# Death and Suffering Bad

### Nuclear War

#### Nuclear war makes the worst forms of suffering inevitable – comparatively worse than any event in history

Child, 86 (James W., professor of philosophy, Bowling Green State University, “Nuclear War: The Moral Dimension,” Transaction Publishers, pg. 33-39, Tashma)

Are **nuclear war** and its consequences morally measurable? Or **is** it truly **an infinite evil**, "unbounded" as McNamara and Bethe say? The answer has profound consequences for moral analysis. To assess the moral cost of nuclear war we must begin by conceiving of it. Can we? For a long time we told ourselves that we could not. And if it would impose truly infinite human costs, it is little wonder. We called it "the unthinkable" and works of fiction skirted its boundaries. Nevil Shute, in On the Beach} wrote about consequences occurring well after a nuclear war, exclusively from radiation effects and only in the Southern Hemisphere. Even that was frightening enough. Terry Southern took us right to the edge in the film, Dr. Strangelove, then left us to try to conceive it for ourselves. Not so any longer! Numerous works of nonfiction have been written about the effects of nuclear war, from the Office of Technology Assessment’s sober The Effects 0f Nuclear War’ to Jonathan Schell's rather frantic The Fate of the Earth} Several attempts have been made to assess the medical consequences, including Last Aid’ and The Final Epidemic? At long last, popular fiction and drama have begun to grapple directly with nuclear war, rather than to dance around its edge. Examples include General Sir John Hackett’s The Third World War,’ the novel Warday,“ and the films The Day After, Testament, and Threads. Though the definitive fictional account of an unlimited nuclear war has yet to be published, we can begin, through these fictional accounts, to see the outlines of what it might be like. The truth is that nuclear war is quite conceivable, although doing so takes hard work and is profoundly disturbing. A. The Notion of Moral Commensumbi/ily Can the effects of nuclear war be related to our history in a meaningful way? Can they be compared to past catastrophes? lf the answer to the two previous qustions is yes, then moral analysis and evaluation can at least begin. Furthermore, we can employ the categories and concepts of previous moral thought about human conflict and, in particular, just war theory. lf, however, nuclear war is fundamentally different, geniuneiy new under the sun, then new categories and a new conceptual framework might well be required. Which is it? The antinuclear movement has answered without much inquiry that **nuclear war is sui generis**, and that is a handy answer. But is it the right one? As we shall see, that is a complex question. What kinds of nuclear wars are we referring to and what are their consequences? l—low much human death, suffering, and privation does, or might, a given kind of nuclear war produce? ls it commensurable with the human experience of other wars or the Black Plague, for example? Can it be measured on the same scale of human cost? A word about the notion of moral measurement. We work here with a concept familiar to economists, game theorists, and business planners. It is known as "utility." Utility is just some good or value. It may be pleasure, happiness, self-expression and self»development, or one of several other things, depending upon the moral theory of value one holds. The important thing is that it is abstract and, by definition, quan» tifiable and, therefore, measurable} Since we are working with bad things here, like wars andthe bombing of cities, we will speak more of negative utility. It is interesting that philosophers and moralists more often agree about negative utility than about positive. It seems obvious to most of us that human **pain**, **suffering**, deprivation, **and death are bad** (have negative utility). I will refer to this negative utility as "human cost." Some would say that there are bad things other than those which can be measured in terms of human cost, such as blaspheming God or making animal species which have no utility to man extinct. Others, like me, would say that violating the rights of people, or failing to carry out duties owed to them, is also bad, never mind that no human cost may result. But whether it is the only bad thing or not, nearly universal agreement exists that human cost is very bad, indeed. Note also that while we often cannot measure instances of human cost directly, we certainly can (and often do) rank them in order of severity. A ruptured appendix is worse than a hangnail. A child being hungry is worse than a child being deprived of television, and the hunger of ten children is worse than that of one. One thousand human deaths are worse than ten, and (to go to a far more difficult moral claim) we intuitively feel that the death of an innocent person is worse than the death of a person who somehow "deserves it": a terrorist who is killed in his own effort to kill many other innocent people, for example. As we approach the consequences of nuclear war and attempt to get a conceptual grip upon a catastrophe of such large human proportions, we must knock down one very large bogyman raised by the antinuclear defense movement. The philosopher Michael Dummett says: Those who devise nuclear strategies and talk of megadeaths are already insane.