts for the transparency thesis because of the fundamental first-person powers that are non-multiply exemplifiable.
3. 'Obscure' dualisms do not have this fundamental power that is non-multiply exemplifiable.
4. Therefore, 'Obscure' dualisms cannot account for the reality of the transparency thesis. (*The Creation of Self* 73-4)

The transparent nature of our mental states seems to push us here as property dualism is implied, so are the distinct substances that instantiate them. For as Fumerton himself argues causal theories won't do and the sort of queer physicalism renders the knowledge we do have dubious and suspect. But, this is so if we fail to make the next step in affirming substance dualism for those properties that are not available on physicalism. But, one might argue for a bundle of properties that leaves out the need for substance dualism. Fumerton, too, argues that this is unlikely and doesn't seem to account for that which we know. He argues:

Let's suppose for simplicity that there are two and only two people in the world — you and I. We exist at the same times have various perceptions. I am in pain while I have a visual image of a red apple. You experience euphoria as you have the visual image of an orange. The bundle theorist says that the pain and the visual redness go together to make up me, while the euphoria and the visual orangeness go together to make up

you. Why is that true? What do the redness and the pain have in common that makes them both my experiences? (Fumerton 258-9)

There is nothing about the properties themselves that would make sense of the fact that I am instantiating this bundle. To accept the bundle theory would be necessary to leave something out of the picture. But, the argument I lay out above doesn't simply yield an inference to the best explanation, rather our phenomenal consciousness seems to yield something unique about the substance of phenomenal consciousness in question that would make this person distinct from *that* person.

One might take something like a memory-continuity theory in John Locke's com-
presence theory. Locke's com-
presence theory resembles the property-bundle view in that it too lacks the sort of distinctive fact making the subject of phenomenal consciousness a reality. (Fumerton 263) Fumerton's analysis points to a substance of consciousness that has the power of access, enters into a distinct intentional relation, and one for which is transparent to the subject necessary. Without it, the property-bundle view renders the possibility of perfect duplicates a reality. What is needed, then, is a substance. And what makes a substance of consciousness distinct is the fact that souls are themselves fundamentally distinct substances of the sort that are not their bodies, the parts therein or even the distinct set of properties (that themselves presuppose a substance), but rather the soul itself (that is non-multiply exemplified; something like a primitive subject; a haecceity). If this is the case, then there are obvious advantages that are apparent: the substance is an enduring identity, binds the features of phenomenal consciousness, provides a ground, and individuates it across time and at a time. But that cannot be had on the epistemological dualism alone—a substance is required. And, as E.J. Lowe persuasively argues in numerous places it is that substance that makes it distinct not its properties. Lowe states:

[I]t is strongly arguable that the only adequate criterion of identity for mental states and events will be one which makes reference to their subjects... [P]art of what makes an experience of mine numerically distinct from a qualitatively indistinguishable experience of yours is the very fact that it is mine as opposed to yours. (Lowe 149, 137-55)

The question, then, is this substance individuated by its own substance or a set of properties or is it simply a brute given without a sufficient explanation. Given PSR (the principle of sufficient reason), I have argued that it is a substance that is a primitive essence.

If true, then the sufficiency supplied to my soul would explain why some properties fail to offer a full or sufficient explanation. Take for example the fact that I like some flavors and others do not like those same flavors. The argument is quite simply that not only qualitative experiences of consciousness are not explained by physical (i.e., genetic or biological differences), but the fact of discriminating between the difference in tasting something differently or the same finds no recourse to the physical facts about what it is that is being tasted. There may be some cases where the causal properties of the body cause the soul to taste something different, but not in all cases. In some cases, there would be no further fact of the matter in the properties themselves that explains either the fact that I taste something in the same way or in a different way (Callaway).⁴ The fact that I don't like some such taste finds no further explanation. But, this would also mean that I am not the product of some generalizable event, but would find a recourse to the explanation not found in regular lawful events but in something else like a personal explanation. This is where theistic dualism becomes the plausible option explaining the particularity of persons. But, without some specific generalizable event say in biological evolution, it would seem that we would need to look elsewhere for the cause of the person's origination. Something like a God or a supernatural being is the best explanation (and I argue elsewhere the only explanation for these types of beings—something John Foster quite readily found apparent). Here, then, we find a link to theology as giving us an explanation for the fact of souls and their origination. We must look elsewhere for the origination of souls and theology, as the unconditioned mode helps us arrive at an understanding of human personal identity that materialism otherwise limits.

