

## Surviving resurrection

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**Abstract** In this paper we examine and critique the constitution view of the metaphysics of resurrection developed and defended by Lynne Rudder Baker. Baker identifies three conditions for an adequate metaphysics of resurrection. We argue that one of these, the identity condition, cannot be met on the constitution view given the account of personal identity it assumes. We discuss some problems with the constitution theory of personal identity Baker develops in her book, *Persons and Bodies*. We argue that these problems render the constitution theory of personal identity as stated by Baker untenable. The upshot for the debate over the metaphysics of resurrection is that the constitution view of the metaphysics of resurrection must either be rejected or modified.

**Keywords** Resurrection · Personal identity · Persons · Constitution · Lynne Rudder Baker · Metaphysics

### Introduction

Thanks in no small part to the work of Lynne Rudder Baker, the options in the debate over the metaphysics of resurrection have grown, making more room for versions of materialism about persons. While her theory of the metaphysics of resurrection, like her theory of persons more generally, has many attractive features, it is not obvious

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that, given her constitution view of personal identity as stated, personal identity can be preserved through resurrection. This is the case because, if we focus on the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, there are significant differences between the bodies that constitute persons at the time of death and their glorified bodies when they are resurrected. The upshot of our argument in this paper will be that what type of body constitutes a person at a given time is as important as the features Baker emphasizes if personal identity post-mortem is to be preserved.

### **Prolegomena: Baker on human persons and the metaphysics of resurrection**

Baker's theory of the metaphysics of resurrection is a constitution view.<sup>1</sup> It assumes the truth of a constitution view of persons and personal identity.<sup>2</sup> On a constitution view of human persons, something is a person in virtue of having a first-person perspective (or a capacity for such a perspective); and it is a *human* person in virtue of being constituted by a human organism (body) (Baker 2000, p. 20; 2002, p. 371). How Baker thinks of the first-person perspective and the nature of the constitution relation should be briefly noted before moving on to considering the desiderata enumerated by Baker for a theory of resurrection.

First, the first-person perspective, according to Baker, underlies self-consciousness (Baker 2000, p. 60). First-person phenomena have both weak and strong manifestations; but only beings that exhibit strong first-person phenomena have a first-person perspective (Baker 2000, p. 67). Regarding weak first person phenomena, Baker argues that they “are exhibited by problem-solving beings whose behavior is explained by attitudes understood perspectivally, from their own points of view” (Baker 2000, p. 67). Such phenomena are ubiquitous not just in normal adult humans, but in non-human animals and human infants. “All experience of any sentient being is perspectival, had from its own point of view” (Baker 2000, p. 67). But not everything that exhibits weak first-person phenomena also conceives of itself “in the first person as the subject of those states” (Baker 2000, p. 67).

Strong first-person phenomena are characteristic of persons. Strong first-person phenomena “require that the subject conceptualize the distinction between himself (and everything else) from a third-person point of view and himself from a first-person point of view” (Baker 2000, p. 67). Anyone who has a first-person perspective has a perspective characterized by the ability to “think about oneself as oneself and think about one's thoughts as one's own. In English, the ability to conceive of oneself as oneself is marked grammatically by a sentence with a first-person subject of a psychological or linguistic verb and an embedded first-person reference” (Baker 2001a, p. 161). So, for instance the stance of a younger academic being reviewed for tenure who thinks “I wonder if I will get tenure” is an instance of someone having a first-person perspective towards herself. It is important to note that the first-person perspective

<sup>1</sup> Baker's constitution theory of the metaphysics of resurrection is developed and defended in Baker (1995, 2001b, 2004a, b, 2007).

<sup>2</sup> For representative defenses of Baker's constitution view of persons that are not part of a defense of her theory of resurrection, see Baker (2000, 2001a, 2002, 2008).

requires the ability to think of oneself reflexively in this way, but it does not require that it always be manifested in just this way if it is present. Finally, a person, in virtue of having a first-person perspective, can reflect on and identify her psychological states, e.g., desires, hopes, intentions, beliefs, etc., as her own and either identify *with* them or else reject them and take steps to rid herself of them (Baker 2000, p. 66).

Second, regarding constitution, constitution is not identity. “If  $x$  constitutes  $y$ , then  $x$  has some properties in virtue of constituting  $y$ , and  $y$  has some properties in virtue of being constituted by  $x$ ” (Baker 2001a, p. 164). In the case of human persons, qua persons, human persons have a first-person perspective essentially and, thus, non-derivatively; and the persistence conditions of persons are determined by having this first-person perspective (Baker 2007, p. 339). The persistence conditions of the human organism that constitutes a human person are determined by the properties that make it an organism. There are properties that a human person has derivatively in virtue of being constituted by an organism (properties the organism has non-derivatively). A derivative property is exemplified by something in virtue of being related to something that has it independently of the constitution relation. A nonderivative property is exemplified by something independent of constitution relations. So a human organism could cease to be a human *person* (in the sense of constituting a human person) by ceasing to have a first-person perspective and a person could cease to be a *human* person in virtue of ceasing to be constituted by a human organism. In either case, the organism or the person could cease to exist while the other continues to exist. What is important for Baker’s purpose is that loss of the first-person perspective means that the person ceases to exist.

