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Constitution and the Falling Elevator

The Continuing Incompatibility of Materialism and Resurrection Belief

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In order to maintain a rational belief in life after death, one should be able to show how it is at least possible that a person who has died may yet be found to exist at a later time. This is difficult if you believe that persons are identical with their bodies, since at death bodies become corpses which disappear. How can there be postmortem existence if it is the person who decays in the grave, and whose atoms are gradually assimilated by various other things? The traditional answer that a person is or possesses a nonmaterial soul is energetically resisted by a number of Christian scholars. A recent, prominent example is N. T. Wright who claims that, “we do not need what has been called ‘dualism’ to help us over the awkward gap between bodily death and bodily resurrection.”¹

Philosophers sharing Wright’s intuition have looked for ways to understand the human person and life after death without dualism. One suggestion is that entirely physical persons may nevertheless be distinct from their bodies, and that a Christian view of life after death can thus be maintained by accepting either a temporal gap in existence between death and resurrection, or the possibility that death does not bring about the end of the earthly body. I will argue that these suggestions do not help the Christian materialist, and that recent work defending the theory that bodies continue to exist after death does not save it from either incoherence or absurdity.

ABSTRACT: Ontological dualism is energetically resisted by a range of Christian scholars including philosophers such as Baker and Corcoran who defend accounts of human persons based on material constitution. Whilst Baker’s view fails to account for diachronic identity, Corcoran’s account of life after death makes use of Zimmerman’s problematic “Falling Elevator Model.” It is argued that Zimmerman’s recent reassessment of the model overestimates its value for materialists. In fact, the model generates either a fatal encounter with the nature of identity, or absurdity. A lack of alternatives is illustrated by anticriticalist proposals. Thus it seems materialism and resurrection belief remain incompatible.

1. N. T. Wright, “Mind, Spirit, Soul and Body: All for One and One All: Reflections on Paul’s Anthropology in His Complex Contexts,” Society of Christian Philosophers, regional meeting, Fordham University, March 18, 2011, http://ntwrightpage.com/Wright_SCP_Mind-SpiritSoulBody.htm.

To begin, consider the question of how a thing existing at one time might be identical to a thing existing at another. There is an important tradition that this question should be answered in different ways for artefacts and persons. In the case of artefacts, identity seems to be both graded and arbitrary. For example, it is reasonable to ask how many planks of a wooden ship can be replaced before the original ship becomes something different. In the case of persons, however, identity seems to be an all-or-nothing, absolutist affair, and so we expect that a person observed at one moment either is or is not identical with a person observed at a different moment. Because of this, we can doubt that two persons observed at different moments are identical even if there is a high degree of qualitative similarity between them (for example, there may be two separate occasions on which we have indistinguishable experiences of meeting one of a pair of identical twins, but we have no trouble accepting that they are distinct persons). We can also accept that two persons are identical even if there is a high degree of qualitative difference between them (for example, we accept that we could meet a baby and then an adult who would be utterly different, and yet be the same person). The distinct, absolutist character of personal identity was defended in the eighteenth century by both Joseph Butler and Thomas Reid, who took a Simple View, believing that identity cannot be established on the basis of facts about the physical world or experience.²

So, is it possible to accept both the absolutist nature of personal identity and the possibility of resurrection whilst remaining a materialist? Lynne Baker has argued that it is, building her case on the assumption that when one looks at a single hunk of matter, one may in fact be looking at more than one object. She argues that two objects can be united in such a way that one *constitutes* the other without being identical with it.³ For example, consider a statue constituted by a particular lump of copper. To compress the copper into a sphere would be to destroy the statue but not the lump. The two thus have different persistence conditions and are not identical. Instead, they are numerically distinct objects sharing the same space and matter. Given that there are two objects, some of the properties attributed to the unity will be essential properties of the statue and only derived properties of the lump (consider “being admired by millions”), whilst for others the reverse will be true (consider “hardness”). Baker argues that what goes for copper statues also goes for embodied persons. Thus persons and bodies are separate objects that share the same material basis. A person also has as an essential property the *capacity for a first-person perspective*; the ability to think of oneself as an individual subject of experience.