\*° In describing the numerical proportions of a U.S. attack on the Soviet Union, Helen Caldicott tells us, "These numbers are obscene,"" and by implication she calls "obscene" anyone who analyzes nuclear war by using such numbers. The actress, Coleen Dewhurst, at a meeting of the Cambridge Union, has said that defense planners who think about nuclear war are "pure evil." It is not evil, nor obscene, nor insane to think and talk about the consequences of nuclear war. To be told that it is can only be understood as name-calling and bullying. The reader should note that those who use such abusive ad hominem arguments almost always go on to discuss nuclear war and its effects. They do not deem themselves to be insane, obscene, or evil, only those who might use such numbers to disagree with them. To talk about quantities of human cost—death, pain, and suffering —and to reason about them, does not necessitate a callous or indifferent attitude toward that suffering and death. Nor does it indicate approval of the actions which cause it, whatever they may be. We may talk of tens of thousands of deaths in conventional bombing raids in World War ll or millions of deaths in a nuclear war[’l`he horror felt at the deaths, often painful, of many of our fellow humans ought never to leave us. For myself, at least, it never does. We must not become inured to the horror by using numbers, but neither should we let it paralyze our thinking process. We are not less humane or human for pushing beyond the horror we feel to use what tools of reason we have, to think and to analyze. We must, after all, decide what we shall do, for great decisions about nuclear war and peace remain to be made. Time and events dictate that these decisions will be made. But it is our choice whether they are made thoughtfully and carefully or by default. Unexamined horror and reac tivc revulsion alone will make for very poor decisions, and perhaps dangerous ones. Now for the commensurability of wars. Wars are great producers of all sorts of human cost and, thus, of massive amounts of clisutility. We can compare those disutilities and measure them (at least rank them in order of their severity, if not on an exact metric scale). Wars (or any other events productive of human cost) are commensurable {flhey can be measured 0n the same scale. That is all that is at issue here! ‘Comrnen» surable’ does not mean "no worse than." I shall argue that the consequences of any practically possible nuclear war are indeed comrnen» surable with past human catastrophes. This claim, if satisfactorily established, has important moral consequences. Indeed, it leads to answers to seemingly unanswerable moral questions. For there is little wonder that "unbounded calamities" are mythic in nature. They are very difficult to think about any other way. But a bounded, finite catastrophe, however vast, however unequaled in our history, is commensurable and thus comparable. The near term effects (within the first ninety days) of various possible nuclear wars are, within very broad but meaningful limits, known; thus, we can arrive at approximations of commensurability. The long term et`fects, on the other hand, are almost completely unknown. Indeed, the theory of the nuclear winter appears to hold that in important sorts of ways, nuclear war might be truly incommensurable. And l shall examine the theory and these apparent claims. But let us look first at the consequences that would occur in the first ninety days following a nuclear war. lB. The Cnmmensurabilily of Nuclear War in Historical Perspective ln thinking about wars in history, one is inclined to think of the neat, orderly battlefields of Frederick the Great or the Duke of Marlborough, where each army formed neat lines, and each soldier was in a colorful uniform which clearly identified him as a combatant. ln these kinds of battles, noncombatants were nowhere to be seen—or threatened. But we must remember that battles are like this only in Hollywood epics. Grapeshot was a vicious weapon which often struck off heads or limbs, or disemboweled its victims. An asymmetric, tumbling musket ball behaved much like a modern dum—dum bullet, which was outlawed at Geneva as inhumane. Wars kill brutally and painfully! They always have. Still, wars, like those of Frederick or Marlborough, made up of a series of battles between professional armies, often mercenaries and always predominantly (before the French Revolution) volunteers, on isolated fields, are not even a good paradigm. Wars have always been worse than that, far worse. Whole peoples have made war their primary cultural activity, or source of livelihood, or both. The Yanomamo of the Orinoco Valley in Venezuela live to fight." War and plunder (more often than not visited upon noncombatants) were central to the tribal existence ofthe Mongols, the Norse raiders, and numerous American Indian tribes. Of more relevance to our purposes, total war—defined as the oblitera» tion of whole societies and the enslavement or slaughter of whole peoples—did not arrive with the nuclear weapon or even with the strategic bomber. It is literally as old as recorded history. Sargon of Akkad, for example, conducted strategic devastation throughout Mesopotamia around 2250 B.C. lf one activity captures the essence of war in history it is not the battlefield, but the siege and sack of cities and the devastation of the country— side: total war carried out upon civilians. The Second Punic War (218-201 B.C.) matched two of the greatest generals of the ancient world, Hannibal and Scipio Africanus. The battles they fought are still studied in military schools. Less often remembered is the horrible devastation that resulted in Southern Italy, the locus of most of the campaigns, devastation that resulted from the marching armies, rather than the historic battles. Some claim that 50 perecent of the population was killed or died of hunger or disease in the seventeen years of the war." Genghis Khan (1 162?