2. Origins of Ensoulment: A Revelational Argument, Christology of Personal Identity

Given the distinct and radically different types of property-bearers on offer, we seem to have two types of substances, hence substance dualism (one of mind as the subject/substance of experience and one of body that has properties derivable from the first-person experiences of those subjects of experience). The type of substance dualism I advanced leads to what some perceive as an unsavory conclusion. The conclusion that there exists no determinative way to arrive at a conclusion about

⁴ The study shows that there are some empirical links that account for one's tasting of coriander as chalky compared to others. But, not only would we know this by way of testimony, this only accounts for approximately 10% of the cases whereas others are unknown let alone all the complex varieties of taste in other material substances. Presumably, there is not an empirical explanation for all these distinctions or for the fact that we couldn't determine empirically, in some cases, whether one tastes certain objects the same (but doesn't like it) or tastes it differently from other persons. This is a fascinating subject that deserves more reflection.

the timing of ensoulment. For some dualists, this has led them to conclude that the matter (no pun intended) is underdetermined. For others, like Swinburne, the case is sufficiently equivalent to an emergentist account of the soul's origination, which means that what makes it determinative is a sufficiently developed brain to sustain the functioning of the soul (Swinburne 174-203). But such matters make science an insufficient means for arriving at the timing of ensoulment. We might reach different conclusions based on the scientific evidence for ensoulment, but ultimately such a line seems non-determinative for detecting the soul's presence during the stages of gestation in the womb.

John Foster has argued along the following lines and makes clear the challenge. He states:

Biological life begins at conception, when an ovum and a sperm fuse to produce a new unitary organism. But it is hard to see how this process, or the subsequent development of the organism, could create an additional nonphysical substance and functionally attach it to the organism in the relevant way. The answer, it seems to me, is that we should explain these things by appeal to the creative role of God... it is God who creates the nonphysical subjects and arranges for their functional attachment to the appropriate organisms. (Foster 29)

There are two challenges here that point us in the direction of theology determining an answer. Foster raises the concern over the ambiguity of the body and fuzzy boundaries for arriving at a conclusion. He perceives this as a sufficient and positive conclusion to accept theistic-dualism where God is the creator of the soul and attaches the body in some functional arrangement. I agree. If this God, is the Christian God, then we have reason to believe that the soul is present at the moment of conception. And theology aids us in arriving at a sure and certain conclusion.

Moving from a philosophy of personal identity to a theology of personal identity, it is the case that our generative relationship leads us to see the soul as somehow tied to the whole process of embodiment in this life. »The significance of human embodiment is reflected in our generative relationships. The incarnation and resurrection . . . also point to the significance to human life.« (*An Introduction to Theological Anthropology* 268) Taking our cues from Christology establishes the value of embodiment, and verifies truths about embodiment.

What we learn from theology is something of the importance found in the typological, familial, natural and, more, Christological identity of the soul—something neither clear in some cases and insufficiently clear in others through a natural theology of personal identity.

Guided by our Christology, it seems that the soul must be present at the moment of conception because of what we confess about Christ as the exemplar of humanity.

1. If God assumes embryonic human life, then God establishes the value of embryonic human life by assuming human life. 2. God assumes embryonic human life. 3. Therefore, God establishes the value of embryonic human life.« Our value is such both naturally and redemptively because our identity is ultimately, in a richer sense, wrapped in Christ's identity. As he identifies with us, he shares his identity with us. »By the incarnation, God enters into the full pattern of human origination. In light of this, God gives embryonic life and blesses that life at every stage of development. (Farris and Hamilton)

In our confession, we confess that the Logos assumes human nature at the moment of conception when the Holy Spirit miraculously impregnates Mary (or, at a minimum, this is implicit in our confession of the biblical material and the creedal statements) (Crisp 103-22).⁵ For the Logos to assume a human nature means that he assumes a full human nature and not a partial human nature. To do otherwise, would entail that Christ was only partly human during a phase of his existence—hence Apollinarianism, but this would undermine the Creedal teaching attested to by the whole of the Christian Church. It would, further, render his salvific work of humanity incomplete. By employing the principles of exemplary humanity and normative humanity, Christ not only supplies an example of what we ought to be but what we are by nature. And, his incarnation at a more foundational level presses us to ask what it is that is more than material that would make sufficient his nature as a human—pointing us once again to the soul as present in general, but also present at the beginning of his life—his embryonic life in the womb of Mary (which applying the normative principle would mean that our souls are present at the beginning stages of embryonic development).

