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Editor's Introduction

You may be tempted not to renew your subscription or membership to *Philosophia Christi* after seeing this issue. It is so packed with wonderful ideas by leading thinkers that it would be easy for one to conclude that this issue truly is the be-all and end-all of philosophy journal publishing. In Anselmian terms, you might be concluding that this journal issue is “than which no greater can be conceived.” By analogy it reminds me of my son who recently gave a toast at his brother’s wedding. He lifted his glass and said of his new sister-in-law that she may “never look better than she does right now.”

If these kinds of feelings are washing over you, then you need to step back, take a deep breath, and let your better than average rational faculties kick in and take over. Although the odds of a better issue ever appearing are slightly greater than the probabilistic resources in the universe as we currently understand it, we must cling to the sliver of hope that there may very well be a multiverse of publishing operations that we know not of.

In case you haven’t guessed, I think it’s a fine issue—and a big one too!

But in all seriousness there are some people I need to thank for coordinating our special symposia in these pages. First, we’d like to thank Angus Menuge and Jonathan Loose for riding herd and editing the wonderful discussion on dualism and physicalism. In addition (as you will see in the announcement adjacent to the first page of the introduction to the symposium in these pages), you can watch video interviews with many of our authors on the topics they address. When they are available a link will be posted at our website, www.epsociety.org.

Second, we need to offer a word of thanks to Chad Bogosian and Paul Copan for bringing together a very stimulating interchange on the topic of the epistemic significance of religious disagreement. In addition we need to offer a special word of thanks to Betty Talbert and Gary Hartenburg because any time we get an issue this size coming out, it is a significant amount of extra work for these two wonderful servants of the Society.

Third, we need to properly thank Chad Meister and Tim Erdel for their outstanding labor as our book review editors over the last decade. This also gives me the opportunity to solicit nominations for a new book review editor or two. If you or someone you know could do a really good job guiding the book review feature of our publication, we’d love to hear about it.

See you all in Denver in November.

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Introduction to Symposium on Dualism and Physicalism

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A Sea-Change in the Philosophy of Mind

In the second volume of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, Treebeard says that he had not seen his fellow Ents (sentient tree-herders) "roused like this for many an age."¹ To the astonishment of Saruman—Tolkien's representative of modern, scientific materialism—the long-dormant Ents overwhelm his seemingly invincible stronghold. This dramatic turn of events finds a partial parallel in the resurgence of substance dualism and the waning of materialism in the philosophy of mind. Materialist anthropology has not (so far) been routed, and continues to have many able defenders. But four remarkable trends suggest that the days of materialist anthropology may be numbered.

First, on the physicalist side, there has been a dizzying proliferation of theories, but a pattern of persistent failure. The failures do not depend on the details of specific formulations, but on a massive explanatory gap between

ABSTRACT: Routinely dismissed as a defeated position, substance dualism has seen a resurgence. This is partly due to a persistent failure of reductive physicalism to capture mental phenomena and to the instability of nonreductive alternatives. But it is also due to the return of the subject to center stage in the philosophy of mind and to the rich diversity of historical and contemporary theories of the soul. It is therefore time for a serious reevaluation of the merits of substance dualism by both dualists and their physicalist rivals, hence this symposium and the related book, *The Blackwell Companion to Substance Dualism*.

1. J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Lord of the Rings*, 50th anniversary one-volume ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004), 485.

what physicalist theories can in principle accommodate and the type of phenomena that characterize the mind. Strict (eliminative or reductive) forms of physicalism fail to do justice to subjective experiences (qualia), the unity of consciousness, intentionality, rationality, and free will. Thus, a quarter of a century ago, John Searle lamented:

The most striking feature is how much of mainstream philosophy of mind of the past fifty years seems obviously false. I believe there is no other area of contemporary analytic philosophy where so much is said that is so implausible. . . . In the philosophy of mind, obvious facts about the mental, such as that we all really do have subjective conscious mental states and that they are not eliminable in favor of anything else, are routinely denied by many, perhaps most, of the advanced thinkers in the subject.²