-1227), one of the greatest conquerers of all time, quite consciously used terror to prompt surrender. ln one particularly brutal campaign, he attempted to slaughter the entire population of the Khorezin Empire of Persia. " He did not quite succeed, although millions must have died and scores of cities and towns were completely destroyed in the process. Desmond Seward, in his excellent book, The Hundred Years’ War: The Eng/ish in France [337-[453, gives us a frightening account of strategic devastation on a smaller scale, but one which is completely characteristic of military campaigns throughout history. On 13 July 1346 the English armada landed at La Hogue, on the north of the Cherbourg peninsula .... The following day the King launched a chevauchee through the Cotentin, deliberately devastating the rich countryside, his men burning mills and barns, orchards, haystacks and cornricks, smashing wine vats, tearing down and setting fire to the thatched cabins of the villagers, whose throats they cut together with those of their livestock. One may presume that the usual atrocities were perpetrated on the peasants·the men were tortured to reveal hidden valuables, the women suffering multiple rape and sexual mutilation, those who were pregnant being disembowelled. Terror was an indispensable accompaniment to every chevuuchee and Edward obviously intended to wreak the maximum ‘dumpnum’—the medieval term for that total war which struck at an enemy King through his subjects .... On 26 July Edward’s army reached Caen, larger than any town in England apart from Loudon, and soon stormed their way through the bridge gate. When the garrison surrendered, the English started to plunder, rape and kill, ‘for the soldiers were without mercy‘. The desperate inhabitants then began to throw stones, wooden beams and iron bars from the rooftops down into the narrow streets, killing more than 500 Englishmen. Edward ordered the entire population to be put to the sword and the town burnt, ‘and there were done in the town many evil deeds, murders and robberies’~although Godefroi d`l—{arcourt per— suaded the King to rescind his order. The sack lasted three days and 3,000 townsmen died." And so goes the grim tale throughout Edward’s entire campaign in France. Closer to our own time, it is estimated that in the Thirty \’ears’ War (1618-1648) as much as 40 percent of the population of Germany was wiped out either directly by siege or by strategic devastation with its consequent disease and hunger. Reports of starvation and cannibalism were not uncommon. What was almost certainly the greatest human cost ever expended in human conflict before the dawn of the twentieth century is almost unknown in the West. China in the middle of the last century was wracked by a series of revolutions and outbursts of civil violence on a scale never seen anywhere before. They lasted from 1850 until 1878. The cost in lives can never be known within even a worthwhile approxima~ tion, but it was vast. The worst outbreak, called the Taiping Revolution, lasted from 1850 to 1864. lt has been estimated that forty million people died, perhaps l0 percent of the entire population of China. Much of this monumental human cost resulted from the conscious policies of both the rebels and the lmperial Manchu armies as they killed civilians and induced starvation by strategic devastation.‘° To get a measure of the ethnocentrism we practice in these matters, consider the fact that this titanic human cataclysm does not even merit its own article in most English language encyclopedias. As we shall see, this ethnocentrism is a key feature of our assessment of nuclear war. ln general, wars throughout history were characterized by armies marching from siege to siege and laying waste to the countryside along the way. Moreover, one is constantly struck while reading in primary historical sources just how casually such brutality was accepted. Hugo Grotius, whom we have met before, did as much as anyone to civilize and humanize war. Nonetheless, in his The Law of War and Peace, he blithely comments that after a city falls to siege the commander ought to turn it over to his troops for three days of plunder (always unavoidably attend— ed by rapes and killings).‘” lt is after all, he assures us, a conventional law of war, honored throughout history. He was quite correct, of course. And besides, he continues, it is their due! Just three days though, H0 more. Quite simply, most wars in history have been total wars waged without quarter against combatants and noncombatants alike, with the level of destruction limited only by the means available. Sometimes this viciousness and brutality was part of the conscious use of terror; sometimes it was completely without rational purpose. Whether purposive or not, it occurred over and over throughout history. Of course, fact does not translate to value; the frequent occurrence of such frightful events does not render them justifiable: most certainly not. It only sets the stage for consideration of what we face today. It tells us that our problems might not be without precedent in history. The siege and sack of cities and the devastation of rural areas made the whole population of a city and the surrounding countryside hostage to their leaders` policies and their enemies’ mercy. Constant risk of total war—the stakes being death or enslavement—seems to have been an element of the human <>0¤· dition. Quite simply, the period between the Thirty Years’ War and the advent of the strategic bomber in World War ll represents a short hiatus, while the era of strategic bombing and nuclear weapons is a return to the norm. lf the military historian Michael Howard is correct, even this relatively humane respite from an otherwise horrifying tale of brutality was not due to the moral values ofthe West but, instead, to the meager national treasuries that funded wars during that time.'“ But surely, we want to say that, however regrettable this sad tale is, nuclear war is worse than these examples of human cruelty and stupidity. An **unlimited nuclear war between** the **super powers would**, quite simply, **be the worst catastrophe in** human **history**, substantially worse than anything that has preceded it.

