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Moral Status and the Treatment of Dissociative Identity Disorder[1]

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ABSTRACT

Many contemporary bioethicists claim that the possession of certain psychological properties is sufficient for having full moral status. I will call this the *psychological approach* to full moral status. In this paper, I argue that there is a significant tension between the psychological approach and a widely held model of Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID, formerly Multiple Personality Disorder). According to this model, the individual personalities or alters that belong to someone with DID possess those properties that proponents of the psychological approach claim suffice for full moral status. If this account of DID is true, then the psychological approach to full moral status seems to entail that the two standard therapies for treating DID might, on occasion, be seriously immoral, for they may well involve the (involuntary) elimination of an entity with full moral status. This result should give proponents of the psychological approach pause, for most people find the claim that current treatments of DID are ethically suspect highly counter-intuitive.

Keywords: abortion, dissociative identity disorder, full moral status.

I. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH TO FULL MORAL STATUS

I will regard any account of full moral status that endorses the following claim as a version of the psychological approach:[2]

> *Psychological Approach:* Any entity that possesses psychological properties of kind *P* has full moral status, and it has that status in virtue of possessing psychological properties of kind *P*.

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The psychological approach is a prominent – and quite possibly the standard – account of full moral status in contemporary bioethics. In this section I survey a range of accounts of full moral status that seem to endorse the psychological approach in one form or another.

A number of bioethicists place the notion of being a subject of a life at the heart of their account of full moral status. According to Regan, our basic moral status depends on the fact that we "are each of us the *experiencing* subject of a life, a *conscious* creature having an individual welfare that has importance to us whatever our usefulness to others" (Regan, 1997, p. 158; my emphasis). Regan seems to hold that anything that is the subject of an experiential life has inherent value and, by implication, basic moral rights (Regan, 1983, pp. 246, 319).

Rachels also grounds full moral status in the notion of being the subject of a life:

> To replace the traditional view [of the right to life] I offer a different way of looking at such matters. The alternative view begins by pointing out that there is a deep difference between *having a life* and merely *being alive*. The point of the moral rule against killing is not to keep 'innocent humans' alive. Being alive, in the biological sense, is relatively unimportant. One's *life*, by contrast, is immensely important; it is the sum of one's aspirations, decisions, activities and projects and human relationships. The point of the rule against killing is the protection of *lives* and the interests that some beings, including ourselves, have in virtue of the fact that we are subjects of lives (Rachels, 1986, p. 5; original emphasis).

Although Regan and Rachels appear to have different conceptions of what it is to be the subject of a life – Rachels seems to emphasize narrative structure in a way that Regan doesn't – both authors agree that: (a) the notion is to be understood in psychological, rather than biological, terms; (b) being the subject-of-a-life suffices for full moral status.

Other bioethicists approach the question of full moral status via an analysis of personhood. I begin with Warren's account. In her influential paper "On the Moral and Legal Status of Abortion," Warren argued that a fetus does not have full moral status because it is not a person, and ". . . it is part of this concept [of personhood] that *all and only* people have full moral rights" (Warren, 1973, p. 56, emphasis added).[3] Although Warren declined to give necessary and sufficient conditions for personhood, she claimed that a number of properties

were 'central' to the concept of personhood.[4] These properties – sentience, emotionality, reason, the capacity to communicate, and so on – were uniformly *psychological* properties. Warren's paper attracted much critical attention, but, significantly, critics did not object to Warren *granting* entities serious moral status on the basis of personhood: they objected to Warren's use of personhood as a basis for *excluding* entities from the moral realm. Indeed, Warren herself has since written that while personhood ''seems somewhat less plausible as an *exclusion* criterion'', it ''is important as an *inclusion* criterion for moral equality'' (Warren, 1993, p. 311; my emphasis).

