

S&CB Editorial

This issue of S&CB contains three papers that focus our attention on the ultimate questions of ‘who am I?’ and ‘what will I become?’ The first, by David Muthukumar tackles questions of Cartesian dualism. Are human beings souls with disposable bodies or merely physical bodies with no souls? Many Christians assume the former, that we are embodied souls that inhabit material bodies that are of no ultimate significance. Contrast this with the materialist view that we are nothing more than our physical bodies, and are merely the sum of a vast and complex assemblies of neurons that define every aspect of our conscious selves? David Muthukumar uses Christ’s resurrection, to argue that our physical bodies are of major significance and, by engaging with cognitive neuroscience and the phenomenon of consciousness constructs an embodied and socially embedded identity of ‘human self’.

In two papers Andrew Sloane addresses the philosophical, scientific and pastoral questions concerning what happens when our mental faculties fail, in the form of Alzheimer’s disease. This is an ever-growing issue in society and one that will probably affect each one of us in one way or another as we watch dear friends and relatives succumb to this condition. This state can be as painful and confusing for the observer, as it is for the sufferer, who may not be aware of the depth of their condition. I commend both these articles to you. The first paper focuses on questions relating to memory and identity. What happens to us, to our identity, when memory, the ability to remember the stories we use to define ourselves, fades? In the second, Andrew treats dementia as example of cosmic entropic processes that impinge on human neural systems. He describes space, time and matter in a way that gives a meaningful resurrection hope for people with dementia

The fourth paper is a full response from Denis Lamoureux to an article that we published in a previous edition of S&CB. I am grateful for this opportunity to publish this response. This exchange demonstrates that we are not afraid to consider opinions on which Christians disagree and to engage in respectful dialogue. I look forward to publishing other thoughtful dialogues and comments on articles published in S&CB, as we seek to be faithful to scripture and to science.

We are sorry to hear of the death of two members of the S&CB Editorial Board.

Professor Derek Burke, biochemist and Vice Chancellor of the University of East Anglia from 1987-1995, died on 15 March 2019, aged 89. The University’s obituary noted that he was “a committed Christian interested in ethical issues, a member of the Board of Social Responsibility of the Church of England, chaired a working party on the social and ethical issues of cyberspace and became a

member of the Archbishops' Medical Ethics Advisory Group." Derek was CiS President from 1999 to 2001 and CiS's tribute to him is published at <http://www.cis.org.uk/tribute-professor-derek-burke/>

Martin Bott, Professor in the Department of Earth Sciences in Durham until his retirement in 1988, died on 20 October 2018 aged 92. His department's obituary (<https://www.dur.ac.uk/earth.sciences/news/?id=36197&itemno=36197>) noted that "Martin was a committed Christian, which was not a challenge to his science, rather he sought to explain how Christianity and Science can be complementary. He undertook many speaking engagements within the University and city and was on the Editorial Board of Christians in Science." We give thanks for both their lives and their service to Christians in Science.

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