#### Extinction is a qualitatively different impact

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In 1983, discussion of human extinction re-emerged when Carl Sagan and others [calculated](http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/222/4630/1283) that a global thermonuclear war could generate enough atmospheric debris to kill much of the planet's plant life and, with it, humanity. While the "nuclear winter" theory fell out of favor in the 1990s, recent climate models suggest that the original calculations actually underestimated the catastrophic [effects](http://www.agu.org/pubs/crossref/2007/2006JD008235.shtml) of thermonuclear war. Moreover, the original model of Sagan and his collaborators supported research showing that supervolcanic eruptions and asteroid or comet impacts could pose comparable extinction risks. Despite these notable instances, in the 61 years since the Doomsday Clock's creation, the risk of human extinction has received relatively scant scientific attention, with a bibliography filling perhaps one page. Maybe this is because human extinction seems to most of us impossible, inevitable, or, in either case, beyond our control. Still, it's surprising that a topic of primary significance to humanity has provoked so little serious research. One of the missions of the [Future of Humanity Institute](http://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/) at Oxford University is to expand scholarly analysis of extinction risks by studying extinction-level hazards, their relative probabilities, and strategies for mitigation. In July 2008, the institute organized a meeting on these subjects, drawing experts from physics, biology, philosophy, economics, law, and public policy. The facts are sobering. More than 99.9 percent of species that have ever existed on Earth have gone extinct. Over the long run, it seems likely that humanity will meet the same fate. In less than a billion years, the increased intensity of the Sun will initiate a wet greenhouse effect, even without any human interference, making Earth inhospitable to life. A couple of billion years later Earth will be destroyed, when it's engulfed by our Sun as it expands into a red-giant star. If we colonize space, we could survive longer than our planet, but as mammalian species survive, on average, only two million years, we should consider ourselves very lucky if we make it to one billion. Humanity could be extinguished as early as this century by succumbing to natural hazards, such as an extinction-level asteroid or comet impact, supervolcanic eruption, global methane-hydrate release, or nearby supernova or gamma-ray burst. (Perhaps the most probable of these hazards, supervolcanism, was discovered only in the last 25 years, suggesting that other natural hazards may remain unrecognized.) Fortunately the probability of any one of these events killing off our species is very low--less than one in 100 million per year, given what we know about their past frequency. But as improbable as these events are, measures to reduce their probability can still be worthwhile. For instance, [investments](http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/118486553/abstract?CRETRY=1&SRETRY=0) in asteroid detection and deflection technologies cost less, per life saved, than most investments in medicine. While an extinction-level asteroid impact is very unlikely, its improbability is outweighed by its potential death toll. The risks from anthropogenic hazards appear at present larger than those from natural ones. Although great progress has been made in reducing the number of nuclear weapons in the world, humanity is still threatened by the possibility of a global thermonuclear war and a resulting nuclear winter. We may face even greater risks from emerging technologies. Advances in synthetic biology might make it possible to engineer pathogens capable of extinction-level pandemics. The knowledge, equipment, and materials needed to engineer pathogens are more accessible than those needed to build nuclear weapons. And unlike other weapons, pathogens are self-replicating, allowing a small arsenal to become exponentially destructive. Pathogens have been [implicated](http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/118564287/abstract) in the extinctions of many wild species. Although most pandemics "fade out" by reducing the density of susceptible populations, pathogens with wide host ranges in multiple species can reach even isolated individuals. The intentional or unintentional release of engineered pathogens with high transmissibility, latency, and lethality might be capable of causing human extinction. While such an event seems unlikely today, the likelihood may increase as biotechnologies continue to improve at a rate rivaling [Moore's Law](http://www.intel.com/technology/mooreslaw/index.htm). Farther out in time are technologies that remain theoretical but might be developed this century. Molecular nanotechnology could allow the creation of self-replicating machines capable of destroying the ecosystem. And advances in neuroscience and computation might enable improvements in cognition that accelerate the invention of new weapons. A survey at the Oxford conference found that concerns about human extinction were dominated by fears that new technologies would be misused. These emerging threats are especially challenging as they could become dangerous more quickly than past technologies, outpacing society's ability to control them. As H.G. Wells noted, "Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe." Such remote risks may seem academic in a world plagued by immediate problems, such as global poverty, HIV, and climate change. But as intimidating as these problems are, they do not threaten human existence. In [discussing](http://www.foreignaffairs.org/19831201faessay8351/carl-sagan/nuclear-war-and-climatic-catastrophe-some-policy-implications.html) the risk of nuclear winter, Carl Sagan emphasized the astronomical toll of human extinction: A nuclear war imperils all of our descendants, for as long as there will be humans. Even if the population remains static, with an average lifetime of the order of 100 years, over a typical time period for the biological evolution of a successful species (roughly ten million years), we are talking about some 500 trillion people yet to come. By this criterion, the stakes are one million times greater for extinction than for the more modest nuclear wars that kill "only" hundreds of millions of people. There are many other possible measures of the potential loss--including culture and science, the evolutionary history of the planet, and the significance of the lives of all of our ancestors who contributed to the future of their descendants. Extinction is the undoing of the human enterprise. There is a **discontinuity between risks that threaten 10 percent or even 99 percent of humanity and those that threaten 100 percent**. For disasters killing less than all humanity, there is a good chance that the species could recover. If we value future human generations, then **reducing extinction risks should** dominate **our considerations**. Fortunately, most measures to reduce these risks also improve global security against a range of lesser catastrophes, and thus deserve support regardless of how much one worries about extinction. These measures include: Removing nuclear weapons from hair-trigger alert and further reducing their numbers; Placing safeguards on gene synthesis equipment to prevent synthesis of select pathogens; Improving our ability to respond to infectious diseases, including rapid disease surveillance, diagnosis, and control, as well as accelerated drug development; Funding research on asteroid detection and deflection, "hot spot" eruptions, methane hydrate deposits, and other catastrophic natural hazards; Monitoring developments in key disruptive technologies, such as nanotechnology and computational neuroscience, and developing international policies to reduce the risk of catastrophic accidents.