Tooley also seems to endorse the psychological approach. Like Warren, Tooley has been primarily concerned with the morality of abortion and infanticide, and thus his work has focused on the question of what is *necessary* for full moral status. Nevertheless, Tooley has suggested that his account of what is needed for full moral status has implications for what suffices for full moral status. Tooley states that he is ''inclined to give an affirmative answer'' to the question of whether having a desire to continue to exist as a subject of experience suffices for full moral status (Tooley, 1972, p. 49).[5]

Other bioethicists have been more forthright in linking Tooley's analysis of full moral status with the psychological approach. For example, Kuhse writes:

> I believe Tooley's argument [regarding the foundation of a right to life] is basically sound. The underlying principle of his argument is that the wrongness of an action is related to the extent to which the action prevents some interests, desires or preferences from being fulfilled. This basic principle explains . . . why it is wrong, other things being equal, to kill a being with a desire to go on living. Any being capable of feeling pain can have a desire that the pain cease; but only a being capable of understanding that it has a prospect of future existence can have a desire to go on living, and only a continuing self can have an interest in continued life (Kuhse, 1987, p. 216).[6]

Harris holds a similar view. Having defined a person as a creature that is capable of valuing its own existence, Harris goes on to claim that personhood so defined

> provides a species-neutral way of grouping creatures that have lives that it would be wrong to end by killing or letting die. These may include animals,

> machines, extra-terrestrials, gods, angels and devils. All, if they were capable of valuing their own existence, would, whatever else they were, be persons (Harris, 1999, p. 307).

Similarly, Pojman claims that ''rational self-consciousness marks the criterion for having a right to life'' (1998, p. 282), where he means a criterion to be understood as both a necessary and a sufficient condition. Feinberg is also sympathetic to the psychological approach. He claims that in the ''commonsense way of thinking, persons are those beings who, among other things, are conscious, have a concept and awareness of themselves, are capable of experiencing emotions, can reason and acquire understanding, can plan ahead, can act on their plans, and can feel pleasure and pain'' (Feinberg, 1986, p. 262). Feinberg goes on to defend the view that the joint possession of these properties is sufficient for moral personhood (Feinberg, 1986, pp. 263, 270). To say that the psychological approach to full moral status is widely endorsed is something of an overstatement.

While there are important differences between various versions of the psychological approach – differences that make a difference when it comes to questions of abortion and animal rights – I want to focus on what these accounts have in common: they share the (quite plausible) view that being a self-conscious subject of experience that desires to continue to exist as such suffices for having full moral status.

II. THE SELF

It is one thing to argue that possession of certain psychological properties is sufficient for full moral status, but it is another thing entirely to *individuate* the entity that has full moral status in purely psychological terms. Bioethicists have spilt much ink over the analysis of full moral status, but they have said rather less about *what it is* that has full moral status. Accounts of full moral status tend to refer to the bearers of that status rather loosely as 'selves', 'persons', 'organisms' and so on, without saying much about what they take such entities to be.

Without meaning to beg any crucial questions, we can call accounts of that which has full moral status ''accounts of personal identity.'' Roughly speaking, we can divide such accounts into two broad classes, psychological accounts and biological (or animalist) accounts. Roughly, psychological

accounts derive from Locke and attempt to give identity conditions for persons in psychological terms, while biological accounts follow Aristotle in holding that our identity conditions are biological in nature.

I don't have space to argue in support of the psychological approach to personal identity here, but will assume for the sake of argument that some such approach is correct. This assumption is more defensible than it may seem. First, despite the recent revival of biological approaches to personal identity (Olson, 1997; Snowdon, 1990), the psychological approach to personal identity remains the dominant view. Secondly, there seems to be a natural affinity between psychological accounts of full moral status and psychological accounts of personal identity. Although there is no obvious incoherence involved in endorsing one view but not the other, the two views do seem to hang together. In short, we can expect that many of those who endorse the psychological approach to full moral status will also endorse a psychological account of personal identity. Henceforward, by the 'psychological approach' I mean the psychological approach to both full moral status *and* personal identity.

According to proponents of the psychological approach, that which has full moral status is a self. But what is a self? Obviously I cannot provide a detailed analysis of the self here; all I can do is sketch the sorts of notions that will feature in most analyses of the self.[7] What follows should be generally acceptable to most proponent of the psychological approach to personal identity.