Second, in response to this crisis, there has been a rise in less austere, nonreductive forms of physicalism, a halfway house between strict physicalism and substance dualism. Many in this camp hope to maintain their physicalist credentials by insisting that all aspects of our mental life are determined by (supervene on) states of the brain, while accommodating the recalcitrant phenomena by allowing them as irreducible mental properties. For example, Terence Horgan, John Searle, and Nancey Murphy have all defended some version of nonreductive physicalism (NRP) in this sense.³ There is some tension here though, because many who are attracted to NRP would like to claim that the mental properties bring new powers into the world, perhaps supporting downward causation and even libertarian free will. However, these ambitious claims (arguably more at home with classical emergence theories, like that of C. D. Broad) seem to conflict with physicalism.⁴ For, as Jaegwon Kim has repeatedly argued, any consistent form of physicalism must affirm the causal closure of the physical, and if supervening mental properties are entirely determined by their physical bases, then distinctively mental causation is excluded.⁵

This puts physicalists in an uncomfortable position. It seems that either they must reluctantly deny that mental properties bring any new powers into the world—and thus they cannot really account for rationality and intentionality *in action*—or they must heroically affirm that they do—and thus they

2. John Searle, *The Rediscovery of Mind* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 3.

3. Terence Horgan, "From Supervenience to Superdupervenience: Meeting the Demands of a Material World," *Mind* 102 (1993): 555–86; John Searle, *The Rediscovery of Mind and Rationality in Action* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001); Nancey Murphy, *Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies?* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

4. C. D. Broad, *The Mind and Its Place in Nature* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1923).

5. Jaegwon Kim, *Mind in a Physical World: An Essay on the Mind-Body Problem and Mental Causation* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998); "Emergence: Core Ideas and Issues," *Synthese* 151 (2006): 547–59; *Philosophy of Mind*, 3rd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview, 2011).

can no longer claim to be physicalists. Further, if the latter path is taken, and there are autonomous mental powers, then it must be asked: is this state of affairs more to be expected on a standard (nondualistic) version of naturalism, or on a dualistic scheme, like classical theism? In a world without mental particulars, it seems highly unlikely that novel mental powers like consciousness, intentionality and rationality simply emerge from physical objects, since no physical science detects or entails the existence of any such powers. As David Chalmers pointed out, given the underlying physical facts, it is surely conceivable that there are zombie worlds—in which our physical duplicates are not conscious at all—or invert worlds in which, whenever we experience pleasure or see red, our duplicates experience pain or see green.⁶ So naturalism neither explains why consciousness exists at all, nor why there is the particular distribution of mental states that exists. By contrast, God is an infinite mental substance, so if He specially creates beings in His image, it is more to be expected that He would make us like Him in being (or having) a mental substance with a mind designed to track reality in reliable ways, so that we can fulfill our vocation as stewards of the natural world.⁷

Third, another factor may be decisive in rousing drowsy philosopher-Ents from their dogmatic slumber: the return of the subject to center stage in the philosophy of mind. Throughout most of the twentieth century, philosophers of mind assumed that Cartesian egos (or anything like them) were off limits, and focused their energy on understanding particular mental events and states. But it could not be denied forever that thoughts and experiences have a subject, that there is a person who has a mental life. Even naturalistic philosophers like Searle have recognized that human rationality seems to presuppose a “non-Humean” self with libertarian free will.⁸ And while eschewing substance dualism, Lynne Rudder Baker acknowledged that essential to a person is a first-person-perspective, an emergent capacity which cannot be reduced to any property recognized by the physical sciences.⁹ Likewise Mike Tye and Tim Bayne have sought to understand how the unity of consciousness could possibly arise if we are merely physical objects.¹⁰ Naturalism, it would seem, is slouching closer to the endorsement of something very like a soul—all the while stoutly denying that it is doing anything of the kind. And there is a worry that naturalism is becoming vacuous, as “nature” absorbs without explaining the phenomena that theists have raised in objection.

6. David Chalmers, *The Conscious Mind* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

7. For a development of this idea, see Angus Menuge, “Why Reject Christian Physicalism?,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Substance Dualism*, ed. Jonathan Loose, Angus Menuge, and J. P. Moreland (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2018).