2. Joseph Butler, “Of Personal Identity,” in *The Analogy of Religion*, in *Personal Identity*, ed. John Perry (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975); Thomas Reid, *Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man*, ed. A. D. Woozley (London: Macmillan, 1941).

3. Lynne Baker, *Persons and Bodies: A Constitution View* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Given this view, the continuation of a particular person over time requires the continuation of a particular first-person perspective. Since a first-person perspective cannot be possessed by degrees, the view entails the absolutist account of identity we have been looking for. However, Baker claims (and Hasker emphasizes) that when considering first-person perspectives, “the Constitution View has no non-circular . . . account of personal identity over time.”⁴ Nevertheless, Baker does argue that when human persons and their bodies are considered together, identity at different moments becomes explicable and “consists in necessary sameness of constituting bodies at each of the times.”⁵ In his own constitution account, Kevin Corcoran makes the related claim that “human persons are essentially constituted by the human bodies that do, in fact, constitute them.”⁶ Thus, we may conclude that on a constitution view, an account of the resurrection of a human person requires an explanation of how a particular body could persist through death. Corcoran discusses how such an explanation might be given.

Corcoran rightly argues that persistence cannot be due to continuity of the same matter, since bodies are themselves constituted objects, and the matter constituting a body is being gradually and continually replaced over time. Instead, he suggests that identity relies on immanent causal connection: an ongoing self-sustaining causal process by which a body maintains itself.⁷ He writes, “A body persists in virtue of the fact that the atoms that are caught up in a life-preserving (causal) relation at one time pass on that life-preserving causal relation to successive swarms of atoms.”⁸

Corcoran discusses two main ways that a body in this world could be immanent causally connected with a body in the next. First, he argues that there could be a temporal gap in existence such that pre- and post-gap bodies remain immanent causally connected. Second he suggests that there could be a process through which death leads to survival rather than extinction of the body such that there is no break in the immanent causal chain.

Corcoran’s argument for temporal gaps does not succeed. Any causal influence of the pre-gap body on the post-gap body must be conveyed by a third party, and so cannot be immanent; there is no obvious way that the identity-preserving immanent causal connection could be passed across a gap in existence. His evidence that this leap can in fact occur amounts to the claim that it must be possible since resurrection is promised in Christian

4. Ibid., 138; William Hasker, “The Constitution View of Persons: A Critique,” *International Philosophical Quarterly* 44 (2004): 23–34.

5. Baker, *Persons and Bodies*, 138.

6. Kevin Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature: A Christian Materialist Alternative to the Soul* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006), 68–9.

7. Contrast immanent and transeunt causation. Zimmerman writes, “In transeunt causality, says Johnson, the cause occurrence and the effect occurrence are referred to different continuants, whereas in immanent causality cause occurrence and effect occurrence are attributed to the same continuant” (Dean W. Zimmerman, “Immanent Causation,” *Nous* 31 (1997): 433).

8. Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature*, 72.

scripture. He admits that he “hasn’t a clue” how it might happen,⁹ and speculates that perhaps “what makes the first stage of the post-gap body a different stage of the [numerically] same pre-gap body that perished is that God makes it so.”¹⁰ Goetz has identified the problem with Corcoran’s speculation, noting that it is simply confused to suggest that anything other than the identity conditions of a body can determine its persistence conditions, and thus God’s causal role in the process could not achieve the desired result.¹¹

In addition, Corcoran cannot rely on a limited scriptural picture to defend immanent causal connection across a temporal gap, since scripture promises *both* resurrection after death, *and* existence between the two.¹² For example, even Wright’s recent anti-dualistic writing contains the claim that “Paul is of course clear about ultimate resurrection, and hence about an intermediate existence.”¹³ Gappy existence is ruled out by both the demands of immanent causal connection, and scriptural teaching about life after death. What, then, of the alternative possibility that bodies do not in fact cease to exist at death?