Central to our notion of the self is the notion of something that is a subject of experience, something that has a stream of consciousness. Indeed, a natural reading of the traditional claim that consciousness is unified is that a self can only have a single stream of consciousness at any one time (Bayne & Chalmers, 2002). Even those who reject the claim that consciousness is necessarily unified in this sense grant that consciousness is normally unified (Davis, 1997; Greenwood, 1993; Marks, 1980; Moor, 1982). Prolonged bifurcation in consciousness, it is generally thought, would lead to the development of multiple selves.

We also regard the self as a unitary locus of agency: were we to discover two loci of agency in a single body we would be tempted to posit two selves. Of course, giving an informative analysis of what it is to be a single locus of agency is no easy matter. Nevertheless, we have a rough and ready sense of what it is to be a single agent even if it is often unclear about how to apply this notion in many contexts.

A third feature of the self, and one that is heavily emphasized by neo-Lockeans, is the self as an entity with a coherent integrated psychological character. Selves have beliefs and desires, memories, intentions, dispositions, and so on. The psychological character of a single self must, according to neo-Lockeans, be reasonably coherent, both at a time and through time.

Finally – and somewhat controversially – selves have the potential to engage in first-person thought; that is, selves can be aware of themselves as selves. Psychological accounts of personal identity tend to place more emphasis on self-regarding psychological states – episodic memories, intentions and so on – than on psychological states that don't involve self-consciousness – such as habits, dispositions, and so on. I say that this feature of selfhood is somewhat controversial because it is an open question whether self-consciousness should be a condition on selfhood as such or personhood. Personally I am inclined to think that (the potential for) self-consciousness should be a condition on personhood but not mere selfhood, but this point is somewhat stipulative and nothing turns on it here. For simplicity's sake I will assume that selves must be capable of self-consciousness.

There is, of course, much debate about how these various aspects of personhood are related: how is the unity of consciousness related to the unity of agency, and how are these two unities related to the unity of psychological character?[8] These are interesting questions, but they need not be addressed here. What is relevant to the present discussion is this: any entity that possesses all of the properties outlined, that is, anything that is both an agent and a subject of experience, has a reasonably integrated psychological character, and is capable of first-person thought, qualifies as a self. This claim may not be completely uncontroversial, but it is, I think, a claim with which most proponents of the psychological approach to personal identity would be in agreement.

According to such theorists, selves may bear an intimate relation to individual animals (subjects of a biological life), but they are not themselves animals. Such theorists give different accounts of exactly how selves and animals are related. Some say that the relation is that of constitution (Baker, 2000; Pollock, 1988; Shoemaker, 1999), others say that it is a straightforward part-whole relation (Strawson 1999), but all follow Locke in distinguishing the self from the animal. Of course, it doesn't follow that those who defend the psychological account will also hold that a single animal can support two selves at once – Baker, for instance, rejects the ''multiple occupancy thesis'' (Baker, 2000, p. 108). What does follow is that proponents of the psycholo-

gical approach, unlike animalists, are *able* to take the multiple occupancy thesis seriously. As I shall now go on to argue, some prominent discussions of DID do take this thesis very seriously indeed.

III. DISSOCIATIVE IDENTITY DISORDER (DID) AND THE NATURE OF ALTERS

Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) is a complex phenomenon and almost every aspect of it generates intense controversy.[9] Luckily, some of the most heated debates surrounding DID are immaterial to the present context; in particular, we can sidestep the vexed issue of the extent to which DID is a product of specific cultural and therapeutic contexts. The crucial issue here concerns the nature of alters, not their genesis.

We can distinguish two models of alters, what I call the *weak* model and the *strong* model. Each model admits of variations, but I will restrict myself to outlining them in their essential form. According to the weak model, alters are merely aspects, manifestations, or personalities of the multiple to whom they belong, they are not selves in their own right. When we say that Sally, one of Mary's alters, is now out, we mean that Mary's action are being informed by the collection of episodic memories, emotional dispositions, motor skills, goals and intentions and so on that are known as 'Sally'. According to the weak model, we should say that the *multiple* acts and has experiences, but only *as* one of her particular alters. Alters are not agents, subjects of experience, or unique objects of I-thoughts; the only agent, subject of experience and thinker is the multiple herself.