Regarding the Christian doctrine of resurrection, Baker suggests that there are three features that characterize it—the identity condition, the embodiment condition, and the miracle condition (2007, pp. 339–340). Whether each of these is necessary for an adequate theory of resurrection is not obvious, but they seem representative of the orthodox consensus in Christian theology.

The identity condition is simple: “the very same person who exists on earth is to exist in an afterlife” (2007, p. 339). Some weaker notion of survival is not enough, according to Baker.

The embodiment condition is fairly straightforward. Resurrection requires that a person be embodied after death. In the Christian tradition, such bodies are variously referred to as spiritual, incorruptible, and glorified. We will not attempt to parse what this means here beyond noting that orthodox Christians take resurrected persons to have undergone a fairly radical bodily change. What is doubtful is that persons who are resurrected are any longer *human* organisms. In fact, their status as organisms is dubious.<sup>3</sup>

The miracle condition follows from how the Christian doctrine of post-mortem existence differs from other such doctrines. Life after death is a gift from God (Baker

<sup>3</sup> An upshot of this that Baker notes is the following. Animalism—according to which human persons are essentially human and identical to human animals (see Olson 1997)—as a candidate theory of resurrection faces what appear to be insuperable difficulties (see Van Inwagen 1978 for an animalist account of resurrection). Corcoran’s (2001) constitution view of human persons and the metaphysics of resurrection may face similar problems. This is the case because of his insistence that human *persons* are essentially organisms.

2007, p. 340). This is in contrast with accounts of life after death on which immortality is an essential property of persons. Baker notes that, however much we explain the doctrine of resurrection, there is always some residual mystery left. “The best that metaphysics can do is to show how resurrection is metaphysically possible” (Baker 2007, p. 340). This is an appropriately modest sentiment.

The metaphysical resources of a constitution view of persons better serve Christian theists trying to make sense of the possibility of resurrection, according to Baker (2007, pp. 345–347). We will not rehearse her reasons for the superiority of the constitution view here. What is worth noting is that Baker claims that the relative merits of other theories of persons do not outweigh the overall benefits of adopting a constitution view.

Baker may be right that the constitution view of persons provides the best metaphysics of persons for a theory of resurrection. But the constitution view is not without problems. Specifically, there are problems meeting the identity condition for resurrection. Why this is the case requires that we review the account of personal identity that emerges from Baker’s constitution theory of persons.

In what follows, we will first consider how well her constitution account of personal identity can handle certain types of cases of bodily transfer. Next, we will consider the implications for her account of resurrection. The upshot, we will argue, is that, while the constitution view of persons may provide us with the most viable metaphysics of resurrection, it cannot guarantee that a resurrected person is identical to the person who died with whom she is continuous. A person may survive in some looser, weaker sense. And perhaps this is all we really need for an adequate metaphysics of resurrection. But this will not be a matter we will take up in this essay.

### Constitution and personal identity

The distinctive feature of Baker’s constitution view of personal identity is the continuity of the first-person perspective. She asserts that, “sameness of first-person perspective allows that one could survive a complete change of body, including the brain” (Baker 2000, p. 133). Privileging this first-person perspective has its benefits but the implications of bodily change should be examined more closely, especially if we are interested in the metaphysics of resurrection.

Simply, on Baker’s account, *A* at  $t_1$  and *B* at  $t_2$  are the same person if and only if *A* and *B* have the same first-person perspective. Baker admits that she cannot “give noncircular conditions under which a first-person perspective considered at one time is the same first-person perspective as a first-person perspective at another time,” but she claims that her account “does avoid the difficulties found in other materialist accounts” (2000, p. 132). Baker claims to offer sufficient conditions for the sameness of a *human* person, suggesting that these conditions are more informative than her general criterion for the sameness of a person *simpliciter* (2000, p. 138). Since we are most interested in personal identity over time, we will simply focus on the diachronic condition she offers:

(T) For all objects, *x* and *y* and times  $t$  and  $t'$ , if *x* is a human person at  $t$  and *y* is a human person at  $t'$ , then  $x = y$  if and only if for all human bodies,  $z$ ,

$w$ , necessarily: ( $z$  constitutes  $x$  at  $t$  if and only if  $z$  constitutes  $y$  at  $t$ ) and ( $w$  constitutes  $x$  at  $t'$  if and only if  $w$  constitutes  $y$  at  $t'$ ). (Baker 2000, p. 139)

While not stated in (T), the only criterion Baker offers that can guide us in determining whether or not  $z$  and  $w$  constitute *the same person* at  $t$  and  $t'$ , respectively, is if  $z$  constitutes a person who shares the same first-person perspective at  $t$  with the person constituted by  $w$  at  $t'$ . This suggests that sameness of first-person perspective is as important as the human body criterion for personal identity. This is so because if the person constituted by  $z$  has a different first-person perspective from the person constituted by  $w$ , then they are not the same person. They are different persons because they have different first-person perspectives. It seems safe, then, to treat (T) as offering necessary and jointly sufficient conditions (viz., the first-person perspective and human body criteria) for diachronic personal identity.

