

## PHILOSOPHIA CHRISTI

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### *Editor's Introduction*

We have a wonderful string of special issues of *Philosophia Christi* in the editorial pipeline right now. And we are very excited for this first one on neuroscience and the soul to see the light of day. The essays we publish here on this topic are stimulating, erudite, and an honorable step forward in terms of research on an important but often contentious and controversial subject. I couldn't be more grateful to Professor Chad Meister and Charles Taliaferro for their expert guidance and as always to Joe Gorra, our managing editor, for bringing all the people and pieces together for publication. Meister and Taliaferro's introduction to the special issue that follows is itself a fine example in summarization!

Submissions have been arriving for our next special issue on ramified natural theology with a lead article by Richard Swinburne. You can read this in advance, if you'd like, at <http://bit.ly/SwinburneResurrection>. Charles Taliaferro is pitching in again as guest editor for this special issue along with EPS President, Angus Menuge, and assistance from Lydia and Timothy McGrew. The project is shaping up nicely, and we can't wait to see it in print late in 2013.

Speaking of late in 2013, it is not too early to make your plans to attend the annual meeting of the EPS at the Baltimore Hilton on November 19–21. We have invited Professor Swinburne to present our plenary address that will be the highlight of scores of wonderful papers, which Chad Meister and Tim Erdel have helped to faithfully coordinate.

You likely heard by now that our dear friend, mentor, colleague, and brother in Christ, Dallas Willard, passed away recently after a long bout with cancer. We invite you to visit a wonderful tribute and remembrance web page that the EPS has set up at <http://bit.ly/EPSEWillard> to appreciate so much about this dear man who meant so much to the community of Christian philosophers.

And finally, we are continuing our EPS "Christ-Shaped Philosophy" discussion that was stimulated by the Winter 2012 issue of *Philosophia Christi*. The whole enterprise was inspired by Paul Moser's recent work in religious epistemology. Many have jumped in to make comments and participate (Graham Oppy, William Hasker, Angus Menuge, Charles Taliaferro, and many more). Just go to <http://bit.ly/ChristShapedPhilosophyProject> to follow this discussion as it develops each month.

I look forward to seeing you in Baltimore!

Craig J. Hazen  
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## Guest Editors' Introduction

Neuroscience is an interdisciplinary science that includes the collaboration of a number of fields, such as biology, medicine, psychology, and philosophy, to name a few. Something of a revolution occurred when scientists realized that this interdisciplinary approach to brain studies could yield a more adequate understanding of the workings of the brain. Since that revolution began in the 1970s, neuroscience has been rapidly advancing. In fact, the fastest growing association of professional scientists in all of experimental biology is the Society of Neuroscience.<sup>1</sup> As neuroscience has advanced, the general view of the human mind has been increasingly understood to be the functioning of a material system, nothing more. The view that mind or consciousness is something beyond or emergent from the physical processes of the brain and central nervous system is now taken by many in the field to be nothing but a remnant of the antiquated Cartesian ghost in the machine. Concomitant with these scientific developments has been a philosophical naturalism which eschews the reality of entities beyond the physical and if the mental cannot be either identified with or reduced, then it is ripe for elimination in the final, preferred description and explanation of reality. And if the mental is jettisoned, it is hard to see how one might still find a place for a robust view of values, freedom and responsibility, and more.

This special summer issue of *Philosophia Christi* is devoted to neuroscience and the soul. It includes ten articles that bear on current thinking about science and the mind from a diverse group of philosophers. With the generous support of the John Templeton Foundation (JTF), Biola University's Center for Christian Thought has helped to support this publishing opportunity. JTF is highly committed to fostering fruitful exchanges on science and religion. Our hope is that you find these articles engaging and perhaps challenging to your own perspective on the role of science in understanding the mind and the world of which it is a part.

The lead article is by Daniel Robinson. Professor Robinson is aptly suited to write this opening piece, having published widely on consciousness and the mental life, having been the past president of two divisions of the American Psychological Association—the History of Psychology Division and the Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology Division, receiving lifetime achievements in both—and having served as the principal consultant to PBS and the BBC for their award-winning series “The Brain” and “The Mind.” In this article he reflects on some internal threats to scientific progress, including science's attenuated capacity to be self-critical and its potential to over-extend its reach (what does science truly have to say about art, culture, the moral life, the conscious life?). There is also regular criticism by

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1. Mark F. Bear, Barry W. Connors, and Michal A. Paradiso, *Neuroscience: Exploring the Brain*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2006).

many in the scientific community about those who have faith in realities beyond the physical. How ironic, then, that the very practice of science entails faith commitments, such as in the enduring reliability of the laws of nature. He further argues that while the scientific advances regarding the brain are impressive, no equivalent scientific advances have been made with regard to the other dimensions, including the moral and aesthetic. From the vantage point of contemporary naturalism, perhaps even thinking that there should be such advances is a category mistake.