By arriving at a determination of the timing of ensoulment, we are necessarily moving beyond the 'conditioned' mode described above. We are, by consequence, rejecting materialism of human persons. Additionally, we are rejecting scientism (as described above), reductionist science as the route for understanding human persons, as well as moving beyond the provenance of phenomenology and analytic philosophy for determining what it means to be human and what it is that constitutes humans. The soul not only becomes a pointer to the Divine as it's originaive cause (hence theistic-dualism), but also opens the door to consider a distinct mode

⁵ At best a substance physicalist would need to affirm a weird version of property dualism that permits a distinctive account of Christ's human nature as sufficiently distinct from a body, brain, or animal view of persons, as Crisp discusses.

of reflection beyond that which is found in methodologies that fall under the 'conditioned' mode.

Another common philosophical and theological objection raised to dualism is that it necessarily creates a bifurcation between the mind and body, and, by extension, the knowledge gained from the natural sciences, that have as their object of study the physical bits that comprise the universe, and that of theology (with its object of study being God, his attributes, and creative activity).

In recent science and religion discussions, there has been a renewed interest in the relationship between science and theology. In particular, there has been an interest in developing a scientific view of theology that incorporates the insights from revelation and dogmatic theology. But, as I will show, there is a unique way in which theology not only becomes an integral source of information regarding the human, but it is actually prioritized in light of the methodological dualism implied by the view of persons as ensouled beings defended earlier. In this way, the discussion about the timing of ensoulment opens up to a rich methodological proposal that introduces theology as predominant in the discussion concerning human personal identity. This, I will argue, leads not simply to a science-engaged theology but what might be better termed a theologically-engaged science that prizes theological authority.

3. Ensoulment and End of Life: Science-Engaged Theology or Theologically-Engaged Science

One of the areas that can aid in filling out our understanding of the soul is through a consideration of the end of life. The following, then, is, at a minimum, suggestive in the direction of a soul and unique features not derived from unaided reason (i.e., analytic philosophy or science). What I will show through empirical results is how theology takes us from deconditioning to the unconditioned. The following, then, is novel and introduces the reader to a different way in which to understand science in conceiving of human identity. Given this, what I advance below is something of a *sketch* of how to conceive of science in relation to theology by considering the human through the lens of recent empirical research.

Recent case studies in dementia unveil additional information about the nature of the soul (Williams).⁶ What I will argue is that this is not only further confirmation

⁶ I am relying heavily on Tricia Williams's research on dementia patients. A guided reflection on her theological conclusions actually opens the door to a distinct method or mode of theologically thinking about personal identity of which I touch on here for the purposes of expanding on the philosophical notion of personal identity discussed above and illustrates a distinctive mode that breaks with a conditioned mode that has and continues to hinder theological development.

of the soul, despite inclinations to interpret the data along monist lines, but also that this subject matter gives us insight into the nature of the soul otherwise not addressed in a natural theology of ensoulment. In fact, a guided revelational understanding seems to demand a soul, but takes us beyond the sort of 'conditioned' thought we described earlier into other territory. The unveiling begins with reflections on the nature of dementia cases (but is also buttressed by similar studies occurring with Alzheimer's patients) (Williams 219).

You might think of this as a piece of science-engaged theology because it not only uses empirical studies as a source of theological information but it also recognizes the entangled nature of the subject of personal identity with revelation and philosophy (Perry and Leidenhag 15). But, that said, I think what we see here might be more like what I will call theologically-engaged science rather than science-engaged theology not because of the entanglement for which empirical data is enmeshed, but more because the empirical data provides a phenomena that is new in some sense for theological reflection. Yet, it is important to point out that the reflection is guided in some way, once again, by a revelational perspective that when conjoined with this novel empirical information gives us fresh insight on the nature of personhood. This is so because the information under reflection gives us new empirical data guided by a meta-perspective in which to frame the empirical. One would likely not arrive at a knowledge of this unique empirical data through unaided reason. Without this revelational/theological phase or layer the novel insights into human identity would be underdetermined.