### Magnitudes of Suffering

#### Some suffering may be inevitable – but extreme suffering is unjustified

Edelglass, 6 (William, Department of Philosophy, Colby College in Maine, “Levinas on Suffering and Compassion,” Sophia, Volume 45, Issue 2, October 2006, pg. 43-59, SpringerLink, pdf, Tashma)

According to Levinas's phenomenology, mild discomfort can be mastered by consciousness. But, **as suffering increases and overwhelms the subject**, **it becomes** a pure passivity, **meaningless and evil**. Suffering that leaves the subject without resources, Levinas consistently emphasizes, is characterized by an excessive passivity. It is a submission without a synthesizing act of consciousness. Our senses in their receptivity to the world, phenomenologists insist, are still acting, constituting meaning, forming the material content of sensation. As a content of consciousness, suffering lends itself to phenomenological description, not unlike other sensations of vision, hearing, or touch. And yet, according to Levinas's phenomenology, suffering cannot be grasped, it is 'unassumable,' and this elusiveness is its 'content' (US91). Suffering is outside the intending capacity of consciousness or the apperceptive synthesizing activity of the Kantian 'I think.' Levinas thus speaks of the ambiguity of suffering as a consciousness of the refusal of order and this refusal itself. In suffering, Levinas argues, the refusal of meaning is itself a sensible quality: 'In the guise of "experienced" content, the way in which, with a consciousness, the unbearable is precisely not borne, the manner of this not-being-borne; which, paradoxically, is itself a sensation or a datum' (US92). Beyond the ambiguity of patience - the hope and activity of passivity that masters itself- Levinas insists, **there is suffering in which** even the **exertion of** the will as **hope is no longer possible.** Such suffering is an undergoing without initiative, a bearing of the world, a pure passivity not associated with an activity that senses pain as an object. Thus, the very content of suffering is passivity: 'passivity - that is, a modality - signifies as a quiddity' (US92). The passivity of suffering does not derive simply from a great intensity; the essence of suffering is disproportionate to our senses, an excess beyond the measure of our faculties. Because suffering is a pure passivity, lived as the breach of the totality we constitute through intending acts, Levinas argues, even suffering that is chosen cannot be meaningfully systematized within a coherent whole. Suffering is a rupture and disturbance of meaning because it suffocates the subject and destroys the capacity for systematically assimilating the world. 9 Pain isolates itself in consciousness, overwhelming consciousness with its insistence. **Suffering**, then, **is an absurdity**, 'an absurdity breaking out on the ground of signification.'1~ This absurdity is the eidetic character of suffering Levinas seeks to draw out in his phenomenology. Suffering often appears justified, from the biological need for sensibility to pain, to the various ways in which suffering is employed in character formation, the concerns of practical life, a community's desire for justice, and the needs of the state. Implicit in Levinas's texts is the insistence that the analysis of these sufferings calls for a distinction between the use of pain as a tool, a practice performed on the Other's body for a particular end, and the acknowledgement of the Other's lived pain. A consequence of Levinas's phenomenology is the idea that instrumental justifications of extreme suffering necessarily are insensible to the unbearable pain they seek to legitimize. Strictly speaking, then, suffering is meaningless and cannot be comprehended or justified by rational argument. Meaningless, and therefore unjustifiable, Levinas insists, suffering is evil. Suffering, according to Levinas's phenomenology, is an exception to the subject's mastery of being; in suffering the subject endures the overwhelming of freedom by alterity. The will that revels in the autonomous grasping of the world, in suffering finds itself grasped by the world. The in-itself of the will loses its capacity to exert itself and submits to the will of what is beyond its grasp. Contrary to Heidegger, it is not the anxiety before my own death which threatens the will and the self. For, Levinas argues, death, announced in suffering, is in a future always beyond the present. Instead of death, it is the pure passivity of suffering that menaces the freedom of the will. The will endures pain 'as a tyranny,' the work of a 'You,' a malicious other who perpetrates violence (TI239). **This tyranny**, Levinas argues, 'is more radical than sin, for it **threatens** the will in its very structure as a will, in its **dignity** as origin **and identity**' (TI237). Because suffering is unjustifiable, it is a tyranny **breaking open** my world of **totality and meaning** '**for nothing**.' The gratuitous and extreme suffering that destroys the capacity for flourishing human activity is generally addressed by thinkers in European traditions in the context of metaphysical questions of evil (is evil a positive substance or deviation from the Good?), or problems of philosophical anthropology (is evil chosen or is it a result of ignorance?). For these traditions it is evil, not suffering, that is the great scandal, for they consider suffering to be evil only when it is both severe and unjustified.