The prevailing philosophical naturalism, with its insistence that the physical world should be understood by the physical sciences and be closed off to anything that is deemed nonphysical, has given rise to deeply antireligious sentiment in both philosophy and the sciences. The next four articles respond to philosophical naturalism. First, William Hasker considers several definitions of naturalism. Given a definition widely held by leading naturalists, he argues that naturalism is unable to account for rationality (which involves drawing conclusions in light of reasons, entailment relations and the like). So long as naturalists affirm or presuppose the normative nature of rationality (and they seem to need to do so insofar as they advance arguments that they believe will make evident the truth of naturalism), they appear to be unable to explain the normativity they require in arguing for their position. Next, E. J. Lowe examines some of the internal inadequacies of philosophical naturalism and argues that theism offers a more plausible account of certain dimensions of the world, in particular of the ontological status of objects of reason. His conclusion also threatens a purely empirical neuroscientific approach to understanding the role of the mental life. In the third relevant contribution, Stewart Goetz tackles the topic of human reason, in this case offering an interpretation of C. S. Lewis's argument from reason as developed in his book *Miracles*. Goetz examines different interpretations of the argument from reason, shows how it reveals a deep problem with naturalism, and concludes that the argument remains timely and worthy of continued serious philosophical attention. Lastly, due to advances in biogenetics and brain research, some neuroscientists and neurophilosophers have envisioned a revolution in the social sciences and ethical theory; namely, that purely naturalistic evolutionary processes are capable of providing a full-orbed explanation of the material universe and of human morality. Daryl Charles challenges this vision, one rooted in what he calls "metaphysical materialism." He also offers some reflections on what is at stake in the debate from a cultural perspective.

Two leading figures in contemporary philosophy of mind and consciousness are John Searle and Daniel Dennett. The next three articles engage their work—the first two with Searle and the third with Dennett. First, Angus Menuge proposes that on Searle's view, reasoning requires free will—a libertarian version of free will which can be (hopefully, for Searle) subsumed within a naturalistic neuroscience. Menuge argues that Searle's view fails

to overcome four central problems and is therefore unable to account for reasoning without appealing to nonphysical realities. In the second article, Eric LaRock argues that Searle's account of mental causation is unwarranted on various grounds, including neuroscientific ones, and that his theory of emergent mental features also fails. With the support of recent work in neuroscience, LaRock proposes an expansion of Searle's ontology of mind to include an emergent subject with causal powers. He highlights the additional explanatory advantages of this view. In the next piece John DePoe critically examines recent arguments offered by Daniel Dennett to support the view that consciousness need not be nonphysical. He utilizes both philosophical arguments and empirical scientific discoveries to support an antiphysicalist position.

J. P. Moreland next addresses forms of physicalism that employ what is called top-down causation. Some physicalists who want to find a role for mental causation contend that when a physical system (an animal with a brain) reaches a certain level of complexity it can have features as a whole (features from or at the top of its formation) that are not deterministically fixed by microfeatures (features from or at the bottom). By their lights, events in the world may be explained by the causal power of a human being as a whole, and one is thereby able to escape the idea that all our activities as a whole being are explained only in terms of the explanatory power of the things that make us up (controlled from below). Moreland argues that there are no clear examples of top-down causation, especially with respect to any events that may shed light on mental causation. He then provides an argument against top-down mental causation, concluding, however, that because mental causation is real, physicalism should be rejected.

In the final article, Anthony Rudd argues that the mind-body problem can be beneficially reconfigured by gleaning insights from the phenomenological tradition. He examines the relation of consciousness to the body from a phenomenological, first-person perspective, introducing a phenomenological account of embodied subjectivity. He goes on to propose how we can recount this first-person experience with a scientific depiction of the human being. He concludes with reflections on whether this notion of subjectivity permits personal disembodiment.

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