More than three decades ago, Peter van Inwagen suggested that the possible compatibility of materialism and resurrection could be demonstrated on the assumption that the fate of the body is not what it obviously seems to be.¹⁴ He argued that God could systematically and instantaneously replace corpses with identical copies at the moment of death, such that it is a duplicate that is buried while the “real” body is kept by God for a future resurrection, thereby guaranteeing identity of person. Van Inwagen did not intend to suggest that this is what actually happens, but only to establish the possibility of materialist resurrection by showing one way in which it might go. His account proved unpopular, not least because it entailed God’s systematic deception of the bereaved through last-minute body-switching. Dean Zimmerman has subsequently proposed an alternative that avoids this problem-

9. *Ibid.*, 130.

10. *Ibid.*, 131.

11. Stewart Goetz, “Christian Materialism: A Review Essay of Kevin Corcoran’s *Rethinking Human Nature*,” *Philosophia Christi* 9 (2007): 211.

12. John W. Cooper, *Body, Soul and the Life Everlasting: Biblical Anthropology and the Monism-Dualism Debate* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000); N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (London: SPCK, 2003), chap. 4; John W. Cooper, “Exaggerated Rumors of Dualism’s Demise: A Review Essay on *Body, Soul, and Human Life*,” *Philosophia Christi* 11 (2009): 453–64. These authors both reject immediate resurrection, and so intermediate existence has temporal extension.

13. Wright, “Mind, Spirit, Soul and Body.” Goetz has argued that Wright’s rejection of dualism is unnecessary. He argues that the New Testament authors and audience assumed a common, generic, prephilosophical dualism distinct from developing Greek thought *about* dualism that Wright rejects. Goetz sees issues of anthropology and morality in the New Testament as analogous, citing C. S. Lewis’s argument that the New Testament does not seek to innovate in such matters (Goetz, “Is N. T. Wright Right about Substance Dualism?,” *Philosophia Christi* 14 (2012): 183–91).

14. Peter van Inwagen, “The Possibility of Resurrection,” *International Journal for the Philosophy of Religion* 9 (1978): 114–21.

atic implication,¹⁵ and Corcoran offers Zimmerman's proposal to those who cannot accept the possibility of temporal gaps.

Zimmerman's suggestion runs as follows: God could cause the simples that make up the body of a person, *A*, to *bud* (or, in the original version, to *fission*) such that there come to be two identically structured sets of simples; one in this world *C*, and one in the next *B*. Each of these products inherits the life-preserving causal relation from *A*. Thus, the self-sustaining causal process that had been passed down a single path during *A*'s earthly life now continues down *two* separate and unrelated paths in two different worlds. Crucially, the body *C* in this world immediately goes on to constitute a non-living corpse, while the body *B* in the next world, suitably healed, functions as the sole and therefore successful candidate for the continuation of the pre-fission life. Zimmerman named this idea the Falling Elevator Model (FEM) because it describes a last-minute escape from annihilation, just as a cartoon character might escape death from a falling elevator by having it stop an inch from the ground so that he can step out of it! Does this idea open the way to belief in the possibility of survival given both materialism about persons, and the impossibility of gappy existence?