The strong model, on the other hand, allows that (at least some) alters qualify as selves in their own right. That is, they are agents, they have their own experiential perspective on the world, and they may even be able to refer to themselves (as themselves) by means of I-thoughts.[10, 11] The strong model does not claim that alters have *no* psychological states or abilities in common – they might, for instance, share certain motor skills, or semantic knowledge – but it does hold that alters are the unique possessors of the sorts of psychological states that are central to the individuation of selves, namely, autobiographical states.

As might be expected, one can find support for both the weak and strong models within the DID literature – sometimes within a single article. Rather than attempt to present a fair and balanced overview of the literature, I will

restrict my attention to the case for taking the strong model seriously. (For a sample of those sympathetic to the weak model see Benner and Evans, 1984; Clark, 1996; Gillett, 1986, 1997; Heil, 1994).

Wilkes's (1988) analysis of DID leans towards the strong model. She claims that each of Christine Beauchamp's three main alters were self-conscious, and that "... we ought to conclude that during the period from the appearance of Sally and B4 to that of B2, Prince had three people to deal with" (Wilkes, 1988, p. 127f). Dennett and Humphrey claim that "the grounds for assigning several selves to [a multiple] *can be as good as – indeed the same as – those for assigning a single self to a normal human being*" (Dennett & Humphrey, 1998, p. 54, emphasis in original). According to Flanagen, alters "experience themselves as qualitatively distinct centers of self-consciousness at different times" (Flanagen, 1994, p. 146), although it is not clear whether he also thinks that they actually *are* distinct centers of self-consciousness. Radden's position is equivocal. Although she claims that there is little compelling evidence in support of the claim that multiples have simultaneous divided centers of awareness (Radden, 1994, p. 244), she does describe integrative therapy as effecting "a kind of permeability between hitherto separated centers of awareness, so that each of the subselves or alters comes to know what happens not only in the external world, through perception, but also in the inner world of that spatio-temporal individual's other locus, or loci, of awareness" (Radden, 1996, p. 213). This last statement betrays some sympathy with the strong model. Furthermore, she holds that "... the erratic behavior of multiples invites us – if it does not actually require us – to attribute more than one source of agency to the composite person [i.e., the multiple]" (Radden, 1996, p. 244). Braude's attitude vis-a-vis the strong model is also nuanced. Although he claims that we need to regard a multiple as a single synthesizing subject, he also argues that "alternate personalities are more than merely distinct sets of traits, beliefs, memories, etc. ... those sets appear to be organized around (or to belong to) discrete centers of self-awareness (i.e., different *selves*)" (Braude, 1991, pp. 67, 70).

There is certainly significant, although by no means unqualified, support for the strong model in the literature: what motivates this support? There is certainly much to recommend the weak model. In refusing to reify alters, it presents DID as 'merely' involving an extreme form of the cognitive and conative fragmentation to which most of us are, to varying degrees, subject. Both self-deception and weakness of the will involve certain incoherence

and disunity in one's psychological character, but few are inclined to think that such phenomena demonstrate that we are each multiple selves or persons.[12]

Parallels of this kind are unconvincing. Differences in degree can become differences in kind. In particular, the cognitive fragmentation that characterizes DID far outstrips that which marks quotidian instances of self-deception and akrasia. Indeed, the level of cognitive fragmentation that characterizes many instances of DID is such that it becomes difficult not to regard each alter as a distinct locus of experience, thought and agency. As Wilkes points out with respect to the Beauchamp case,

> [Prince] firmly (for example) ticked Sally off for her tricks follies, and would lecture her sternly; he criticized or approved of B4's plans for finding a job, or for taking a holiday; and he commended B1's sweet and self-sacrificing nature. All the alternate personalities were thus treated as moral and prudential agents, with respect to other people, with respect to each other, and with respect to their own selves. Prince is by no means alone in taking such an attitude to the diverse personalities of a patient – it is practically impossible to avoid (Wilkes, 1988, p. 122).

DSM-IV itself, perhaps despite its intentions, encourages the strong model, for it characterizes alters as "distinct identities or personality states (each with its own relatively enduring ways of relating to, and thinking about the environment and the self" (DSM IV, p. 487). Dispositions, identities, personality states, and so on do not relate and think – selves do.