Herein I am relying on theologian Tricia Williams's research, as well as her mentor John Swinton. Williams is working with case studies in dementia of which she had first-hand exposure. Her aim is to consider the nature of human identity with the specified goal of considering their »faith-identity«, which presumes as I will show an underlying set of claims about the fundamental nature of human identity. She describes her method as a hermeneutic-phenomenological approach, which takes as its cues certain ways of exploring and testing the findings of her patients' phenomenal experience during early, mid leading into late dementia. Her patients' are evangelicals, and their religious context becomes an important lens in which to reflect on the continuities they experience during dementia. In this way, the studies are, admittedly narrow on a specific, section of Christianity, but as she supposes, the findings, might well be similar across the sub-traditions (e.g., Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodoxy). With that said she takes (i.e., first-person accounts) her patients' phenomenal experience seriously and considers them in light of their evangelical backgrounds. Her aims are explicitly practical as a guide for ministers to apply when leading dementia patients through these apparently dark times (Williams 197-214). This leads her to reflect on the nature of spiritual growth as a con-

crete reality (Williams 215-39). What she finds along the way, however, is quite revealing about the patients themselves, and the data is suggestive of something transcendent about the patients (Williams 1-17). While I do not agree with all of her interpretive judgements (particularly her rejection of the soul doctrine, which I argue the data actually points to a soul), I find most of it not only fascinating and insightful, but demanding both philosophical and theological attention of which the empirical results demand. Consider this, then, a piece of science-engaged theology or theologically-engaged science that moves us out of the conditioned mode to the unconditioned mode (with theology as our guide).

A summary as it pertains to my exploration here: Williams, following her mentor Swinton, explores a detailed yet limited set of patients (8 patients with research pointing to other studies), from the evangelical tradition, who all exhibit similar qualities. She notes key »theological issues« that arise in her analysis of her patients that emerge as themes. They exhibit notable experiences that find footing in their Christian faith: a sense of relationship both to God and the community of faith despite failing brains and memory, an active relationship with Christ, a sense of mission, and trace memories (although unarticulated or propositional; distinguishing between »cognitive« and »affective« dimensions) of Scriptural passages as well as songs that have stayed with them during dementia, and, finally, they exhibit a hopefulness for the future (Williams 7-9, 10-17, 222, 228-33). They all recount similar feelings, experiences, prayers, and songs even when they can't recall their past or articulate who they are historically (Williams 219, 236-9). In other words, the phenomenology suggestively points to other identity features despite their failing body and brain to something that both transcends the body and is not dependent on it. These aspects of the phenomenological perspective of the subject are reinforced by the philosophical arguments provided earlier that demand a radical distinction between the phenomenal and the physical. And, they continue to experience their faith early, mid leading into late dementia. This potentially, then, has profound implications for how we understand the identity of persons.

A central issue in her study, once again, is faith-identity. To the contrary of those who have deemed persons as effectively material in nature, the studies reveal something about their identity that transcends their material nature and points us to that which we wouldn't initially expect if these patients are merely material in nature. The expectation, from dementia and other neural or physical ailments to the brain, is that it would provide evidence for the fact that humans are merely material. Citing Stephen Post as summarizing this sort of position, Williams suggests that more, in fact, is revealed about these patients. Post states: »The most urgent bioethical problem of our time may not be death but dementia and the hyper cognitive idea that forgetful persons are already in the house of the dead.« (Williams 2, cf. Post

136) Williams shows that there is more to the patients than one would expect. And, while Williams does not affirm a soul-view, or dualism as I described above, she does affirm a holistic view that is suggestive of the fact that there is not only more to humans than being mere meat machines, animals, but that there is an identity that is both God-like and collective in nature (Williams 180). But, first, I will argue that her findings actually point to the view that we, as humans, are souls and briefly discuss some of the other findings as revelatory of the soul. In both cases, the present reflection extends deconditioning to securely place the unconditioned mode of the soul as ultimately theological in nature.