If it turns out that the first-person perspective criterion and the human body criterion are not jointly sufficient conditions for personal identity over time, then (T) is untenable. We will argue that, while they may both be necessary, they are not sufficient for personal identity over time. This is the case because someone may satisfy the sameness of first-person perspective criterion at  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ , and be constituted by a human body at  $t_1$  and  $t_2$ , and yet the person at  $t_1$  may fail to be identical to the person at  $t_2$ . We will argue in this section that other considerations need to be brought to bear in making judgments about the persistence of persons through certain types of changes over time. Specifically, we will argue that a more robust conception of sameness of first-person perspective is needed for diachronic personal identity. And since Baker is offering a materialist metaphysics of persons, in cases of body transfer, personal identity may require that the body that constitutes a person at some time  $t_2$  be similar enough to the body that constituted the person at  $t_1$  in order to preserve the more robust sameness of first-person perspective we think is needed for diachronic personal identity. If this is true, what constitutes a person at any time and its similarity to what constituted a person at a time immediately prior means more for diachronic personal identity than Baker's own account of personal identity suggests. If we are right, this will prove to be a problem for Baker's account of the metaphysics of resurrection.

Consider the following bodily transfer scenario:

Case 1: Charles' doctor tells Charles that he is terminally ill. Lucky for him, there is a new procedure whereby all his mental states can be transferred to another donor body. His mental states replace that of the donor and he may live on with this new body. His previous body will be destroyed once his mental states are transferred.<sup>4</sup> Importantly, his first-person perspective will be preserved. Thus, he will identify his previous body as having constituted him prior to the procedure and will regard his new body as constituting him afterwards. He decides to proceed with the experiment finding it to be the best alternative.

<sup>4</sup> We ignore some possible problems about mental to physical causation here. The untenability of downward causation may prove fatal to any such putative case of bodily transfer. But we will not worry about that here.

Considering Baker's constitution account of personal identity, there should be no problem here. Charles has moved from one body to the other. Even better for the case, the first body ceases to exist, extinguishing any overlap problems; a feature that we wish to extend through each of the examples. The case now needs to be manipulated to demonstrate the difficulties that Baker's account of personal identity faces.

Consider a physical abnormality of a very basic kind: full color blindness. One's ability to see in color certainly affects how the world is represented to one and how one synthesizes information. For a fully color blind person there are variations in a gray-black scale. Colors such as red are not part of such a person's experience of the world. If someone were to transfer from a normal body that has properly functioning vision to a body that is color blind, then how that person interacts with and understands the world would have changed. Of course, individuals who are color blind function in ways similar to those able to see the full color scale. But a change in one's vision as drastic as going from seeing the full color spectrum available to persons with normal vision to being color blind will affect how one interacts with one's surroundings.

If something such as color blindness has the ability to change how an individual interacts with and understands the world, the body has some direct affect on aspects of that person's mental states (beyond merely realizing the states in question).<sup>5</sup> Consider the following scenario of body switching.

Case 2: The doctor informs Charles that he is terminally ill. He is told about the body transfer procedure as in Case 1. Charles decides to proceed with the body transfer procedure, finding it to be the best alternative. Unbeknownst to Charles, this donor has full color blindness.

In this case we are to assume that all other relevant aspects of the donor body resemble Charles' physical state prior to the switch with the exception of color blindness. As we noted above, it seems that the condition of color blindness does affect one's ability to interact with and understand the world (especially with respect to processing some new visual inputs). Charles was once able to see the world in color and now he may no longer do so. It seems that there is a sharp distinction in the way Charles not only interacts with the world but how those interactions are taken in and understood from the first-person perspective ("I wish I could still experience red"<sup>6</sup>). But the change in body does not seem to affect the *sameness* of Charles' first-person perspective and does not seem to affect his identity through the procedure. It is appropriate to conclude that the physical source for significantly altering one's mental life, including aspects of one's first-personal perspective, needs to be of a very particular variety if diachronic personal identity is to be jeopardized.

<sup>5</sup> Of course, someone who would go from having normal vision to being color-blind may remember colors. But when she encounters new objects how she processes the new information will be different. Most importantly, absent being told the color of something, some information about the color of an object will not be accessible to her. She cannot simply look at a painting and be able to discern some differences in color.

<sup>6</sup> Again, the agent may remember what red is like. But this is not the same thing as experiencing red. Becoming color blind is perhaps like what someone may experience who lived in a distant city earlier in her life but can never return to it. She can no longer experience the city in the way she did when she visited it. She may remember it, but this is different from having a direct experience of it once again.

The variety of physical alteration necessary to undermine diachronic personal identity needs to be the type of physical condition that severely alters one's mental states including certain aspects of one's first-person perspective without resulting in a *loss* of first-person perspective. This kind of change needs to be dramatic, requiring a significant difference in the two bodies between which mental states are transferred. Consider the following.

Case 3: The doctor informs Charles that he is terminally ill. As in Cases 1 and 2, he is told about the body transfer procedure. He decides to proceed with the procedure finding it to be the best alternative. Unbeknownst to Charles, the donor was diagnosed with autism.

Case 3 may prove troublesome for the constitution view of diachronic personal identity.

As a condition that one is diagnosed with at an early age, an individual with autism must learn to interact with the world in a dramatically different fashion from non-autistic persons. Not having been autistic before the transfer, and undergoing bodily transfer to an autistic body, Charles' new body puts some rather serious limitations on Charles' mental life, including aspects of his first-person perspective.