In short, this seems extremely unlikely. The decisive problem for the Falling Elevator idea is that it shows that immanent causal connection is a conceivably duplicable relation. It is therefore an example of a closest-continuer theory and subject to the difficulties commonly associated with these.¹⁶

To illustrate the difficulty, imagine a budding process that occurs in the life of a child, *A*, and which produces both a body *B* in the next world, and a body *C* in this world. Now compare two situations. In the first, the result of the budding process is that *C* is a corpse, whilst *B* is a living body in the next world. The budding has been "*singly successful*," resulting in only one child in the next world. Thus, we would conclude that *A* has *survived into the next world, being identical to B*. In the second situation things are different because *C* does not become a corpse, but remains a functioning body in this world. In this second situation, the budding has been "*doubly successful*," and has resulted in two children inhabiting different worlds. What do we conclude about the fate of *A* this time? Since without a "budding" event, *A* would have continued in this world, we might assume that this is also what happens here. Thus, in the second situation *A* has *survived in this world, being identical to C*, and a new person, *B*, has been created in the next world.

Now compare the two situations just outlined. Note that the identity of *B* after budding is different in each situation, and is dependent on the fate of *C*; a body that is entirely unrelated to it. Thus, if *C* is a corpse, then in the next

15. Dean W. Zimmerman, "Materialism and Survival: The Falling Elevator Model," *Faith and Philosophy* 16 (1999): 194–211.

16. Bernard Williams, "Personal Identity and Individuation," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 57 (1956): 229–52.

world *B* continues the life of *A*. However, if *C* is *not* a corpse, then *B* is a new person. It seems absurd that this should be the case, and it is widely agreed that identity cannot function this way. Harold Noonan emphasizes this with his “only *X* and *Y*” principle (“OXY”) which may be stated in terms of *A* and *B* as follows:

Whether a later individual *B* is identical with an earlier individual *A* can depend only on facts about *A* and *B* and the relationships between them: it cannot depend upon facts about any individuals other than *A* or *B* (such as *C*).¹⁷

The denial of OXY may be more than absurd. This is because to deny OXY is to deny the necessity of identity. If two things are identical, then they are identical necessarily; they are identical in every possible world. Yet, we have already seen that in the case of *B* and *A* there *is* a possible world in which they are not identical, crucially dependent on the fate of *C*. So identity is being treated as a contingent rather than a necessary relation.¹⁸

Another consequence of the nature of identity is that we cannot in fact suggest that a doubly successful budding might lead to the continuation of *A*'s earthly life. This is incoherent because *each* of the products of a doubly successful budding would have *equal* claim to identity with *A*, and so either both would continue *A*'s life or neither would. Since it is not possible that one thing can be two things, neither *B* nor *C* can in fact be identical with *A*. Bizarrely, *A* has “budded out of existence.” The Falling Elevator's clash with the necessity and transitivity of identity, if real, is fatal for it.¹⁹

Corcoran recognizes the problem, and admits that he does not know why the immanent causal connections that allow *A*'s life to persist can be transmitted in one direction but not another.²⁰ The argument is reduced to the claim this must be the case, as Corcoran suggests that “there must be something in the nature of immanent causal connections that prevents the relation from ever going both ways.”²¹

At this point it seems that neither temporal gaps nor bodily survival will provide the account of life after death that Corcoran is after. It may be, then, that immanent causation simply fails to provide an adequate account of

17. Harold Noonan, *Personal Identity* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 129.

18. See, e.g., Joseph Baltimore, “Got to Have Soul,” *Religious Studies* 42 (2006): 417–30.

19. See also William Hasker, *The Emergent Self* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999).

20. Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature*, 133. Corcoran's suggestion that he has provided evidence that, “it can never be the case that a competitor for identity with my body can exist” is mystifying, since he refers only to the claim contained in the next footnote.

21. Corcoran writes, “I frankly admit that I cannot say what ingredient in immanent causation accounts for this. But neither have I claimed that a completely informative account of the relations is available. Perhaps the relation itself, or at the very least some ingredient in it, must be treated as primitive” (Corcoran, “Physical Persons and Postmortem Survival without Temporal Gaps,” in *Soul, Body, and Survival: Essays in the Metaphysics of Human Persons*, ed. Kevin Corcoran (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 216).

resurrection. Corcoran thus offers a further suggestion that a God who exists necessarily and who has the essential characteristic of willing the good for human persons would not and *could not* allow a situation to arise in which a human person is annihilated through a fission (or budding) process that generates two equal competitors. However it is unclear that annihilation could *never* be consistent with God's willing the good for human persons, and if it *were* consistent then there is no reason to rule out fission as a method God could use to bring it about.