#### Suffering leads to alienation and degradation

Hooft, 98 (Stan Van, professor of philosophy, Deakin University in Melbourne, “The Meanings of Suffering,” The Hastings Center Report, Volume 28, Issue 5, pg. 13-19, JSTOR, pdf, Tashma)

The idea that suffering is an inevitable and inescapable aspect of worldly existence but that it can be escaped by a form of self-transcendence, an elevation to a higher mode of existence, can also be found in many of the great world religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, and Christianity. In the West, the pre- dominant way of giving suffering meaning is still derived from Christianity. For a Christian, human beings are tainted with original sin. There is here another version of the notion that worldly existence is less than perfect, even corrupt, but in this version, the primordial condition of humanity requires reparation. As a natural outgrowth of a religious tradi- tion in which ritual blood sacrifice was used to appease God and seek His favor, and in which guilt for sin was washed away in sacrificial blood, suffering came to be seen as a price that had to be paid for sin. And so heinous was the original crime of humanity that nothing less than the suffering of a God was required to achieve reparation for it. Christ's suffering on the cross thus becomes a paradigm case of positive suffering. It was this sacrifice that saved human- kind from sin, and every Christian is called upon to participate in it by dedicating his or her own suffering to this salvific task or by declaring his or her faith in its achievement. Thus the Christian believes that salvation is achieved through suffering, whether his or her own or that of Christ. This account can be complicated. At least one writer in the Christian tradition, Stanley Hauerwas, has recently argued that Christians should not in any simplistic way align their suffering with that represented by the cross. According to Hauerwas, only suffering accepted for some moral reason is Christlike. Hauerwas argues that suffering is an intrinsic part of our moral lives. No human life could be complete without accepting some suffering as part of its moral project. Just as we should be prepared to accept death for some overwhelmingly noble cause, so we should be pre- pared to accept suffering in proportion to the value at issue. Even in mundane contexts our moral self project or our autonomy involves being able to give up things that we want. "Suffering is not morally significant only because things happen to us that we cannot avoid," writes Hauerwas, "but because the demand of morality cannot be satisfied with- out asking the self to submit to limits imposed by morality itself. In this sense, without allowing ourselves and others to suffer we could not be human or humane."5 This insightful observation about human life recasts the meaning of suffering by turning it into sacrifice. Suffering for a cause, even merely giving up something we want for the sake of something worthier, frustrates our desires and might for that reason be thought of as suffering. Insofar as these experiences are freely accepted for the sake of some good, however, they are actually cases of sacrifice. That is, one is accepting some frustration, pain, or negative experience for the sake of something better or worthier. However the relation between the Christian's suffering and the sufferings of Christ is understood, the out- lines of the Christian theory of suffering are clear. At the contemplative level of our being, where we establish the meaningfulness of our lives by relating it to a larger story, reality, or cosmic theory, Christians relate their suffering to the story of Christ so as to give it meaning. In this way Christians feel that they can contribute their suffering to the salvific plan of God. Suffering loses its prima facie negative character for the victim by being given a transcendent, positive meaning. The Christian concept of divine providence works in a similar way, by suggesting that all the unfortunate things that occur in the world have a larger purpose and will ultimately tend to the good, as guaranteed by God. This too is a theory that belongs to the meaning-seeking or contemplative aspect of our existence. It too allows us to understand suffering and misfortune as meaningful, in this case by situating it within a divine providential plan. The key point about an authentic acceptance of suffering is that suffer- ing is not made meaningful. It is inherently negative. What is crucial in the Christian theories is that suffering is experienced as negative-it really is suffering-but that when suffering is given meaning within the larger story, it becomes something positive. Suffering will be negative in that it hinders the fulfillment of the biological aims of the body, negative in that it involves pain or other frustrations of our desires and needs, and negative in that it frustrates our practical projects and our pursuit of everyday goals. Yet it becomes positive by virtue of the meaning-giving aspect of our existence. Our bodies might suffer maladies, we might suffer pain, our zest for life might be lost, our relationships shattered, our projects failures, our suffering real, and yet we can think of it as for the ultimate good. And in this way the meaningfulness and integration of our existence can be preserved and even enhanced despite the trauma we experience. It is among the highest triumphs of human existence that it can achieve the overcoming and transformation of suffering in this way. Even within the Christian tradition, these ways of turning suffering into something positive have been questioned. In a rich and complex argument, Simone Weil has stressed the irreducibly negative character of suffering even when conceived from a theological perspective. Weil argues that some suffering amounts to what she calls "affliction," a form of suffer- ing that damages the selfhood and crushes the spirit of its victim. Whereas **everyday** pain and **suffering** are troubles **we can cope with**, **in the face of** which we can bless **God** for the challenges He sends us, **affliction cannot but lead to despair**. Whether because of the intensity or the inter- minable duration of the agony, the victim of affliction is reduced to being a thing completely determined by the blind forces of causality. Such **suffering is** a form of **humiliation and** of **absolute degradation**. To endure it is to be a slave to the pain and anguish that the victim undergoes. Moreover, by focusing the victim's attention excusively on personal distress, it constitutes the victim as totally alienated in relation to others and to Otherness. **Affliction leads to total separation from hope**, from society, and from God.