Depending upon the severity of his autism, for the autistic donor, social interaction takes the shape of unresponsiveness and introversion.<sup>7</sup> In lower functioning autistic persons, speech is difficult, resulting in repetition and poor vocalization of sounds and is often disconnected with the desired auditory behavior (Sigelman and Rider 2006, p. 460). Even if the donor is a high-functioning autistic adult who does not suffer from mechanical and procedural speech deficits, he may have difficulties with linguistic comprehension and interpretation, along with other difficulties. This may be the case for the high-functioning autistic adult despite his being able to linguistically navigate his way around the world better than those with more severe forms of autism (Minschew et al. 1995, pp. 255–261). If the donor has a more severe variety of autism, the donor's higher-order capacities associated with properly functioning frontal lobe regions, such as his capacity for planning future and immediate activities, acquiring and modulating social rules, inhibition, and his working memory may function similarly to what is evinced in persons who have suffered from frontal lobe damage (Russo et al. 2007; see also Damasio and Maurer 1978). A low-functioning donor with autism may be prone to "repetitive stereotypic movements, such as rocking, hand-flapping, and head banging" (Grossberg and Seidman 2006, p. 485). Finally, even if the donor has high-functioning autism, his capacity for empathy will be lower than normal, affecting his ability to interact with others and thus navigate his way in the world (Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright 2004).

Suppose that Charles' donor is a relatively high-functioning autistic person. If Charles' mental states were transferred to this donor, Charles would now interact with the world in a very different fashion. For the sake of discussion, we may assume that Charles was a forty-five year old normal adult prior to the time of body transfer.

<sup>7</sup> It is worth noting that low-functioning autistic persons may lack a first-person perspective as characterized by Baker. See McGeer (2004), for discussion and critique of recent research that suggests that perhaps not all autistic persons have a first-person perspective.

This means that the forty-five years of Charles' life prior to body transfer have been experienced as constituted by a human body without autism. What he has learned and come to understand has been absent of this restriction. Importantly, a brain not affected by autism has realized his first-person perspective. The body transfer procedure deposits all of Charles' mental states into the donor without any adjustment to these mental states to make the transition easier. The upshot is that Charles' forty-five year old developed social personality is no longer exhibited. He no longer has the neural architecture necessary to realize his pre-transfer personality.

For the sake of argument, we agree with Baker that a body must constitute Charles if he is to continue to exist post-procedure, and it must be a human body if he is to continue as a *human* person. Constitution by a human body is a necessary condition for personal identity in cases of the identity of human persons over time. Moreover, we are willing to grant that sameness of first-person perspective (as characterized by Baker) is necessary for personal identity over time. But, as we claimed above, while both criteria are necessary conditions, they are not jointly sufficient for personal identity in the case of human persons.

If case 3 were to be played out in the way suggested, it appears that while there may be sameness of first-person perspective through the bodily transfer in the sense required by Baker, this sameness of first-person perspective is not enough for personal identity. The condition of the body that constitutes a human person at a given time may dramatically affect how an individual identifies himself. This suggests that we need something more than the addition of the bodily criterion for the identity of human persons over time as stated by Baker. Let us explain.

In case three, there are differences between certain aspects of the first-person perspective of Charles with autism and Charles without autism. While Charles through the transfer would continue to have a first-person perspective as characterized by Baker, Charles has undergone a change that has implications for whether he can accurately be described as identical to the person who decided to undergo a procedure. Charles post-operation knows he is Charles and would think of himself in the way indicative of sameness of first-person perspective as characterized by Baker both before and after the procedure. However, there are important differences between pre-procedure Charles and post-procedure Charles, some of which affect aspects of his first-person perspective without eliminating it, preserving what Baker seems to think is important for sameness of first-person perspective.

A condition such as autism would alter aspects of Charles' point of view with respect to the world and himself, changing Charles by changing how he relates to others and himself. Of course, if all that is necessary for sameness of first-person perspective is that Charles pre-transfer and post-transfer have a first-person perspective (continuing to identify himself as the subject of sentences in the first-person that have embedded first-person references), then, assuming that sameness of first-person perspective and being constituted by a human body are sufficient for personal identity, Charles *is* the same person before and after the procedure. The first-person perspective as characterized by Baker seems preserved. Charles still claims that he is Charles after the events of case 3 and thinks and speaks of himself in the way requisite for sameness of first-person perspective. However, there is now a qualitative difference between Charles before and after the experiment due to the type of body that constitutes him.

And this affects some aspects of his first-person perspective, even if it is the same first-person perspective in the sense specified by Baker.