If bodily persistence is to provide an account of life after death, then one must find a way for the Falling Elevator to avoid its terminal encounter with the necessity of identity. Noonan has suggested ways to reconceive arguments of this type in order to achieve this,²² and Zimmerman has recently made use of one of Noonan's suggestions in defending the Falling Elevator Model.²³ Does this defence succeed and thus demonstrate the possibility of life after death on the constitution view?

Zimmerman considers the situation in which he himself survives a doubly successful childhood budding, subsequently living out his earthly life before meeting the other product of the budding in the next world. A peculiar meeting, no doubt! How should he explain the peculiarity? In order to avoid denying the necessity of identity, Zimmerman takes Noonan's suggestion that the situation could be reconceived in terms of the relation of constitution rather than identity.²⁴ The products of the budding process are thus not bodies in competition for identity with *A*, but hunks of matter in competition to come to *constitute A* at a later time. Zimmerman writes:

Instead of saying that I could have been identical to the child, I should have said: "Had my matter been destroyed at the point of budding, the matter [rather than body] which was caused to appear in the next world by the budding of the particles would have constituted [rather than 'been identical to'] me, and not this child. In those circumstances, this child would not have existed."²⁵

Zimmerman accepts that such an explanation is odd, but not that it is absurd. He thus argues that interpreting the Falling Elevator in constitution terms provides a solution to the materialist at an acceptable cost. Noonan disagrees with Zimmerman's conclusion. In fact, he describes the constitution route as

22. Noonan, *Personal Identity*, 157–8, notes that a four-dimensionalist could suggest in the case of a doubly successful budding there were two persons in existence all along, sharing a temporal part throughout their earthly lives. This is Nozick's view in his original discussion of closest continuer theories, but is not pursued here since many including Baker, Corcoran, and Zimmerman reject four-dimensionalism.

23. See Noonan, *Personal Identity*, 135; Dean W. Zimmerman, "Bodily Resurrection: The Falling Elevator Model Revisited," in *Personal Identity and Resurrection: How Do We Survive Our Death?*, ed. Georg Gasser (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), chap. 2.

24. Noonan, *Personal Identity*, 132–3.

25. Zimmerman, "Bodily Resurrection," 43.

a leap out of the frying pan of contingent identity and into the fire of absurdity.²⁶

Before we consider that absurdity, we should note that, under this view, we still have no explanation of how a life-preserving causal relation might go in one direction rather than another when there are multiple candidates, and so even if the constitution view successfully avoids the problem of contingent identity, these problems require additional *ad hoc* constraints. OXY is still denied; the question of whether or not the next-worldly product of budding will come to constitute Zimmerman remains dependent on the fate of the this-worldly product. Whilst this may no longer entail a clash with the nature of identity, it remains highly implausible. For example, it implies that Zimmerman could say to the other product of budding: “You should consider yourself fortunate that the budding process was successful in the case of the matter constituting me, just as it was for the matter constituting you. If the process had failed to produce the matter constituting *me*, then *you* would not have existed.” Surely such a statement is absurd, and not simply “odd.” Noonan thinks it so, and important enough to rule out closest continuer theories of personal identity, including the Falling Elevator. In case we remain unconvinced, he also points to other absurd consequences such as the claim that the same events can constitute the origin of different things.