3.1. WHY NOT PHYSICALISM?

Buttressed by the conclusions about the the nature of the soul earlier (along with dogmatic teachings of the Church Catholic), there are several reasons, upon reflection of the empirical studies of dementia, that indicate that more is going on in the internal life of the individuals, which points us beyond physicalism (or substance physicalism to be precise). There are several common views in personal identity studies that are advanced as positions accounting for personal identity from the body (i.e., an animal), brain, and memory-continuity. These studies confirm, it seems, that there is more going than machinery and that these individuals are souls. What we find, in fact, is that more than the neural workings of the brain are present in the life of the individuals. And further, even more than the causal triggering of the brain to memory is going on because in several cases the individuals do not realize or remember their history, so it cannot be memory that makes them who they are. Memory doesn't make them who they are because there is still an internal life that is represented and hearkens back to phenomenal experiences, practices and religious symbols. For that matter, cognitive decline seems insufficient when considering the life of the individuals in these cases because there is more going on than an awareness or cognitive recall of specific historical facts about their life. Nonetheless, they persist. And, there are traces of evidence that *they* persist despite their deteriorating brain, failing memory, and diminished cognition. In fact, there is what Williams and Swinton call a kind of »remembering without remembering« that provides a type of continuity from their past that extends, in some cases, even despite what we would expect during dementia given a physicalism of persons.

Ironically, Williams, even, leans on the physicalist monist literature (trendy in contemporary theology), but it doesn't really support that thesis. Beyond the holism thesis that we are generally embodied and related to others in some fundamental way, there exists something that persists relevant to the individual (Williams 176-83).

Williams begins her assessment of personal identity along the lines of relational ontology. For her, she sees this ontological framework as a fitting foundation for thinking about dementia patients and consonant with what some, sub-set, of biblical-theological literature has argued in its favor.

Williams grants primacy to a small but vocal minority of biblical scholarship that prizes the functional integrated holism of the Creation narrative, which is buttressed by an eschatology of bodily resurrection. This set of literature from figures like Joel Green, Nancey Murphy, Richard Middleton, J.T. Turner, and N.T. Wright affirms the holistic and bodily integrity of human beings and sees the Creation story as decisive in favor of a distinctively bodily, construed physically, identity (Green).⁷

According to Williams, »The Creation story gives us a holistic sense of what it is to be human. Together, the »dust« and »breath« form the »living being.« The Hebrew word *nephesh*, often translated as »soul,« indicates God's »breath of life.« Anderson in his exploration of the nature of being human speaks of »ensouled body and embodied soul. This understanding concurs with the Old Testament Hebraic understanding. However, Christian tradition, influenced by dualist Greek thought, has over the centuries separated the physical and spiritual, and this dualism has persisted into twenty-first-century thinking.« (Williams 181) In other places, Williams takes her aims at a dualism (of the Greek world) that prizes or makes central the defining mark of 'rationality' or 'cognitive' capacity, which she believes is out of sync with the qualitative experiences of her dementia patients (Williams 178-83).

Before proceeding, several comments in response are in order. Despite what Williams may think and Anderson affirms (Anderson 38, 210), the fact of holistic integrity does not necessarily entail the kind of monism present in physicalism, as many philosophers and theologians assume. The functional integrity does not entail an ontological sameness, identity, or a conflation of the person as soul with his or her body. In fact, John Cooper has made this clear in his, *Soul, Body, and Life Everlasting*, where he summarizes the Old Testament anthropology often presumed as ruling out dualism: »So the final result of our inquiry into Old Testament anthropology yields both functional holism and dualism.« (Cooper 70, Steiner)⁸ And, these terms are not incompatible if we understand the distinction between

⁷ Green's work is possibly the most important defense of Christian physicalism to date.

⁸ Steiner gives more credence to what some consider the »greek« understandings of the soul as disembodied and detachable from their bodies as being the common view of the ancient near east world that is prominent and drawn from in the Old Testament Scriptures. In other words, the image of the anthropos given is consistent with dualism and some of the facts about the afterlife seem to confirm dualism despite contrary reports from the physicalists already mentioned.

functional, existential (during this life) contrasted with the ontological dualism that permits survival into the next life (Cooper 33-72).