Consider the following example. Suppose that prior to the procedure Charles is moved by empathy to help those less fortunate than himself. He does not help them out of an abstract commitment to any well-articulated moral principles. He finds himself moved by a sense of shared suffering with the dispossessed. Moreover, he cares deeply about the plight of such persons. Suppose Charles thought to himself immediately before the procedure, “I hope I will be well enough to volunteer at the Oxfam offices next Friday after the procedure.” Motivated by his empathic concern, Charles wholeheartedly identifies with his desire to alleviate the suffering of others prior to bodily transfer. Immediately after the procedure of case 3, Charles may remember his earlier plan to volunteer at Oxfam, perhaps even recalling that he identified with his earlier desire to alleviate suffering and that he cared about the state of the dispossessed. But he cannot remember why he would be motivated to engage in such activities and why he would care about such persons. He wonders why he had such a desire, and why he identified with such a desire to begin with. He may think to himself, “I cannot understand why I would have been moved to volunteer at Oxfam. I have no moral commitments that demand such behavior. What on Earth could have motivated me?”<sup>8</sup> Charles is genuinely puzzled post-transfer by his earlier commitments. In such a case, it seems that something is lost in Charles’ first-person perspective before and after body-transfer. Specifically, he no longer identifies *with* many past feelings and attitudes he had identified with immediately before the procedure that were expressions of his true self prior to the procedure. In fact, he finds that he simply *cannot* identify with these attitudes and feelings. In virtue of having a first-person perspective he was able to and did so identify with certain attitudes and emotions pre-procedure. However, post-procedure, Charles has the same first-person perspective he had immediately prior to the procedure in Baker’s rather anemic sense of having such a perspective. But something has changed, and it is not the sameness of first-person perspective in Baker’s sense.

What is missing is a certain variety of continuity of first-person perspective over time. Specifically, aspects of Charles’ mental life, particularly what he cares about, where this may include things he values and which he previously identified with, are radically discontinuous. Such an attitude of caring should not be confused with merely liking or wanting something. Rather, a person who cares about something is, Harry Frankfurt notes, “invested in it.” “He *identifies* himself with what he cares about in the sense that he makes himself vulnerable to losses and susceptible to benefits depending upon whether what he cares about is diminished or enhanced” (Frankfurt 1988, p. 83). Caring about something is more stable and prospective than immediate wants and likes. Such an attitude affects how one thinks of oneself in the future and ties together one’s personal narrative in ways that less stable dispositions do not.

In the case of Charles, his first-person perspective post-procedure vis-à-vis what he cared about pre-procedure has changed significantly. Call this aspect of the continuity

<sup>8</sup> We are not suggesting that autistic persons are amoralists. But there is a low-functioning capacity for empathy in autistic persons or a complete lack of any such capacity depending upon the severity of the autism. See Kennett (2002) for a discussion of the affects of autism on empathy and moral agency.

of his first-person perspective “continuity of care” (henceforth, “C-continuity”).<sup>9</sup> The following is a schematized necessary condition for such continuity.

(C) A person  $S'$  at  $t'$  is C-continuous with someone  $S$  at some time  $t$  immediately before  $t'$  only if the set of things for which  $S$  cares about at  $t$  resembles the set of things for which  $S'$  cares about at  $t'$ .<sup>10</sup>

A full-blown account and defense of the importance of C-continuity goes well beyond the scope of this essay. But suffice it to say, that a loss of C-continuity threatens diachronic personal identity.

How does C-continuity relate to the body that constitutes a person at a time? If we assume that the mental states of a person are realized by neural states of the body (specifically, the brain) that constitutes the person at a time, then the C-continuity of any agent’s first-person perspective is inextricably linked to what sort of human body constitutes him at any time. A person can only continue to care about what he cared about at some earlier time if the body that realizes his mental life at that time is capable of realizing the same set of attitudes (or a sufficiently similar set of attitudes) that constitute what the agent cared about.

Returning to the case of Charles, if we suppose, given Charles’ post-procedure condition (specifically, facts about his condition due to the body that constitutes him post-procedure), that there is a lack of C-continuity with respect to his first-person perspective, then it seems that the sense in which Charles’ immediate post-procedure first-person perspective is continuous with the pre-procedure first-person perspective of Charles is quite thin. And the thinness of first-person perspective is attributable to the body that constitutes Charles post-procedure. Aspects of Charles’ first-person perspective (specifically, what he cares about) are discontinuous before and after the procedure because the body that constitutes him post-procedure is incapable of realizing those aforementioned aspects of Charles that he exemplified pre-procedure. Because of this, it stretches credulity to suggest that there is any *robust* sense in which there is continuity between the pre-procedure and post-procedure first-person perspective of Charles. So while Charles may continue to identify himself as the subject of sentences in the first-person that have embedded first-person references, thus exemplifying continuity of first-person perspective in Baker’s thin sense, he no longer identifies himself *with* the cares and concerns of the pre-procedure Charles.<sup>11</sup> And it strikes us as inadequate

<sup>9</sup> See also Frankfurt (1999). While he does not think personal identity is as important as some think, Velleman (1996) offers some provocative remarks that echo some of what we are suggesting here. He writes that, “To wonder how much of the future I can anticipate experiencing is just to wonder how far in to the future there will be experiences that I am now in a position to prefigure first-personally.... The future ‘me’ whose existence matters here is picked out precisely by his owning a point of view into which I am attempting to project my representations of the future, just as a past ‘me’ can be picked out by his having owned the point of view from which I have recovered representations of the past” (p. 68).

<sup>10</sup> Of course what it means for the set of things for which one cares at  $t$  to resemble the set of things for which one cares at  $t'$  is a vague matter. But we will proceed as if we have a general idea of what constitutes an instance of one set of concerns to resemble another set. Minimally, the majority of things for which the person cares about in each set should be the same. Of course, this is still vague.

