

Note that this objection is independent of any wrangling over the meaning of ‘persist’. For the claim that each of us is instantaneous is not made more believable merely by adopting—as Hawley does—a definition of ‘persist’ that makes a sentence like ‘instantaneous people persist’ come out true.

My objections above notwithstanding, *How Things Persist* is a careful and clever defence of stage theory. The book is in large part an extended comparison of the stage theorist’s solutions to standard puzzles with the solutions of the endurantist and the perdurantist. Hawley argues—sometimes in quite insightful and interesting ways—that stage theory’s solutions are preferable to those of its rivals. In the course of presenting her argument, Hawley discusses a wide range of metaphysical issues and their bearing on the nature of persistence. There are chapters on persistence and change, criteria of identity, vagueness, coincidence (or co-location), and modality. So the book is not only a worthy defence of a novel ontology, it is also an instructive survey of the metaphysics of material objects in general and the philosophy of persistence in particular.

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A Materialist Metaphysics of the Human Person, by Hud Hudson.
Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001. Pp. xii + 202. H/b £26.95.

In *A Materialist Metaphysics of the Human Person*, Hud Hudson develops a view of human persons as material objects. On Hudson’s view, a human person and a human organism are distinct four-dimensional spacetime worms that share a stage. The overwhelming emphasis of the book is on technical metaphysical problems about material objects generally, not on characteristics of human persons *per se*. Various solutions to these metaphysical problems (for example, universalism with respect to composition, counterpart theory of *de re* modal properties, epistemicist theory of vagueness, and many more) underlie Hudson’s view of human persons.

The main contributions of the book are the development and defence of metaphysical positions like those just mentioned, and then their application to questions about human persons. Hudson offers a novel four-dimensionalist view of material objects that he calls the ‘Partist’ view. (According to orthodox four-dimensionalism, material objects are temporally as well as spatially extended; so, they have temporal parts.) Hudson begins with a 3DPartist view that he later rejects in favour of a 4DPartist view. Whereas the ordinary three-dimensionalist takes parthood to be relative to a time, Hudson takes three-dimensional parthood to be relative, not only to a time but also to a region of

space. He takes the parthood relation to be a four-place relation among two objects (a part and an object that it is part of), a time and a region of space (p. 46).

He motivates his Partist view by considering a question analogous to this one: ‘How many persons are sitting in the chair in front of my computer?’ This question illustrates the vexed ‘Problem of the Many’, on which Hudson thinks that standard three-dimensional and four-dimensional conceptions of material objects founder. Hudson thinks that a Partist View (3D or 4D) is needed to have a satisfactory solution to the Problem of the Many. There is exactly one person sitting on the chair in front of my computer, but, in 3D language, that person exactly occupies more than one region of space at a time (pp. 47–8).

With a Partist solution to the Problem of the Many in hand, and with acceptance of standard four-dimensionalist solutions to various problems of material constitution (the Tib/Tibbles case, the Lump/Goliath case, and the Fission Case), Hudson advocates a 4DPartist View that is a kind of hybrid: ‘Whereas the 4DPartist resembles the [the orthodox four-dimensionalist] in holding that ordinary objects can be identified with spacetime worms, he resembles [the standard three-dimensionalist] in denying that parthood is a two-place relation and in affirming that numerically one-and-the-same-object can exactly occupy different regions of spacetime’ (p. 61). Except for the solution to the Problem of the Many, the rest of the positions that Hudson takes are consistent with orthodox four-dimensionalism (p. 71).

Hudson’s explicit discussion of human persons is somewhat meagre in comparison with the rich and often meticulous consideration of general metaphysical issues. For example, he comments, ‘It will prove helpful in our attempt to identify which spacetime worms are persons, if we can establish some connection between being a person and possessing (in some sense) a certain collection of cognitive abilities’ (p. 122). As examples of the relevant cognitive abilities, he mentions ‘self-consciousness and first-person intentional states’. Although this is reasonable enough, he goes no further. He just stipulates without additional elaboration, ‘Let us simply call the relevant list of cognitive abilities—characteristics *C*’ (p. 122). It is common among contemporary analytic metaphysicians like Hudson to worry less about exactly which are the features in virtue of which something is a person (that is, what ‘*C*’ refers to) than about, say, how many persons are sitting in your chair.