While it is debatable that Greek thought, so common to the Christian tradition, has, at times, separated the soul from the body, thereby denigrating the body, it does not follow that a minimal dualism is inconsistent with holism. Neither does it follow from the material found in Christian revelation or that in all cases a dichotomy of the human (i.e., soul and body) yields a picture of separation that does harm to the integrity of the image of the human person. In fact, the portrait that we are our souls that exist (at least during specific times) embodied, yields a different picture and one that does not altogether favor physicalism. Further, it is important to point out that the hyper emphasis on rationality or cognitive capacity (that is dependent on the brain) is not necessitated in Greek thought nor in dualism itself. What is needed is a distinct entity, a substance of phenomenal experience (with distinct transcendent capacities) that makes sense of the unique religious features that these dementia patients seem to exhibit. The dualism advanced by most contemporary dualists (including John Cooper) yields a picture that the body and soul are functionally united during this time of embodiment, but permits the possibility for separation (however harmful) from the body, the parts of the body, and the operations of the body. More to the point, the dualistic explanation of human persons would not diminish the importance of bodily function to experience, but, instead, provides us with a more complicated picture that permits the sort of possibilities of religious experience, transcendence that these cases seem to require. And, in fact this is suggested by both Williams and Swinton in their studies of dementia patients.

What we would expect to find of dementia patients given physicalism actually fails to support physicalism and certainly fails to guarantee physicalism. In fact, it *suggests* a dualism of parts or something akin to dualism. The fact of a distinction from the person as soul (existing as it were as an immaterial substance) that is not always dependent on the brain, the brain's malfunctioning, and shows signs of possible detachment find an explanation in dualism not physicalism. And, more, the transcendence of capacity quite apart from or unexplained by the brain and its parts is suggestive of a distinct set of properties that are not dependent on the brain, but properties and capacities dependent on something else (i.e., a soul or something akin to it). And, this is precisely what we see when we consider the case studies advanced by Williams.

And, Williams suggests this in several places without spelling out the ontological implications of what she is saying in a manner that would either be limited by physicalist commitments or would be inconsistent with those physicalist commitments.

In one important place she discounts the dualistic image as »fragmented« and overemphasizing the cognitive, yet she proceeds to paint a picture of these cases in a way that would be best explained by dualism rather than physicalism. She states:

Contrary to the fragmented understanding of personhood where cognitive capacity is definitive, the *imago Dei* understanding is of the whole person—body, mind and soul—the integrated self, expressed through the unity of body and soul. This understanding is of significance for those who know that their cognitive capacities are diminishing. In biblical terms, the living, breathing human being, whatever their incapacities, is made in the image of God, holy and worthy of honor. One participant (Alice) emphasized her completeness in this way:

Alice: Our worth and value doesn't depend on... what our health is like or the state of our bodies... He just loves us for who we are... so we are complete in him.

In these understandings of who we are as human beings there is hope for those living with developing cognitive incapacity. In keeping with this theological understanding, the participants in this study expressed that they know themselves to be »more than a diseased brain.« (Williams 182)

Her theological commentary on these case studies is insightful, but doesn't suggest the physicalism often suggested. To the contrary, it is this »more than a diseased brain« that deserves additional attention. It is not simply a *diseased* brain that is implicated as insufficient in accounting for the religious capacities of the patients, but the brain itself. In other words, it is not simply a malfunctioning brain that is suggestive, but of something other than the brain itself that directly accounts for the religious capacities of the person who persists rather than her brain. Similar to the argument given earlier that phenomenal properties are fundamentally different from physical properties and that each of these properties depend on distinctive substances of those properties. So it is with the case studies exemplified by those like Alice that are suggestive of distinct capacities that emerge despite the diminishing brain in a way that wasn't present prior to the diminishing brain. Instead, the heightening of religious experience, transcendence, and the capacity to sense God that one would expect to diminish if these experiences were either identical or reducible to neural functioning. But the opposite occurs and is suggestive of higher-order thinking or experiencing not present prior to the diminished brain. If there was a distinct type of property (namely phenomenal properties) dependent on a distinct type of substance (for persistence of those properties and capacities),

then the present studies not only add further confirmation of this distinction but reveal additional facts about them.