<sup>11</sup> To use Velleman (1996) language, Charles pre-procedure does not share the same point of view as Charles post-procedure.

to simply point to the sameness of first-person perspective if sameness does not include a more robust notion of continuity that includes C-continuity.

To help underscore this last point, suppose we shift to examine these circumstances from a third-person perspective, specifically, from the perspective of Charles' family and friends. Let us assume that during this procedure all of Charles' family members have gathered in his support. It is not obvious that they would unhesitatingly regard the pre-procedure Charles as clearly identical to the post-procedure Charles. The guy who walked into the room and who is now walking out at least exhibits social manifestations of a condition change. To Baker's point, yes we have a person who says that he is Charles. He may recall being hungry before the procedure but is now constituted by a body that has recently been fed and thinks, "I do not think I am hungry now." There was no lapse in self-identification in the minimal, thin sense specified by Baker's sameness of first-person perspective criterion. However, the sameness of first-person perspective and human body conditions she offers are not strong enough to account for the psychological effects of the kind of deep set physical condition described that affects how Charles relates to others. Charles' character has changed in important ways. What he cares about, his morally significant impulses, and his capacity for the kind of social interaction that stem from his values that he had prior to the procedure have altered significantly. They have changed enough to make his friends and family question whether they are engaging with the same person who walked into the operating room to undergo the procedure.

The defender of Baker's account of diachronic personal identity may reply to the foregoing as follows.<sup>12</sup> "You noted above, when explaining Baker's account of first-person phenomena that, 'a person, in virtue of having a first-person perspective, can reflect on and identify her psychological states, e.g., desires, hopes, intentions, beliefs, etc., as her own and either identify *with* them or else reject them and take steps to rid herself of them'. When you discuss C-continuity, you mention that persons identify with what they care about and you suggest that a breakdown of C-continuity threatens diachronic personal identity. If this is right, and identification with attitudes is one aspect of first-person phenomena, Baker can simply accommodate what you say about a more robust conception of the first-person perspective without doing any harm to her own views."

This is not obviously true. For Baker, the first-person perspective *enables* one to identify with attitudes and care about things in the way that is characteristic of entities that are C-continuous with each other. But it is not part of the first-person perspective itself (see Baker 2000, p. 15, note 29). In other words, the first-person perspective is *merely* an ability concept for Baker. For Baker, continuity of the first-person perspective is more about the continuity of the ability and *not* the first-personal intentional objects of the attitudes of persons with the ability. We are suggesting that the more robust sense of the continuity of first-person perspective needed for diachronic personal identity includes *more* than just the ability in question. And what constitutes a person at a time will affect whether or not such continuity obtains or not. This is why

<sup>12</sup> A referee for this journal raised this sort of objection in comments on an earlier version of this paper.

the type of body that constitutes a person at a time matters for diachronic personal identity.

Defenders of Baker's constitution view may note that Baker can simply admit that severe enough bodily discontinuity will affect both the first-person perspective as she characterizes it and even C-continuity. In such cases, condition (T) does not fail to provide satisfactory criteria for diachronic personal identity. Rather, (T) simply cannot be satisfied (the case of transfer to a very low-functioning autistic body from a normal body may be such a case). Baker can "admit that there are some limits to the degree of bodily dissimilarity beyond which the transfer of a first-person perspective would be impossible." Moreover, Baker could perhaps absorb the features of the more robust account of the first-person perspective that we defend here into her own account of personal identity.<sup>13</sup>

This sort of reply concedes that the right sort of body needs to constitute someone in order for (T) to be satisfied. To the extent that it is a concession, this is a small victory for us. As a materialist about persons, Baker holds that the mental life of someone depends upon the body that constitutes that person at a time. So she should recognize that the right sort of body must constitute someone in order for (T) to be satisfied. Such a concession-*cum*-clarification does not weaken our argument. The defender of Baker's views has the onus of showing that the sort of case we have sketched is either a case where (T) fails to be satisfied or that it is a case where (T) is satisfied, but that the more robust conception of a first-person perspective (that includes C-continuity as a component) is not necessary for diachronic personal identity. In either case, a dialectic has emerged and our interlocutor (whether it is Baker or simply a defender of her view) must accept and satisfy her burden in the debate. Simply being told that Baker can absorb some of the claims about bodily discontinuity that we are making into her account is not enough to show that the sort of case we have focused on is not a problem for Baker's account. And it does not show that we are mistaken in contending that satisfying (T) is not enough for diachronic personal identity. So such a reply does little to advance the dialectic.

If we are right, Baker has given necessary conditions for personal identity but not the sufficient condition desired. While the thin ability-conception of the first person perspective is avoiding some traps, the type of significant change in bodily conditions that affect other aspects of a person's first-person perspective such as we get in case 3 needs to be accounted for. What case 3 highlights is that a thick conception of sameness of first-person perspective that includes C-continuity as a component seems necessary for personal identity. And attending such a thick first-person perspective will be features of an agent's character and capacity for certain types of social relations. These seem no less important than Baker's thin ability-notion of a first-person perspective.<sup>14</sup> Whether they are all proper parts of a thick conception of sameness

<sup>13</sup> This objection actually summarizes two objections offered by an anonymous referee for this journal (whom we quote) and another similar response offered by a referee on an earlier draft of this paper.