8. John Searle, *Freedom and Neurobiology* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).

9. Lynne Rudder Baker, *Naturalism and the First-Person Perspective* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

10. See Michael Tye, *Consciousness and Persons: Unity and Identity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003) and Tim Bayne, *The Unity of Consciousness* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Fourth, there has been a resurgence of interest in the rich diversity of theories of the soul developed by both philosophers and theologians over the centuries.¹¹ Defenders of substance dualism are not confined to the stereotyped variety of Cartesian substance dualism routinely dismissed in introduction to philosophy classes. Not only are there able defenders of neo-Cartesian dualism,¹² sophisticated versions of emergent, Thomistic, and neo-Thomistic theories are also on offer.¹³ Contrary to the idea that the soul is a superstitious relic of the past, considerable attention has been given to the tenability of mental substances in a scientific view of the world.¹⁴ And Christian physicalist alternatives to the soul have been found wanting on both theological and general philosophical grounds.¹⁵

For these four reasons, substance dualism is back on the table for discussion. We hope readers will want to explore the current state of the debate between the leading defenders and critics of substance dualism in *The Blackwell Companion to Substance Dualism*. In this symposium, we'd like to give you a taste of that debate hoping it leaves you hungry for more.

The Origin of the Symposium

The essays collected here derive from several sources. Four of them (the papers by Richard Swinburne, Eric Olson, J. P. Moreland, and Brandon Rickabaugh) are revised versions of papers delivered in an electrifying panel on dualism and physicalism at the November 2017 national meeting of the Evangelical Philosophical Society in Rhode Island. Swinburne argues that thought experiments involving partial brain transplants provide strong reason to believe in the existence of the soul. Olson, by contrast, is not sure that our modal intuitions are reliable in these cases, and notes that materialists claim equally strong modal intuitions pointing in the opposite direction. We then move to the role of experience. Brandon Rickabaugh argues that here, the mental has primacy over the physical, and that this supports substance dualism. J. P. Moreland further maintains that empirical science cannot be decisive in the philosophy of mind because the metaphysical alternatives are empirically equivalent. William Hasker kindly contributed a contrasting

11. E.g., see Stewart Goetz and Charles Taliaferro's *A Brief History of the Soul* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), and Joshua Farris and Charles Taliaferro's *The Ashgate Companion to Theological Anthropology* (Milton Park: Routledge, 2016).

12. E.g., see Richard Swinburne, *Mind, Brain, and Free Will* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

13. For a critical examination of these views, see *The Blackwell Companion to Substance Dualism*.

14. See Mark C. Baker and Stewart Goetz, eds., *The Soul Hypothesis: Investigations into the Existence of the Soul* (London: Continuum, 2011).

15. See R. Keith Loftin and Joshua Farris, eds., *Christian Physicalism? Philosophical Theological Criticisms* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2018).

perspective, which is more insistent that there are several important findings of empirical science to which philosophers of mind must be responsive.

But there was something else that we thought it only right and proper to do. Just after the EPS conference, and just after one of us (Jonathan) had done a video interview with Lynne Rudder Baker (to appear online via the EPS website¹⁶), we were saddened to learn that she had departed this earthly life. As a Christian philosopher, Lynne Rudder Baker was a tremendous role model, both as scholar and teacher. One of us (Angus) gives credit to Baker's first book, *Saving Belief*, for a major turn in his thinking about the philosophy of mind, and both of us are highly appreciative of Baker's defense of the irreducibility of persons. Baker's work, and her interaction with students, was marked by a kindness and grace that are regrettably not so common in today's highly competitive world. In tribute to Lynne Baker, and with the kind permission of Oxford University Press, this symposium includes an edited selection articulating her constitution view of persons, from her book, *Naturalism and the First-Person Perspective*. Following that, Angus argues that a first-person perspective cannot be a mere mental property, and Jonathan shows that there are internal tensions in Baker's constitution view that prevent it from providing a fully coherent account of personal identity.

As an illustration of the great sophistication of contemporary dualistic theories, our symposium concludes with an exchange between Joshua Farris and William Hasker. Hasker is a notable defender of emergent substance dualism,¹⁷ but Farris maintains that emergence alone cannot account for the particularity (the thisness) of the soul. Farris hopes that supplementing emergence with soul creationism will maintain compatibility with modern science and explain the particularity of persons. To the contrary, Hasker doubts that Farris can fit divinely created souls into an evolutionary account of life, and argues that there is no such thing as thisness in Farris's sense, so it does not need to be preserved.