Consider the singly successful and doubly successful budding situations compared earlier. In the first doubly successful budding situation, the life of *A* continues on earth as *C*, and in the second singly successful budding situation, the life of *A* continues in the next world as *B*. In the first situation, the budding event, along with all the prior events making up the previous life of *A* are the progenitors of a *new* person in the *next* world. In the second situation, those same events fail to be the progenitors of a new person, since in that case the next-worldly product of budding is the continuation of an already existing person. Yet, it is absurd to claim that identical sets of events can produce different things.²⁷

Noonan also asks whether situations such as those just compared can really be described as *different*. Of course, it would be absurd to claim that a situation in which a next-worldly person *is* identical to *A* is no different to the situation in which the next-worldly person is *not* identical to *A*, but it turns out that this is what is being claimed.

26. Noonan, *Personal Identity*, 133.

27. Noonan also points out that closest continuer theories entail that identical events can turn out to be part of the history of different things. Consider two events, one in the life of *A*, and one in the life of *B*. If the life of *B* is a continuation of the life of *A*, then these events are a part of the history of a single individual. However, if *B* is someone else, then these same events are not a part of that history despite the fact that the events are identical in each situation. Yet it is absurd to claim that identical events can be part of the history of different things (Noonan, *Personal Identity*, 134).

In order to understand this, we need to distinguish two types of changes. We might contrast real changes with what Peter Geach termed “mere Cambridge changes.” Consider an example in which my son grows taller than me. When that happens, he and I have both changed. He has acquired the property of being taller than his father, while I have acquired the property of being shorter than my son. However, the change in my son is real, because he has grown, whereas the change in me is of a different kind, because I have not grown. In Geach’s terms, the difference in me is a “mere Cambridge change.”

Given this distinction between real and mere Cambridge changes, consider again the situation of *B* in the next world. Whether or not *B* continues the life of *A* depends on the fate of the causally unrelated, and spatiotemporally distinct budding product *C*. Thus, from *B*’s point of view, the differences in the situation dependent on the fate of *C* can only be mere Cambridge differences. There are no real differences between the situations analogous to my son growing taller than me, but only Cambridge differences analogous to my becoming shorter than my son. However, normally two situations are considered identical even if there are Cambridge differences between them. In other words, Cambridge changes are not normally regarded as events.²⁸ Thus, we should consider the situation in which *B* is the continuation of *A* to be identical to the situation in which *B* is not the continuation of *A*. This, again is absurd.

Zimmerman does not consider the range of Noonan’s objections in detail, but these do in fact suggest that he is mistaken to claim that the constitution version of the Falling Elevator model can be held with minimal cost. If materialists must “learn to love the closest continuer theory” as he suggests, then they are learning to love either the incoherent or the absurd. The Falling Elevator leads either to a fatal collision with the necessity of identity, or to absurdity. Either way, the problems are serious.

Objections of other kinds have been raised against the Falling Elevator model. For example, David Hershenov has argued for an assimilation principle.²⁹ He claims that it is not possible for all the matter constituting a body to be changed simultaneously as the model suggests it must be. Rather, ongoing identity requires continual overlap of old and new particles. Zimmerman has recently explored what such an assimilation principle might look like if it is to rule out the falling elevator process.³⁰ He believes that it would require firm acceptance of the assumption that all physical objects are ultimately composed of partless particles. However, he argues that such an assumption is inconsistent with discussions of the nature of matter in modern physics,

28. *Ibid.*, 137.

29. David B. Hershenov, “Van Inwagen, Zimmerman and the Materialist Conception of Resurrection,” *Religious Studies* 38 (2002): 451–69.

30. Zimmerman, “Bodily Resurrection,” 45–8.

unsupported by compelling argument, and not required by the Falling Elevator account.