Two additional forms of evidence motivate the strong model; neither is unproblematic. First, there is behavioral evidence of struggle for control over the multiple. Braude claims that, "[at times] one can actually observe and clearly identify the participants in the struggle. For example, as two alters vie for executive control, the multiple's face might shift rapidly between the distinctive features of each" (Braude, 1995, p. 67). Pathologies of this kind aren't unique to DID: commissurotomy (Gazzaniga, 1995) and anarchic (or alien) hand syndrome (Baynes, Tramo, & Gazzaniga, 1997; Sala, Marchetti, & Spinnler, 1991) are also characterized by fragmentation and disunity of agency. But in the case of DID, unlike commissurotomy and anarchic hand cases, the intrabodily conflict has a structure which enables one to identify (and reidentify) particular agents with their own perspective, however impoverished, on the world.

Verbal reports of 'introspective' access between alters provides a second form of evidence for the strong model. Consider the following account of the Doris Fletcher case (the initials stand for different alters):

> S.D. watched when R.D. was out [i.e., in executive control of the body]. There would be three of us watching her, each with thoughts of her own. S.D. watched R.D.'s mind, M. watched S.D.'s thoughts of R.D., and I watched all three. Sometimes we had a disagreement. Sometimes a jealous thought would flit through S.D.'s mind – she would think for a moment that if R.D. would not come out any more M. might like her (S.D.) as well as R.D. She never tried to hinder R.D.'s coming, though, but always to help, and only a slight thought of the kind would flit through her mind. But M. would see it and get cross with S.D. (quoted in Braude, 1995, p. 69).

At first glance, these comments might seem to support the weak model rather than the strong model. How can an alter have introspective access to the mental states of another alter unless both alters are merely different manifestations of a single subject? Surely, one might think, one can only have introspective access to one's *own* mental states.

But matters aren't as straightforward as this. We need to distinguish two notions of introspective access. *S* has what I call *direct* introspective access to a mental state, *P*, when *P* occurs in *S's* stream of consciousness. In this sense I have introspective access to a pain when I am in pain. In another sense of 'introspective access,' one has introspective access to some state when information about (or a representation of) that state is contained within one's stream of consciousness without that information being based on external perception. One can have introspective access to *P* in this sense without actually having *P* itself, one merely needs a representation of *P*. Call this *indirect* introspective access.

One can construe inter-alter access in terms of direct introspection, or in terms of indirect introspection. On the *direct* account of inter-alter access, distinct alters can share direct introspective access to particular mental states; in other words, they would have particular (i.e., token) experiences in common. On the indirect model of inter-alter access, however, alters know what their fellow alters are experiencing, not by sharing their experiences, but by having direct representations of these experiences. Suppose that alter *S1* has 'introspective' access to an experience (*P*) of another alter (*S2*). On this model only *S2* has *P* but *S1* has a direct, unmediated representation of *P* by

having < *S2* has *P* >. *S1* need not infer that *S2* has *P* by external perception of *S2's* bodily states, rather, *S1* is immediately presented with the belief that *S1* has *P*.

The direct model of inter-alter access is deeply bizarre. For one thing, it would seem to suppose that streams of consciousness can overlap. While not obviously false, it is certainly fair to describe this scenario as deeply counter-intuitive (Bayne, 2001; Dainton, 2000). For another thing, the direct model fails to explain how inter-alter access could be asymmetrical. In general, the indirect model of inter-alter access seems preferable.[13] Furthermore, the indirect model enables us to make sense of inter-alter access without rejecting the very plausible claim that conscious states are private – they can only be had by a single subject. This is *not* to say that reports of inter-alter access provide conclusive evidence for the strong model, but perhaps they are what they seem to be, namely, reports of the contents of another stream of consciousness.