We hope that this lively interchange about the nature of human persons—and how to make sense of that in the rich context of metaphysics, theology and science—will energize our readers and stimulate important new work in the philosophy of mind.

16. Online at <http://www.epsociety.org>. Other interviews with contributors to this symposium and others discussing related topics will also be published via <https://twitter.com/jonathanjloose> or subscribe to the "Mind Matters" YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCkX01A8oehDa2O0IL19YYoA> (<https://bit.ly/2HTf7Ju>).

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

The Epistemology of Religious Disagreement

An Introduction

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Over the past decade or so, there's been an explosion of literature on the epistemic significance of disagreement. One paper that helped set the trajectory for this discussion is Richard Feldman's "Reasonable Religious Disagreements."¹ Feldman begins with an encounter he had with students in his world religions class, one we have commonly experienced in philosophy and religion courses as well. When students are asked how they view classmates who hold radically different religious (or irreligious) beliefs than themselves, the majority say their peers are reasonable to maintain differing viewpoints. Reasonable people can "agree to disagree." Worth noting is that students who express this kind of view don't necessarily mean "all religions are equally *true*." Rather, in their own way, they mean that two (or more) intellectual peers *can be reasonable in maintaining different views on*

ABSTRACT: Our introduction to the special topics forum provides a brief explanation of terms central to the general epistemology of disagreement literature that has developed over the past fifteen years. We then provide an overview of each contributor's paper with an eye toward how each one relates to and extends the discussion about the epistemology of disagreement. Papers are arranged in an effort to draw readers into the discussion as follows: applying different general theories about disagreement to religious disagreement in particular, analyzing core principles related to disagreement, and then on to specific everyday issues related to navigating religious disagreements such as conversion and tolerance. Of special interest is the possibility of prospects for reasonable religious disagreement or lack thereof.

1. Richard Feldman, "Reasonable Religious Disagreement," in *Philosophers without Gods: Meditations on Atheism and the Secular Life*, ed. Louise Antony (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 194–214.

a hotly contested topic or claim, and neither person is required to give up her epistemic position in light of the disagreement being known. Perhaps this common response to pervasive and intractable disagreements is motivated by *moral* concerns to be tolerant of and kind to persons who hold different views from one's own. Even so, the philosophical questions before us are: Is this response to religious (or irreligious) disagreement *epistemically* defensible and correct? Can intellectual peers reasonably disagree? Are we rationally obligated to adjust our level of confidence in our belief's being true in light of disagreement with an intellectual peer?

These and related questions have been central to the epistemic disagreement literature, without any specific attention to applications to religious disagreement more narrowly. However, more *recently* that attention has turned to applying theories and principles developed in the general disagreement literature to the issue of religious disagreement more specifically. This special topics forum aims to help fill out this recent literature, especially for those wishing to think carefully about whether we can have reasonable religious disagreements or not; whether known disagreement with a purported intellectual peer requires one to reduce her level of confidence in what she thinks the evidence supports or suspend judgment altogether. With these brief background considerations in mind, this introduction will seek to do three things: (1) define key conceptual terms and theses utilized in the broad literature on disagreement, (2) explain some key theses and positions on disagreement one might take, and (3) note how our contributors' papers fit into the overall debate.

Everyday Disagreement and Epistemic Disagreement with a "Peer"

Disagreement pervades our everyday lives, and we disagree with all kinds of people with differing backgrounds and varying levels of education. For the most part, our present study is less interested in what to do when, say, a PhD in astrophysics and a high-school-diploma grocery bagger disagree in the local coffee shop about topics ranging from best NBA basketball team to where moral norms come from. While such disagreements show up often in our lives and—depending upon the topic—may be important, the epistemology of disagreement is primarily concerned with what we should do when we disagree with a so-called *intellectual peer*. As will become clear even from the papers in this forum on religious disagreement (and is evident as one delves into the broader literature on disagreement), the idea of an "intellectual peer" lacks fine-grained definition and consensus among philosophers. As a result, the concept of "*intellectual peer*" usually receives a rough-and-ready stipulated definition as follows: someone who is equally