At a minimum, a dualistic portrait of the human provides a better explanation than that of physicalist monism—despite some contemporary reports to the contrary, because for the dementia patient to experience God, hope, and an unarticulated continuity requires that the person as substance is present rather than some degreed identity predicated on a property-bearer that itself fails to account for the type of substance underlying phenomenal properties, in general, and, arguably, these distinctive types of spiritual and phenomenal properties that are heightened during dementia. And, yet, the person as substance that is present shows signs of something higher than that of the brain that is not heightened but is rather diminishing and deteriorating to the point of death. The modal properties of each, it is suggested quite strongly, are different for the soul as well as the body. In keeping with an older understanding that the body has the modal properties of being able to exist in the state of a corpse and the soul exists in an alternative mode would support and better explain the higher-order capacities of the person (not her brain) during dementia. Whereas on physicalism the identity of the person with body (albeit with higher-order properties) would suggest not only diminished capacities related to pre-dementia states, but would fail to account for altogether new experiential and transcendent states. It is here that dualism as discussed earlier is superior as an explanation, but also opens afresh additional features that would otherwise find limiting expression, explanation in physicalism.

In summary, the evidence for the person as soul seems to be the following. First, assuming the property distinctions of phenomenal and physical, this would require, it seems as argued earlier, for two distinct types of substances that underlie the unique properties of a phenomenal type and of a bodily type. It would require some unique type of material substance to underlie phenomenal properties—something of which, at present, we know not what. Second, if our modal intuitions are correct about the nature of bodies contrasted with the nature of souls, then that more naturally supports the two distinct property-bearers and how to explain the continuity of persons despite the failing body and brain. In other words, there is something present and persisting that hearkens back to the pre-dementia selves that would be the ongoing bearer of the person's identity. Third, and related to the first two, the fact of these unique phenomenal properties would make sense of previous spiritual capacities that become heightened when the body is on demise. To account for them as a substance physicalist, would require adherence to some mysterious properties that are neither identical to, reducible to, and are those capacities that are functionally not heightened when the substance experiences dementia but rather diminished. And, this, would be the natural expectation if the person were

his/her physical substance. The physicalist would need to supply some unique explanation for why these properties are hidden pre-dementia only to emerge by some triggering of the malfunctioning brain. It would seem counter-intuitive for these types of events, even if not necessarily impossible. This would exacerbate the need for a special kind of physicalism beyond even what is found in the physicalist options, on offer, for phenomenal properties.

There are features that extend beyond and are, arguably, inexplicable in light of bodily and neural functioning. Guided by revelational reflections and the philosophical determinations earlier, there is another feature(s) that is strongly suggested by Williams's case studies that she, herself, alludes to in several places.

3.2. A GOD-LIKE AND COLLECTIVE IDENTITY

There are several factors involved in Williams's case studies that demand something beyond the physical is present and that even more than conscious awareness of facts about self make the person who they are, which further serves to extend deconditioning through theology (as the unconditioned) as the mode for reflecting on the human. In a similar way, that the common case of infant baptism suggestively points beyond the individual to a collective identity of which the child is a part (buttressed by the incarnational reflections above), the end of life cases, too, are suggestive of this fact that the individuals bear a collective identity that is not made sense of by individual choice or individual natures. In fact, there are traces that suggest that not only the person is still present despite the ability to recall or consciously articulate the fact. Across the studies, Williams notes that these individuals are experiencing ongoing cognitive decline, but also simultaneous spiritual heightened awareness in keeping with their conditioned practices in their life prior to dementia onset. There is a sense in which they are not remembering or recalling, but still remembering traces, experiences, and feelings that resonate with something in their history. They often even suggest spiritual growth is occurring while they are going through dementia early, mid leading to late dementia. But, the sense, is not a general sense only of God, but also of Christ as being their true identity (Williams 183-90). This is attested to when they have experiences of God and Christ. They sense that they are in God's story and that some songs, passages of Scripture, and prayers they learned would trigger religious experiences and the sense that God is present to them.

For these reasons, Williams is clear that her patients have both a hopeful orientation and an eschatological focus (Williams 194-6). In just a couple of explicit examples the patients sum up her findings regarding the nature of remembering yet not remembering, the inability to recall their identity, showing traces of their

religious life prior to the onset of dementia, and their hopeful eschatological focus as they finish out this life.

In one case study the individual explicitly refers to the presence of God's love for her (Williams 183, 185). She signals a hopefulness even though her mind fades and her brain is deteriorating. »Rosemary: He will be with me ... right to the end! Even if my ... because my feelings are still strong, if not stronger, as my mind becomes less intellectualized and able to ... I shall be more filled with the feeling of the love of God ... It's here that I ... I can speak from experience not from some theory.« (Williams 190)

In another case, similar findings are revealed about the patient. »Researcher: Do you feel that God is with you? Jess: Yes, I'm sure of that. And that's why the fact that I can't remember, my memory loss, doesn't matter.« (Williams 217) But something more is revealed that points to her identity as being present, yet her identity is wrapped up in relationship to God. She cannot remember her life, but she knows that *she* is related to God. This is significant in several ways pertaining to her identity as being something more than the physical, memories, and even suggestive of a religious identity that transcends her cognitive wherewithal.