To conclude this section: the strong model has considerable support in the literature, and with good reason. This is not to say that caution isn't in order: DID is a puzzling phenomenon and it may be that the strong model is overly strong. Perhaps all that one can say with any certainty is that the strong model is, and ought to be, taken seriously: it may well be that some alters are self-conscious, active, subjects of experience.[14] In other words, there is reason to suspect that some alters might qualify as selves which – if the psychological approach is correct – possess full moral status. I turn now to explore the implications of this possibility.[15]

IV. FORMS OF THERAPY

There are two standard therapeutic approaches to DID. The first approach involves the installation of a particular alter as the unique 'owner' of a body. Because the host alter is usually selected, I will call this therapeutic strategy "restoration."[16] An alternative therapeutic goal involves the integration of the various alters into one self, a single agent with a (unified) stream of consciousness and a unified psychological profile. I examine these two therapeutic approaches in turn.

Restoration involves practical problems – in some cases a multiple may not have had an original, single self, and even if she/he did, it may be very difficult to locate – but I want to focus on moral objections to restoration.

Assuming the strong model of DID and a psychological account of full moral status, restoration would seem to involve the involuntary elimination of an entity with a right to continued existence. (I assume that – as is in fact often the case – the alters in question do not want to be eliminated. If they did, restoration would amount to voluntary or therapist-assisted suicide). Restoration may not amount to murder – that depends on whether something can be murdered without dying – but it would seem to involve an act of comparable moral gravity.

I turn now to the integration objection to the psychological approach. The integrative approach to the treatment of DID seems to be the dominant therapeutic strategy.[17] The first problem we confront here is making metaphysical sense of integration. As Braude observes (Braude, 1995, p. 54), integration is one of the least understood aspects of multiplicity. What exactly does it involve? Consider a case in which a multiple has three alters, *A*, *B* and *C*. What does integration mean for *A*, *B* and *C*? Are they all eliminated only to be replaced by a new person, *D*, or do they jointly survive as *D*? There is some temptation to think that their fate is better than complete extinction, but worse than straightforward survival. Consider the following analogy.[18] What happens to two countries when they are united to form a single country? Were East and West Germany extinguished when Germany was reunited, or did they survive in/as the new Germany? It is not clear that we should expect unequivocal answers to these questions. On the one hand, it seems implausible to suppose that East and West Germany were extinguished. Something of East Germany survives in Germany. Germany includes the land mass that was East Germany, it includes the people that made up the population of East Germany, it has the debts that East Germany had and so on. The national identity of Germany is, in part, constituted by the national identity of East Germany. On the other hand, we cannot say that East Germany (or West Germany) became the united Germany. We cannot say that the Germany of 1999 is the same country as the East Germany of 1979, in the way that the East Germany of 1979 was the same country as the East Germany of 1959. A new country was created when Germany was reunited.

When it comes to the integration of countries, we have a good sense of what actually happens, even if we might not always know how to describe it. The same cannot be said of the integration of selves. We don't have a good grasp of what it would be *like* to be the subject of integration. We find it difficult to attain a clear first-person perspective on integration. Does *D* simply look back on the thoughts and experiences of *A*, *B*, and *C* as its own? What plans and

projects does *D* have for the future? How does *D* decide what to do, given that she has *A's*, *B's* and *C's* reasons, goals and beliefs to deal with? Perhaps these questions have answers, but if so they are unlikely to be straightforward.

In the light of all this, what are we to say of the ethics of the forced integration of an alter? Our ethical difficulties piggy-back on our metaphysical difficulties: we don't know how to think of the integration of various 'I's, and thus we don't really know whether, to what extent, or in what way, various selves can be said to persist as integrated. Proponents of the psychological approach would seem to be forced to condemn involuntary integration, for it involves the enforced elimination of a (relatively) autonomous agent – an entity that may possess its own conception of the good, its own plans and projects for the future, and its own sensations of pleasure and pain. Enforced integration does not appear to be as wrong as restoration, but it does seem to be deeply problematic nonetheless. It is not clear that integration should be thought of as the 'elimination' of an alter, but it may well approach that (especially as the number of alters that are integrated increases).

I can detect little concern within the psychiatric community, or indeed the general public, over the ethical probity of restoration and integration.[19] To the best of my knowledge, no discussion of moral status has even raised the question of whether alters might qualify for a right to continued existence. But proponents of the purely psychological accounts of full moral status – accounts that tend to deny neonates a right to continued existence – would, be committed to condemning integration and restoration should the strong model it seems, be vindicated. On the face of it, this would appear to be an objection to such accounts of full moral status.