intelligent, informed, concerned about the evidence bearing on the target proposition, concerned about the truth, and possessing an equal degree of the relevant intellectual virtues as oneself. Feldman's world religions students satisfy this definition; and readers of this journal can imagine those with whom they disagree about matters in philosophy of religion as being their peers in the stated sense. So when you disagree with an intellectual peer about the proposition p —"An all-powerful, morally perfect triune God exists and interacts with this world"—you and your peer enter the dispute on the same footing epistemically. Of course, one might question whether one has any intellectual peers (after all, maybe all one's interlocutors just are better off cognitively than oneself), but the dominant view in the literature is that we do have at least some peers in the relevant sense. Forum contributors generally accept a version of the above definition of "peer," though readers should take note of how the authors tweak the definition to advance their argument(s). If we do, then our next question—and answers to it—concern what influence disagreement with a peer *should* have on one's level of confidence in the truth of p or not- p .

Peer Disagreement, Evidence, and Defeat

When you sit down to the table of disagreement with an intellectual peer, let's suppose you share notes—that is, disclose all your p -relevant evidence. All evidence (that is, arguments) that bear directly upon p is often called "first-order" evidence. Once all first-order evidence is disclosed (as much as possible), you now become aware that your thinking p but your peer thinking not- p follows from the shared body of evidence. As the standard Feldmanian-evidentialist picture goes, one of three doxastic attitudes is supported by a body of evidence: belief, nonbelief, or suspension of judgment. But what bearing might the *fact of disagreement* have on our original first-order body of evidence? Some say the fact of disagreement is new evidence of a different kind that we might call "higher-order" evidence because it bears on one's assessment of the direct first-order evidence for or against p . Put differently, when Plantinga and Mackie disagree about the impact evil has on arguments for God's existence, their different responses constitute new evidence about whether either of them has responded correctly to the direct evidence for or against p .

This is where religious disagreement gets interesting and controversial in ways not typically discussed. Some hold that disagreement-as-higher-order-evidence provides each party to the dispute with a defeater. Each may no longer hold onto the view he thinks is supported by the original first-order evidence, because there's no special reason to dismiss either peer's response. In other words, each lacks a defeating-defeater for peer disagreement. Call this type of response to peer disagreement the *Conciliatory* view.

Strong Conciliatory views hold that the defeater acquired by way of peer disagreement requires either party to move from belief/disbelief to suspension of judgment. Of course, this entails skepticism, because neither side may no longer justifiably believe what she thinks the evidence supports. A key philosophical intuition motivating this view is what's called the *Uniqueness* thesis: Bodies of evidence admit of one and only one rational doxastic attitude (that is, belief, disbelief, or suspension of judgment). Moderate Conciliatory views (perhaps out of concern for the skeptical implications or in disagreement with the Uniqueness thesis) do not entail that you must move all the way to suspension of judgment; you only need to adjust your level of confidence "at least some" in the direction of your peer. For example, one might move from 99 percent level of confidence that not- p to an 80 percent confidence level in light of peer disagreement. For the purpose of this introduction, we will note that there are multiple ways to develop the more moderate view, and we will leave it to the reader to think through the general literature on that. What Conciliatory views of any variety tend to share is that some adjustment of confidence in p or not- p is *required* in response to disagreement with an intellectual peer.

Other philosophers take a different line of reasoning. While religious peer disagreement is noteworthy, it need not require one to adjust one's level of confidence in response. The *Steadfastness* type of view holds that it is reasonable to remain firm on one's original doxastic stance with respect to p after becoming aware of peer disagreement. How Steadfastness proponents develop their view may proceed a number of ways. Perhaps evidence sets are more opaque and less clear and distinct than Conciliationists presume; and perhaps this allows for a special reason for maintaining the same level of confidence in p or not- p . Given the nature and complexity of religious experience, for example, it's possible that evidence is not as shareable as one might hope. Or perhaps bodies of evidence permit/allow for more than one rational doxastic response. Call this kind of view *Permissivism* (one common kind of Steadfastness). As one might notice, Permissivism entails a rejection of the Uniqueness thesis. If evidence sets permit more than one rational response without this entailing relativism about truth more generally, then it's possible multiple parties to a dispute can be rational to stand firm in what they think the first-order evidence supports even after disagreement is known. Disagreement does not defeat one's belief/disbelief that p , as it were. Reasonable disagreement is possible (as the world religions class case indicates). Of course, there are concerns for Permissivism. On the one hand, it's not clear how plausible it is to maintain the claim about bodies of evidence admitting of multiple rational perspectives (especially if only one proposition is *true*). On the other hand, it might be religiously problematic for some

to maintain that contradictory theological beliefs are equally rational.² How Steadfastness proponents who favor Permissivism differ in responding to such concerns depends on the details of their broader epistemological commitments about evidence, justification, intellectual virtues, and so forth.