Zimmerman does suggest that there could be a *weak* assimilation principle that does not require this problematic assumption about the nature of matter. The weak assimilation principle would state that a living thing cannot lose all its proper parts at once, and it may turn out to be consistent with the Falling Elevator idea. However, in order to be so, Zimmerman must guarantee that at least one proper part makes it to the next world. Since the only things that can make it to the next world are things that cease to exist at death, Zimmerman must assume that as a matter of necessity, whenever a living thing dies there is at least one proper part that also ceases to exist. If it can also go on to the next world via the Falling Elevator method, then it is guaranteed that the assimilation principle would never be violated. However, Zimmerman is wisely skeptical of the idea that when the life of an organism ends, some proper part of the organism must also cease to exist.³¹

It seems, then, that notions of material constitution and immanent causation fail to provide a way to avoid dualism whilst maintaining the Simple View of personal identity and life after death. Temporal gaps in existence are inconsistent with both immanent causal connection and Christian scripture, and the Falling Elevator Model faces absurdity despite its attempt to dodge the fatal bullet of contingent identity. The model is also uncertain at best if immanent causal continuity cannot be preserved through a complete change of matter. At present no reasonable account of life after death is apparent given Corcoran's anthropological assumptions.

So, can the materialist hope for an alternative account of identity consistent with the Simple View of Butler and Reid? This, too, is unlikely. One alternative is to simply take personal identity over time to be a brute fact. Thus Merricks follows others such as Mavrodes in arguing that neither facts about the physical world and experience nor appeals to the soul can provide an adequate criterion for establishing identity over time, but that identity just is a fundamental feature of the physical world.³² No explanation of identity over temporal gaps is thus required.³³ However, to turn to anticriterialism is to deny the intuition that has driven the entire discussion; that there must be

31. Other recent objections include Olson's concern that "even if your atoms could reliably find the next world, they could not possibly know where and when to reappear so that the result was a living human being and not simply a cloud, widely dispersed across space and time. It might happen, perhaps, but it would be fantastically unlikely" (Olson, "Immanent Causation and Life after Death," in *Personal Identity and Resurrection: How Do We Survive Our Death?*, ed. Georg Gasser (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), chap. 3. However, Zimmerman responds with ways to achieve this restructuring (Zimmerman, "Bodily Resurrection," 48–50).

32. Trenton Merricks, "How to Live Forever without Saving Your Soul," in *Soul, Body, and Survival: Essays in the Metaphysics of Human Persons*, ed. Kevin Corcoran (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 183–200.

33. George Mavrodes, "The Life Everlasting and the Bodily Criterion of Identity," *Nous* 11 (1977): 27–9.

something in virtue of which two persons at different times might be identical. In addition, van Horn shows that Merricks's own view provides only limited support to the Christian given its difficulties in accounting for the incarnation.³⁴

Of course, it is possible that the only explanations remaining would be dualistic. Baker now suggests that there might be an adequate dualist account of personal identity, although she argues that ultimately, souls are ruled out because they are "surds" in nature, failing to fit in with the world as discovered by the natural sciences;³⁵ Corcoran recognizes that dualists have a "much easier time accommodating post-mortem survival";³⁶ Of course, Zimmerman is in fact a dualist, regularly referring to his limited need of his own Falling Elevator story. He writes, "I offer Peter [van Inwagen] this 'just so story,' to do with as he will, with my compliments. I'm glad I'm a dualist with less need of it."³⁷ Given the range of difficulties surveyed for materialist accounts, I conclude by repeating the comment with which Zimmerman began his account of the Falling Elevator Model: "It is not easy to be a materialist and yet believe that there is a way for human beings to survive death."³⁸ It is clear that this is, in fact, an understatement.

34. Luke Van Horn, "Merricks's Soulless Savior," *Faith and Philosophy* 27 (2010): 330–41.

35. Lynne Baker, "Persons and the Metaphysics of Resurrection," in *Personal Identity and Resurrection: How Do We Survive Our Death?*, ed. Georg Gasser (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), chap. 9.

36. Corcoran, *Rethinking Human Nature*, 133. Corcoran goes on to question the relationship between accounts of resurrection and accounts of survival.

37. "Comment on van Inwagen's 'Dualism and Materialism,'" lecture at the University of Notre Dame, November 3, 1994; see Hasker, *The Emergent Self*, 225.

38. Zimmerman, "Materialism and Survival," 194.