V. OBJECTIONS AND REPLIES

I now want to discuss a number of objections to the foregoing arguments. The first objection is this: One has an absolute right to one's own body; selves that develop within one's own body infringe on one's right to one's body; therefore it is not seriously wrong to extinguish them even on the psychological account of full moral status. This, of course, is a variation on J.J. Thomson's (1971) well-known argument against abortion. Thomson argued that even if a fetus is a person, a mother nonetheless has a right to terminate her pregnancy, because the mother has an absolute right to her own body, on which the fetus is an unwelcome parasite. I'm not going to discuss this argument in detail here,

other than to note that it is not at all obvious that one has an absolute moral right to one's own body especially if one shares that body with someone else. Consider conjoined twins. If we grant that one twin has an absolute right to the body that she shares, then we also have to grant that the *other* twin shares that same right. But one cannot share an absolute right, for an absolute right just is a right that only one person can have.

The second objection is this: unlike the therapeutic elimination of an alter, the elimination of a nonmultiple self typically involves the death of an organism, and the wrongness of eliminating a nonmultiple self might have more to do with the death of the organism than with the extinction of the self that it causes. The proponent of the psychological approach to full moral status will simply reject this objection. From her perspective, biological death per se is not morally significant. According to such theorists, murder is wrong because it brings about the extinction of a psychological life, rather than a biological life (recall Rachels's earlier comment). Putting someone in a permanent coma may not bring about their death qua organism, but it is seriously immoral because it brings about their death (or extinction) qua person.

A final object is perhaps the most troubling. I have assumed that both restoration and integration are morally unproblematic, even on the strong interpretation of DID. The proponent of the psychological approach may simply reject this assumption. She is likely to hold that should the strong model turn out to be vindicated, we should adopt a new approach to the treatment of DID rather than reject the psychological approach. She may well regard the fact that few therapists have concerns about the ethics of restoration or integration as yet another manifestation of the fallibility of our common-sense ethical intuitions. After all, if pre-theoretic judgments about animal rights, abortion, infanticide and the best treatment for conjoined twins are often wide of the mark – as many proponents of the psychological approach hold – why suppose that our naive judgments about how we ought to respond to DID are to be trusted?

The issues this objection raises are very deep ones: what are the proper constraints on accounts of full moral status? How much weight should be given to our pretheoretic judgments about particular cases? Like many, I'm inclined to think that deep and widespread intuitions about the moral status of particular cases should surely be given *some* evidential weight in developing an account of full moral status, and to this extent the widespread endorsement of current therapeutic approach to DID surely counts for *something*. I am,

however, fully willing to grant that it may not count for enough: perhaps there *is* something deeply problematic with current treatments of DID.

VI. CONCLUSION

I have argued that proponents of the psychological approach face the following dilemma: either they should reject the (possibility of the) strong model of DID, or they should hold that current therapeutic approaches to DID are deeply problematic. The strong model is by no means incontrovertible, but there are good reasons to take it seriously. Similarly, the moral legitimacy of current therapeutic approaches to DID may not be beyond debate, but there is deep and widespread support for them. If, as I am inclined to think, current treatments of DID are ethically acceptable, then we may need to explore alternative accounts of full moral status. If, on the other hand, the arguments in favor of the psychological approach are decisive, then we may need to re-evaluate the treatment of DID. Either way, the debate over full moral status needs to take DID into consideration.[20]