Overview of Contributing Papers

Our special topics forum includes contributions by philosophers who work in epistemology and philosophy of religion from both theistic and non-theistic standpoints. In addition, we include papers that work from the range of possibilities on epistemic disagreement detailed above. Each paper takes a unique angle on either (a) some broad issue in the epistemology of disagreement and how that issue bears on and is illuminated by religious disagreement; or (b) some special topic in philosophy of religion and how that topic bears on and illuminates disagreement more broadly. Here is an overview of each paper and its place in the discussion.

Jon Matheson's paper, "Religious Disagreement and Divine Hiddenness," works from a *strong Conciliatory* approach. After briefly providing the motivations for the Conciliatory view, Matheson considers how divine hiddenness presents a special objection to the Conciliatory approach to religious disagreement. In particular, if Conciliation is required of all parties to a religious peer disagreement about God's existence, then divine hiding is worse for theistic belief than the standard hiddenness problem typically highlights. It's not just that God is hidden and could make himself more evident; given Conciliationism, it seems like God is even more elusive. After all, there's no way, say Conciliationists, for us to resolve peer disagreement on the God question in favor of theism; so, this in turn makes God's existence quite improbable. What's important about Matheson's paper is that it presents both theists and Conciliationists with a pressing objection from divine hiddenness; and without an adequate reply, it leaves both with a reason to give up their respective views. Matheson then argues why neither is stuck with an insurmountable problem.

Chad Bogosian's paper, "Rowe's Friendly Atheism and the Epistemology of Religious Disagreement," argues for a Steadfastness view. Engaging William Rowe's noteworthy paper on God and the problem of evil, Bogosian finds in his so-called friendly atheism remnants of a Steadfastness view. After formulating Rowe's friendly atheism into a general epistemic principle about disagreement in light of one's total evidence, Bogosian considers how Conciliationists might leverage the Uniqueness thesis against this principle. He then develops what he calls "Rowe's principle" in light of this objection

2. John Pittard, "Religious Disagreement," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. James Fieser and Bradley Dowden, accessed March 10, 2018, <http://www.iep.utm.edu/rel-disa>.

showing how there are additional epistemic considerations that make it reasonable for atheists and theists alike to remain steadfast in light of their total evidence (including known peer disagreement).

Tom Senor's paper, "The Uniqueness Argument and Religious Pluralism," both argues *against* the standard Uniqueness thesis (see our statement above) and *for* a view he calls "Religious Rationality Pluralism" (RRP). Reminiscent of the Steadfastness type of view, Senor explains that RRP is committed to two theses: (1) there are sincere and intelligent people who believe the core teachings of major religious position (for example, Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, and so forth); and (2) these people are well-informed on related religious matters, and as such, they rationally accept the positions of their own respective religious viewpoints. Senor considers two arguments that challenge RRP but are rarely discussed in the literature: the Uniqueness argument and the Disagreement argument. While these challenge RRP, Senor argues there are two theses related to Uniqueness: Evidential and Rational. The former is about the connection between one's total evidence and "Truth" while the latter is about the connection between one's total evidence and rationality. Once we parse things carefully, we see—he thinks—the implausibility of holding there to be one and only one uniquely *rational* religious position in light of one's total evidence.

John DePoe's paper, "Hold on Loosely, But Don't Let Go: Evaluating the Evidential Impact of Religious Disagreement," considers three ways for a religious believer to remain steadfast after disagreement with an intellectual peer is known. To develop his argument, DePoe considers briefly the nature of epistemic justification and how one's religious beliefs might be justified. Drawing on the rich notion of direct acquaintance, DePoe argues that religious beliefs need not be adversely affected by peer disagreement for either of two reasons. First, a religious believer can base religious beliefs on direct acquaintance with (that is, awareness of) their truth. Second, a religious believer can base religious beliefs on awareness of the evidence that makes those beliefs true or likely to be true. Finally, DePoe's arguments on faith as an intellectual virtue reveal intricate angles on how one might remain steadfast in the face of disagreement. Readers will appreciate his observations on this score.