### Magnitudes of Suffering Extension

#### Extreme suffering is *inherently bad* – it's impossible to determine how individuals view suffering

Hooft, 98 (Stan Van, professor of philosophy, Deakin University in Melbourne, “The Meanings of Suffering,” The Hastings Center Report, Volume 28, Issue 5, pg. 13-19, JSTOR, pdf, Tashma)

Reflecting on the Holocaust, Levinas concedes that **suffering of such magnitude and** such **uselessness cannot be absorbed** into a justifying theological narrative. God was silent in Auschwitz and remains so. And yet there is a nontheological meaning that can be ascribed to suffering if one's view of one's own suffering might be different from one's view of the suffering of others. Indeed, it must be different. To say of the suffering of another that it is justified by having a meaning or a purpose is to denigrate the other by making him a means to some purpose. It is an immoral gesture that refuses to see the suffering for what it is: useless. Our response to the suffering of the other must be compassion, not explanation. Indeed, Levinas argues that suffering is a unique possibility for overcoming the isolation that we all experience as atomistic individuals in a narcissistic society. Even in our own experience, suffering cannot be absorbed into the world that we constitute for ourselves as our own. It is always strange and foreign. Whereas it is the existential nature of our being to be active in relation to the world, in the face of suffering we are passive. As a result **suffering is always an alienation of** our **being**. It destroys our self-possession and our self-satisfied enjoyment of life.

#### Their evidence conflates *all* suffering – we have an obligation to lessen the suffering from (\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

Mayerfield 2 - Ph.D from Princeton, associate professor in the Political Science Department at the University of Washington

Jamie, Ph.D from Princeton, associate professor in the Political Science Department at the University of Washington, "Suffering and Moral Responsibility," 2002, book

Is the relief of suffering more important or is it not more important, than the promotion of happiness? The classical utilitarians answered that it is not. They believed that we should maximize the total surplus of happiness over suffering, so they were committed to the view than increase in positive happiness and a reduction of suffering, when equal in magnitude, are equal in value. Their view is well-stated by Henry Sidgwick. Utilitarianism, we are told, instructs us to seek the Greatest Happiness, by which is meant "the greatest possible surplus of pleasure over pain, the pain being conceived as balanced against an equal amount of pleasure, so that the two contrasted amounts annihilate each other for the purposes of ethical calculation. Against this view, Karl Popper famously objected: I believe that there is, from the ethical point of view, no symmetry between suffering and happiness, or between pain and pleasure. Both the greatest happiness principle of Utilitarians and Kant's principle, "promote other people's happiness…." Seem to me (at least in their formulations) fundamentally wrong in this point, which is, however not one for rational argument… in my opinion… human suffering makes a direct moral appeal, namely, the appeal for help, while there is no similar call to increase the happiness of a man who is doing well anyway. Many people agree with Popper that the alleviation of suffering is more urgent than the promotion of happiness. Many people also believe that the reduction of more intense suffering is more urgent than the reduction of less intense suffering.

#### Even if suffering is inevitable, we should act to lessen the *intensity* of suffering

Mayerfield 2 - Ph.D from Princeton, associate professor in the Political Science Department at the University of Washington

Jamie, Ph.D from Princeton, associate professor in the Political Science Department at the University of Washington, "Suffering and Moral Responsibility," 2002, book

If we try to locate the threshold of lexical priority within suffering, we might try to do it at a certain level of intensity. Intensity of suffering matters a lot. A sophisticated moral understanding requires a knowledge of the moral significance of each level of intensity of suffering. We might want to say a certain intensity level that it is morally significant in this way. This intensity level must never be crossed if the only purpose is to bring happiness to others.

#### Not all suffering is the same

Paul Farmer 1996 - Assistant Professor in the Department of Social Medicine at Harvard Medical School, practices medicine at the Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston and at the Clinique Bon Sauveur in rural Haiti. (“On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below,” Daedalus, Winter 1996, <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/stable/pdfplus/20027362.pdf>, JSTOR)

The capacity to suffer is, clearly, part of being human. But not all suffering is equal, in spite of pernicious and often self-serving identity politics that suggest otherwise. One of the unfortunate sequelae of identity politics has been the obscuring of structural violence, which metes out injuries of vastly different severity. Careful assessment of severity is important, at least to physicians, who must practice triage and referral daily. What suffering needs to be taken care of first and with what resources? It is possible to speak of extreme human suffering, and an inordinate share of this sort of pain is currently endured by those living in poverty. Take, for example, illness and premature death, in many places in the world the leading cause of extreme suffering. In a striking departure from previous, staid reports, the World Health Organization now acknowledges that poverty is the world's greatest killer: "Poverty wields its destructive influence at every stage of human life, from the moment of conception to the grave. It conspires with the most deadly and painful diseases.