NOTES

1. Many thanks to Allen Buchanan, Jack Copeland, Dan Farnham, Cindy Holder, Avery Kolers, and especially Lisa Rasmussen and a referee for this journal for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper.
2. If something has full moral status then it has a right to continued existence. The exact nature of this right is, of course, a matter of some debate.
3. In a more recent version of this paper Warren expresses herself more cautiously: "the presumption that all persons have full and equal basic moral rights may be part of the very concept of a person" (Warren, 1997a, p. 85). In her book *Moral Status* Warren claims that "personhood, in the full-blooded sense that requires the capacity for moral agency, in indeed a sufficient condition for full moral status" (Warren, 1997b, p. 19).
4. According to Warren, the more criteria that are satisfied, the more confident we are that the concept [of personhood] is applicable" (Warren, 1997a, p. 84).
5. Tooley is more emphatic in his book *Abortion and Infanticide*: "... the class of persons either coincides with, or is a subclass of, the class of things with a right to continued existence" (1983, p. 102).
6. See also Kuhse and Singer (1985). Note that Kuhse and Singer, like Tooley, distinguish *serious* (or full) moral status from moral status *simpliciter*. These authors regard mere sentience as sufficient for moral consideration, but deny that it suffices for possession of full moral status.

7. For recent discussion of the self see Gallagher (2000), Lowe (1996), Neisser (1988) and Strawson (1997).
8. For some discussion of these questions see Korsgaard (1989) and Shoemaker (1996).
9. In addition to the references cited below, see Clark (1996), David et al. (1996), Greaves (1980), Hacking (1995), Merskey (1992), Piper (1994), Putnam (1989), Ross (1989) and Spanos (1994) for a variety of perspectives on DID. The most comprehensive examinations of DID from a philosophical perspective are Braude (1995) and Radden (1996).
10. Although it might be possible to hold that an alter is an agent in its own right but is not a subject of experience, or vice versa, these two theses tend to reinforce each other. Radden seems to accept that alters are agents but deny that they are distinct loci of consciousness. I find this view rather puzzling. Wouldn't the fact that alters are distinct agents be a good reason to think that they are also distinct subjects of experience?
11. Davis (1995) argues that even if commissurotomy subjects have two streams of consciousness, tokens of 'I' uttered in each stream don't refer to the stream itself but to the subject as a whole. Similarly, someone might argue that even if a multiple's alters are individually consciousness, it is only the multiple as a whole – the human being – that is *self*-consciousness: I-thoughts thought by each alter refer to the multiple rather than the alter that possess the thought. I find this suggestion rather implausible. As Perry (1979) has emphasized, I-thoughts involve certain unique commitments to action, and it seems plausible to suppose that I-thoughts contained within distinct streams of consciousness will involve distinct commitments to action. In the case of alters, these commitments seem to be had by the alter alone, and not the multiple.
12. See Radden (1996) and Heil (1994) for discussion of the relation between DID, self-deception and weakness of the will.
13. I owe the indirect model of inter-alter access to David Chalmers.
14. The question of exactly what kind of evidence might settle the dispute between the weak and the strong model is an interesting one. My own view is that both conceptual and empirical work needs to be done here.
15. See Rovane for a rather different argument for the claim that "alter personalities approximate, and may even meet, the condition of being multiple persons within a single human being" (1998, p. 179).
16. Prince, for one, seems to have taken this therapeutic strategy with Miss Beauchamp (Hacking, 1995). The phrase 'host alter' is used in different ways. Sometimes the host alter is simply the *first* or original alter, at other times the host alter is just that alter which *dominates* the multiple over a certain period of time. I will use the term in the former sense. Sometimes the term 'primary personality' is used to refer to what is assumed to be the first personality. See Braude (1995, p. 56ff.) for discussion.
17. Ross claim that "everyone is agreed that the goal of treatment is for the person not to have DID anymore" (Ross, 1999, p. 184), while Radden states that the "urgent task of therapy, it is widely agreed, must be the integration of the separate personality elements into one transparent self" (1996, p. 212). However, Radden also points out that some reject integration as the goal of therapy (Chase, 1987, p. 411; Scheman, 1993, p. 103).
18. See Parfit (1984) for discussion of these issues and this analogy. Mathews (1998) contains an interesting discussion of the connections between DID and Parfitian conceptions of personal identity.
19. Although see n. 17.

20. Some, particularly those influenced by the Aristotelian tradition, might take the proper functioning and well-being of the individual human animal as the ethical norm. If eliminating an alter involves restoring a particular human being to its normal state – the state of being a single embodied subject of thought and action – then elimination may well be morally virtuous, even if it involves the enforced extinction of one or more selves.

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