Helen De Cruz's paper, "Religious Conversion, Transformative Experience, and Disagreement," adds the epistemic significance of religious conversion accounts to the discussion of peer disagreement. Conversion is a transformative experience, according to De Cruz, and such experiences give rise to disagreement in a unique way with one's family, friends, and also one's "former self." Might the transformative nature of conversion (especially epistemically) affect whether you remain peers with those with whom you used to agree prior to conversion? Some think your transformative experience counts for so much epistemically that peerhood drops out, because

the convert is now in a better (or special) epistemic position with respect to judging the truth of p . But is this view of how conversion affects disagreement correct? Drawing on Augustine's *De Utilitate Credendi*, De Cruz takes us on an interesting journey for how to think about the value of conversion in religious disagreement. She argues that, while conversion is significant evidence for one's reasonably believing p , reasoned argument must additionally support the assessment of conversion testimony's overall value in affecting disagreement with family, friends, and one's former self.

Robert Audi's paper, "Religious Disagreement: Structure, Content, and Prospects for Resolution," considers two different kinds of religious disagreement, and the criteria for what constitutes a "religion." Understanding the ramifications helps him, among other things, emphasize the rarity of so-called peer disagreement. Epistemic parity among parties to the dispute is hardly as idealized as some epistemologists might think. Even so, disagreement is a real and pressing issue for those seeking to reasonably disagree on religious matters. Perhaps most pressing is how we might attempt to resolve such disagreements in our pluralistic democracy in a way that embodies mutual respect. Audi highlights the difficulty of citing religious experience in the effort to resolve religious disagreements. Natural theology provides a more promising way to rationally resolve disagreements, though here it seems we're led to the problem of intractable religious disagreement. In a pluralistic democracy, we ought to be concerned with common goods, and finding common ground in the face of intractable disagreement is one such good. Drawing on the New Testament and W. D. Ross, Audi presents some *prima facie* moral principles we should act on if we hope to resolve intractable disagreements in a way that respects all parties involved in religious disagreements (whether or not they are one's "peers").

Finally, Bryan Frances's paper, "The Epistemology of Real-World Religious Disagreement without Peers," focuses on this question: "How can you have an epistemically reasonable religious belief, pro *or* con, given that you know full well that it's highly controversial?" Frances explores a variety of cases where we are inclined to think a person is reasonable to maintain his belief in p or not- p even though other smart people disagree (for example, sheltered child or adult). But might we think "reasonability" is compromised in other kinds of cases of religious or irreligious belief? Exploring the recent literature on the epistemology of disagreement and applying it to various kinds of religious disagreement cases, Frances argues that in many cases people are reasonable to believe or disbelieve a religious truth-claim even though they know that their belief or their set of beliefs is controversial and disputed by other nonsheltered persons. Frances's paper provides insight into how we might better think about epistemic praise and blame in different contexts.

In addition to our articles and notes summarized above, we provide a series of book reviews relevant to the topic of disagreement. Kirk Loughheed engages Jon Matheson's book, *The Epistemic Significance of Disagreement*, highlighting Matheson's central arguments in defense of a strong Conciliatory view of disagreement. Derek McAllister provides a thoughtful survey of a recent edited volume on disagreement more broadly. *The Epistemology of Disagreement: New Essays* by Christensen and Lackey will help readers of this journal cover some of the major positions and arguments in the disagreement literature. Winfried Löffler also unpacks a multi-author volume, though these focus more specifically on religious (and moral) disagreements. Paul Copan takes us through the late Dallas Willard's posthumous work, *The Allure of Gentleness*. He highlights how Jesus is an exemplar for how to seek truth together, and also engage in and resolve disagreements. Overall, we hope the book reviews and papers in this forum will provide our readers with much to consider as they work through how one should respond to religious disagreements today.³

3. We wish to thank Betty Talbert, as well as the *Philosophia Christi* editorial team, for their helpful comments and suggestions. This introduction is markedly better as a result. Any remaining shortcomings are our own.