Fascinating in both cases, the patients, once again recall (in a general or vague sense) that they are a part of a community of faith whilst not being able to recall their names or specific propositional content regarding their life historically (Williams 191-4). They also resonate with songs, Scripture verses, and hymns through an experiential or phenomenological awareness (pointing to their relationship with God) yet not with a conscious ability to articulate the facts or the ability to list out specific propositions relevant to these experiences.

Conclusion: The Findings

In what has preceded I have explored different frameworks for thinking about personal identity—specifically deconditioning and unconditioned frameworks (in the language of Stephen Priest). Further, I have given several reasons from philosophy, theology, and the empirical that point us beyond the physicalist framework (or a conditioned framework) for personal identity. Even more, it appears that we have good reasons to reject common views in the analytic personal identity literature, namely that persons are identical to their bodies, brains or memories (even those that permit a sort of non-reduction of phenomenal properties). Instead, the above indicates that they are souls, i.e., immaterial substances of experience. And, according to the first section, it is quite clear that the soul is an individual, composed of a haecceity (a fundamental individuality, arguably, a primitive thisness of the subject). And, while the soul has generables or determinables for its existence,

given origins, biology, neurology, and history, the soul transcends those generables and points to something beyond the generables. Even more, the guided reflections through theology are suggestive of not only the fact that these individuals in Williams's case studies are souls (or comprised of the soul as a fundamental part), but that these souls have an identity that is collective given their origins, the religious communities they belong, and a transcendent identity that is connected to God. The Soul is a Collective according to the Incarnation and the End of Life. The findings at the intersection of philosophy, theology, embryology, and dementia point to a fascinating set of conclusions about personal identity. Furthermore, this understanding of persons as intimately explained by God is an axiom latent in the Platonic-Augustine-Descartes tradition—namely, that we are souls and the identity of those souls is fundamentally tied to God. My intention here is rather modest, which initially has been to set out the findings and point the reader to further and needed additional study of Priest's categories of the conditioned mode, deconditioning, and the unconditioned mode of theology in the context of personal identity.

At its heart, the nature of personal identity is the soul and the soul is by nature theological. This is so because knowledge of God just is knowledge of the soul and vice versa (as is famously captured in the Plato-Augustine-Descartes tradition, even Calvinian tradition) (*The Creation of Self* and *An Introduction to Theological Anthropology*). What this means is that there are some features of the soul that are undisclosed through science or even analytic philosophical analysis. In fact, at the most foundational level of analysis personal identity will reference God as the referent necessary to make sense of individual persons (but at some level this is simply what it means to be a soul in the Plato-Augustine-Descartes tradition) (Menn, Goetz and Taliaferro 106, 155).

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DUŠEVNI IDENTITET: DEKONDITIONIRANJE FILOZOFIJE I NEUVJETOVANA TEOLOGIJA

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Sažetak: *Priroda osobnoga identiteta u konačnici je teološke naravi. Pomoću pregleda nekih nedavnih filozofskih dokaza o duši (u analitičkoj filozofskoj tradiciji) članak izlaže razloge zašto duša objašnjava osobni identitet zbog prirode fenomenološke svijesti kao esencijalnoga deskriptora osobe. Ipak, taj zaključak potvrđuje teološko razmišljanje o osobnom podrijetlu i kraju života. Pomoću vođenoga razmišljanja o podrijetlu osoba i kraju života (promatranim kroz istraživanje slučajeva demencije) daljnje predložene informacije o osobi kao supstanciji svijesti otkrivaju više od onoga što se otkriva samo filozofskim ili znanstvenim analizama. Na taj način, i nadovezujući se na Priestov nedavni rad, članak je skica osobnoga identiteta kao duševnoga identiteta koji nadilazi ono što Priest naziva uvjetovani način neuvjetovanoga načina teologije.*

Ključne riječi: *uvjetovani način; fenomenologija; fizikalizam; dualizam; teologija; qualia; inkarnacija; demencija.*

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