<sup>14</sup> Murphy (2006, pp. 137–141) emphasizes the need for stability of character along with an emphasis upon the social dimension of personal identity in her own account of personal identity and resurrection. Baker seems aware of the importance of the social in the metaphysics of persons. For instance, she notes that, "the fact that the first person perspective is relational in that it would be impossible for a being truly alone in the universe to have a first person-perspective" (2000, pp. 69–70).

of first-person perspective is a matter we will not take up here.<sup>15</sup> In any case, what is evident is that if we assume any version of materialism, then *the relevant properties mentioned are properties a person derives from the body to which she bears the constitution relation*. And the absence or presence of the aforementioned properties affect aspects of the person qua person's capacity for a first-person perspective (characterized in more robust terms than Baker offers)—a putatively non-derived property of persons, continuity of which is sufficient for personal identity, according to Baker. We will here avoid discussing any problems this could pose for a constitution view of the metaphysics of *persons*. What should be clear by now is that it strains credulity to ignore sufficient similarity of body as a criterion for *personal identity* given its implications for the persistence of human persons through significant changes. It may be argued that if we have sameness of first-person perspective, then we will have sufficient similarity between bodies in a transfer case. But as we can see, only a rather thin sense of sameness of first-person perspective can be preserved across a transfer to a radically different body. There are aspects of an agent's abilities and character that seem to constitute a more robust, more satisfying sense of 'continuity of first-person perspective' that needs to be preserved for personal identity. This richer conception of continuity of first-person perspective requires that the body that constitutes an agent at  $t_2$  be sufficiently similar to the body that constitutes her at  $t_1$  for personal identity to be preserved.

If the foregoing is correct, (T) does not provide us with an adequate account of diachronic identity of human persons. We are left with the conditions of sameness of first-person perspective and sameness of body as offering merely necessary conditions for identity, rather than necessary *and* jointly sufficient conditions.

## Resurrection and personal identity

What we will show in this section is that if we accept Baker's constitution view of personal identity, then the identity condition for resurrection is incompatible with the embodiment and miracle conditions. So if we have shown that certain types of body transfer cases are problematic for a constitution view of personal identity, such as Baker's, then this does not bode well for the tenability of her constitution view of resurrection. While persons or something about a person may survive resurrection in some way, the process is not identity preserving.

Consider the following cases.

Case 4: Maria is a normal adult human person before dying at  $t_1$ . She is resurrected at some later time,  $t_2$ , being constituted by a glorified body.

Case 5: Aiko is a moderately-functioning autistic adult human person prior to dying at  $t_1$ . She is resurrected at some later time,  $t_2$ , being constituted by a glorified body.

<sup>15</sup> Baker and those sympathetic to her constitution theory of personal identity may worry that we are endorsing a psychological continuity theory of personal identity. We are not. We are claiming that bodily considerations need to be accounted for because of how they affect a person's first-person perspective, character, etc.

In both cases, there is a radical post-mortem transformation that each agent undergoes when resurrected.

Recall the embodiment condition for resurrection articulated by Baker. Simply, persons must be embodied after resurrection. But what is important for our purposes is what type of body persons must have post-resurrection. In the Christian tradition, the body is, as mentioned in cases 4 and 5 and in section one of this paper, a glorified body. According to Christian orthodoxy, resurrected persons, as we noted above, have undergone a fairly radical bodily change. As we noted above and as Baker also notes, the status of resurrected persons as *human* organisms is dubious.<sup>16</sup> They are no longer subject to the various limitations that characterize humans. The Christian scriptural tradition, while not altogether clear on the nature of resurrected persons, does make it clear that resurrected persons are quite different from persons pre-resurrection.<sup>17</sup> The transformation is miraculous, as Baker notes.

Return to cases 4 and 5. In case 4, Maria's transformation would be significant. If we assume, as many Protestant Christians do, that Maria would bypass purgatory and would not be in need of any period of developing a character fit for communion with God in heaven, then Maria's transformation would be radical, indeed. Suppose that Maria was on the verge of a moral lapse prior to dying. She was deliberating about whether to have an affair with her brother-in-law, Boris. Being dissatisfied with the current state of her own marriage, she has found the company of Boris preferable to that of her spouse. Suppose further that Maria formed the future-directed intention to take steps to commence an affair with Boris. Maria dies before she can execute her intention, however. While crossing a street on her way to meet Boris at a café, she is struck by a car and dies. Prior to being struck she was thinking, "I hope that I can make it to the café to meet Boris on time." Post-resurrection, she may have many thoughts about the change she has undergone and her new environment. But it seems safe to assume that she no longer has the intention to cheat on her spouse. Moreover, if she is aware of her pre-mortem state of mind, she may think, "I cannot believe I was planning on cheating on my spouse." Given her current moral character, including what she now cares about, which is worlds-apart from her pre-resurrection moral character, she is astonished that she could have ever have formed such an intention.