The question that Hudson asks about human persons is this: ‘To which of [the] many (always overlapping) spacetime worms does our term “human person” refer?’ (p. 113). Three definitions are helpful here:

- (MF) x is a maximal $F =_{df}$ x is an F , and x is not a proper, temporal part of any F .
- (TF) x is a temporary $F =_{df}$ x has some maximal F as a proper, temporal part.
- (FP) x is an F -part $=_{df}$ x is a proper, temporal part of some maximal F . (p. 117)

Guided by the intuition that a person cannot have a person as a proper, temporal part (p. 121), Hudson takes a person to be a maximal C -possessor. A

human person shares some, but not all, temporal parts with a human organism. Hudson illustrates this graphically:

After human conception, there is a human zygote at, say, t_1 . Call the zygote 'Hopeful'. At t_2 there exists 'what appears to be a living human organism'. Call this one 'Vital'. At t_3 there exists 'what appears to be a sentient being'. Call this one 'Feeler'. At t_4 there exists 'what appears to be a rational being'. Call this one 'Thinker'. At t_5 there exists 'what appears to be a cheerful fellow'. Call this one 'Cheerful'. At t_6 , Cheerful permanently loses his cheer; at t_7 , Thinker permanently loses all his rational faculties; at t_8 , Feeler has a terrible accident and permanently loses all sentience; at t_9 , Vital stops living when life support is removed. At t_{10} , Hopeful ceases to exist when the corpse decomposes.

Hopeful, Vital, Feeler, Thinker, and Cheerful are five distinct continuants, all of which (along with many, many others) share a stage at t_5 . Cheerful is a mere person-part. Hopeful, Vital and Feeler are temporary persons, and Thinker is the only maximal person (that is, maximal C-possessor). By Hudson's guiding intuition, only maximal human persons are human persons *simpliciter*. Vital is a maximal living human organism, but not a person. So, we have a view that allows a human person to be a material object, but not identical to (or constituted by) a living human organism. 'Human persons are proper parts of living human organisms, and thus earn the qualification "human" only by way of the overlap relation' (p. 128).

The answer to the question that Hudson asks about human persons is that our term 'human person' refers to spacetime worms 'all of whose parts play a role in its exemplifying whatever features are necessary and sufficient for its personhood' (p. 143). More fully: 'Human persons are those (spatially and temporally gappy) spacetime worms (i) that are not proper parts of other human persons, (ii) that are maximal C-possessors, (iii) whose person-stages are united by a certain relation of psychological continuity and connectedness, (iv) whose later person-stages bear an appropriate causal-dependence relation to their earlier person-stages, and (v) which are most often found somewhen within the lifespan and somewhere beneath the skin of a living human organism' (p. 144).

There seems to be a problem with respect to corpses. Does a human organism have a corpse as a temporal part? On the one hand, Hudson stipulates that a corpse is 'a material object that comes into being at the death of a particular human organism ...' and that has 'neither a person nor a sentient as a proper part' (p. 159). This implies that a human organism does not have a corpse as a temporal part. On the other hand, Hudson says that 'the body that decomposes and rots is the human organism ...' (p. 188). This implies that the human organism does have a corpse as a temporal part. Perhaps 'human organism' is ambiguous between objects that have corpse-stages and objects that do not have corpse-stages. Perhaps we can disambiguate 'human organism' either way; it is just a matter of linguistic decision. Such a proposal would be unappealing to anyone (like a biologist) who assumes that there are natural

kinds in nature.

Hudson applies his theory of human persons to problems in ethics (for example, contraception, abortion of embryos, later-term abortions, infanticide, irreversible coma cases) and one in philosophy of religion (the possibility of the resurrection of the body). Some foetuses and infants are claimed to have moral status, but their having moral status has nothing to do with any connection that they have to persons. In Hudson's discussion, the moral status of the foetus depends wholly on *sentience*—Do sentient pig foetuses have the same moral status as sentient human foetuses?—an idea that plays no role in the theory of persons that he develops (pp. 155–7). Sentience may be an unmentioned characteristic referred to by 'C'; if so, then we have further reason to ask for an account of just what characteristics 'C' refers to.

A Materialist Metaphysics of the Human Person, like much of analytic metaphysics today, is a battleground of intuitions. One's agreement with the theory presented here will depend to a large extent on one's intuitions about vagueness, persistence, *de re* modal properties, 'paradoxes' of coincidence, and unrestricted composition. And one's intuitions on these matters will depend upon one's prior acceptance of a mereological conception of reality as theoretically fundamental. Even without sharing these intuitions, however, a metaphysically inclined reader will appreciate the care with which Hudson develops his positions. Although this is not a book for novices in analytic metaphysics, I recommend it to those familiar with the important metaphysical issues of the day.

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Plato's Progeny: How Plato and Socrates Still Captivate the Modern Mind, by Melissa Lane. London: Duckworth, 2001. Pp. x + 165. P/b £9.99, \$17.95.

Over the past two centuries, many significant intellectual movements have established their bearings by assessing the meaning of Plato and Socrates. Melissa Lane has written an excellent, intriguing book about these readings, showing how they have involved both scholarly exegesis and rhetorical appropriation, and stimulating the reader to think about the relationship between the two. The book's intellectual content and interpretative method demonstrate both the limits to and importance of determining 'what Plato said'. As such, Lane's interpretation of the interpreters is itself a work of philosophy and political theory.

Lane defines the object of *Plato's Progeny* at the outset: to provide a compact history of the reception of Plato that will appeal to those familiar and unfa-