If we assume that such a radical transformation has occurred, it is not obvious that Maria at  $t_1$  is identical to Maria at  $t_2$ . Maria does not identify with the attitudes and emotions of the earlier person—they are not C-continuous. The nature of the change, being an instant transformation, is not identity preserving. If we are correct about the implications of the case of Charles for Baker's view of personal identity, then even if there is sameness of first-person perspective in Baker's thin sense and if we were to suppose *per impossibile*, that Maria's body is a glorified *human* body, Maria is not the

<sup>16</sup> That resurrected persons are not *human* persons should be a source of some concern at this point. If (T) does not provide a sufficient condition for diachronic personal identity of human persons, matters are worse if we switch to a case of personal identity that involves a change in the person from being constituted by a human organism to being constituted by something non-human.

<sup>17</sup> See 1 Corinthians 15:40–56 for St. Paul's account of the contrast between persons pre-resurrection and post-resurrection. In the Gospels, the post-resurrection Jesus has evidently undergone a radical transformation. See Luke 24:28–53 and John 20 and 21 offer accounts of how Jesus had changed after his being resurrected.

same person. At  $t_2$ , immediately after resurrection, she hardly recognizes the person who died at  $t_1$  as being continuous with her, much less identical to her. So if we assume the constitution view of the resurrection, assuming as it does a constitution view of personal identity, then the identity condition for resurrection cannot be met.<sup>18</sup>

Suppose we are wrong. In case 4, Maria perseveres through the change of resurrection such that her case meets the identity condition, Maria at  $t_1$ , immediately before death, is identical to Maria at  $t_2$ , immediately after resurrection. Does this mean the identity condition for resurrection can be met on the constitution view of the metaphysics of resurrection? A negative answer is suggested by evaluating case 5.

If we assume that, in case 3, Charles before body-transfer is not identical to Charles post-transfer, then it should be obvious that, in case 5, the pre-resurrection Aiko, is not identical with the post-resurrection person that goes by the same name. While Aiko was a moderately-functioning autistic person before resurrection, the change that would occur in being resurrected to a glorified state would be more radical than what is experienced by Maria. The change she would undergo in her emotional life alone would affect aspects of her character that would affect her first-person perspective immediately after resurrection in profound ways. While she would meet Baker's sameness of first-person perspective criterion for personal identity, the change would affect how she now views herself and how she thinks of the pre-resurrection individual with whom she is continuous. The change would be far more radical than what occurred when Charles underwent his procedure. It is difficult to imagine that the resurrected Aiko is *identical* to the autistic Aiko who died. If post-transfer Charles is not identical to pre-transfer Charles, then post-resurrection Aiko is not identical to pre-resurrection Aiko.<sup>19</sup>

In the cases of Maria and Aiko, it does not seem that the process of resurrection is identity preserving for the same reasons that Charles' body transfer did not preserve the identity of Charles before the procedure with Charles after the procedure. In fact, if we assume that resurrected persons are no longer constituted by human bodies things are worse. The bodies are not sufficiently similar to preserve some of the characteristics necessary for diachronic personal identity. In cases 3–5, there certainly is a weak continuity between the persons before and after the changes that occur. And there may even be a sense in which the persons survive. But it is not obvious that personal identity is maintained through the changes. Baker has not provided a sufficient condition for personal identity and, as a result, her constitution view of personal identity does

<sup>18</sup> Christians who accept the doctrine of purgatory may not have this problem. They can allow that persons post-resurrection are better equipped to deal with moral decisions and must now cultivate a character fit for communion with God. Such persons may still be C-continuous with the pre-resurrections selves. The abruptness of the change that seems to do some violence to the personal identity of Maria through the resurrection would not obviously obtain on such a view.

<sup>19</sup> A referee for this journal suggested that resurrection might allow for the realization of a fuller personal life that was Aiko's all along. But we have no reason to think this is the case. Given the sort of body that constitutes her prior to resurrection, there is nothing about Aiko that affords her the ability to have such a life. She lacks the sort of body that can realize a fuller personal life. She lacks any properties altogether that will make such a life possible prior to resurrection. Therefore, such a claim strikes us as hollow absent any further argument in support of it.

not provide the resources needed for her theory of resurrection to meet the identity condition for resurrection.<sup>20</sup>

## Conclusion

Baker's constitution view of the metaphysics of resurrection has many virtues. But as it is stated, it cannot meet the identity condition for resurrection. Christian materialists do not have to become animalists, however. There may be other options. But we cannot consider any alternative proposals here. But perhaps we should simply endorse a weaker notion of survival and give up on the identity condition for resurrection altogether.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> A referee for this journal suggested that these cases do not provide a severe problem for Baker's account that she cannot somehow account for within the framework of her theory. But absent argument, we have no reason to think this is correct. We have offered reasons for thinking that Baker's account is in need of repair if it is to provide a viable account of personal identity through resurrection. The burden in the debate is now on Baker and those who support her views to show that these cases are not a problem.

<sup>21</sup> Compare the stronger sentiments expressed by Parfit (1971, p. 4): "Certain important questions presuppose a question about personal identity. But they can be freed of this presupposition. And when they are, the question about identity has no importance." We have proceeded under the assumption that such questions are important. But we are not wholly unsympathetic to the sentiments expressed by Parfit.

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