#### Protection of people is worth it

Lloyd Axworthy 2001 - director of the University of British Columbia's Centre for the Study of Global Issues and former minister of foreign affairs of Canada. (“Human Security and Global Governance: Putting People First,” Global Insights, <http://www.jstor.org.proxy.lib.umich.edu/stable/pdfplus/27800284.pdf>, JSTOR)

The present discourse of security reflects this change in the global reality and the change in perspective that goes with it. No longer are we limited to discussions of states' rights and national sovereignty. Protecting civilians, addressing the plight of war-affected children and the threat of terrorism and drugs, managing open borders, and combating infectious diseases are now part of a dialogue. This shift reflects a growing recognition that the protection of people must be a principal concern. But the term is not really new. A recognition that people's rights are at least as important as those of states has been gaining momentum since the end of World War II. The Holocaust forced a serious examination of the place of international moral standards and codes in the conduct of world affairs. It also caused us to rethink the principles of national sovereignty. The Nuremberg trials acknowledged that grotesque violations of people's rights could not go unpunished. The United Nations Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and the Genocide and Geneva conventions all recognized the inherent right of people to personal security. They challenge conventional notions of sovereignty when serious violations of rights occur. Human security today puts people first and recognizes that their safety is integral to the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security. The security of states is essential, but not sufficient, to fully ensure the safety and well-being of the world's peoples. Several current challenges are particularly compelling.

### Preventable Death

#### Should avoid preventable death – contemplating it gives meaning to our life

Kelsang 99 - internationally renowned teacher of Buddhism

Geshe, <http://dealingwithfear.org/fear-of-death.htm>

Preparing for Death Generally, our fear of death is an unhealthy and unrealistic fear-we don’t want to die, so we ignore the subject, deny it, or get morbidly obsessed by it and think that life is meaningless. However, **right now we cannot do anything about dying, so there is no point fearing death itself. What kind of fear is useful**? **A healthy fear of death would be the fear of dying unprepared**, **as this is a fear we can do something about, a danger we can avert. If we have this realistic fear**, **this sense of danger, we are encouraged to prepare for a peaceful and successful death and are also inspired to make the most of our very precious human life instead of wasting** it. This “**sense of danger” inspires us to make preparations so that we are no longer in the danger we are in now**, **for example by practicing moral discipline,** purifying our negative karma, and accumulating as much merit, or good karma, as possible. **We put on a seat belt out of a sense of danger of the unseen dangers of traffic on the road, and that seat belt protects us from going through the windscreen.** **We can do nothing about other traffic, but we can do something about whether or not we go through the windscreen if someone crashes into us**. Similarly, we can do nothing about the fact of death**, but we can seize control over how we prepare for death and how we die.** Eventually, through Tantric spiritual practice, we can even attain a deathless body. In Living Meaningfully, Dying Joyfully, Geshe Kelsang says: **Dying with regrets is not at all unusual. To avoid a sad and meaningless end to our life we need to remember continually that we too must die. Contemplating our own death will inspire us to use our life wisely by developing the inner refuge of spiritual realizations; otherwise we shall have no ability to protect ourself from the sufferings of death and what lies beyond.** Moreover, when someone close to us is dying, such as a parent or friend, we shall be powerless to help them because we shall not know how; and we shall experience sadness and frustration at our inability to be of genuine help. Preparing for death is one of the kindest and wisest things we can do both for ourself and others.

### Always Value to Life

#### One can find value even in the worst circumstances

Lambrou 7/22-PhD, past chairman of psychology at Scripps Memorial Hospital, author of 5 books, member of professional organizations including the Association for Psychological Science, past-president of the American Psychotherapy and Medical Hypnosis Association , the San Diego Psychological Association (Peter, “Opening Your Happiness Value”, Psychology Today, http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/codes-joy/201207/opening-your-happiness-valve)

The shortcuts some people try for achieving happiness include ingesting drugs like alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, narcotic pain medicines, to name just a few; have the consequence of generating imbalances that can lead to addiction, unwanted moods like anxiety and depression, and worse. The shortcuts to happiness are often attempts to resolve stress, worry, hurtful relationships, low energy, loss of confidence, and a broad range of other problems, but the shortcut can lead to those unintended consequences. Better to rely on one's own body chemistry factory instead of shortcuts. It’s scientific truth that our bodies are extraordinary chemical manufacturing plants. Bottom of Form. In much the same way that the powerful pain medicine morphine blocks how your brain perceives pain, your brain has naturally occurring chemicals that do the same thing and more, regulating your emotions, your sleep, your energy, your ability to interact with others and as a result, your happiness. The state of happiness is natural. We all basically seek happiness. I’ve not had a person ever come to my office with the problem, “I’m just too darned happy,” and seeking to be ‘bummed out’ a bit. So, how does a person direct their inner chemistry set to whip up some dopamine or endorphins, or add a dash of serotonin for that matter? Of course, there’s not just one way, there are many. Meditation, love, helping others, long-distance running are some. But when a person has tried and not succeeded, there is a reliable process that helps to dissolve the blocks to allowing the flow of happiness to develop. Blocks to happiness have little to do with the outside world. A considerable body of research shows that happiness is not a product of money or wealth, except at the extreme ends of poverty, money, even lottery style wealth doesn’t lead to lasting happiness. People are able to experience states of happiness almost regardless of life circumstances. Yet, even people who are blessed with the most idyllic set of life circumstances can discover that happiness eludes them. In writing Code To Joy: The Four-Step Solution to Unlocking Your Natural State of Happiness, we found there is a process to melt away the blocks to joy and happiness. The four steps constitute a reliable method for reversing the blocking beliefs that hide happiness from view and are adaptable to a wide range of individual life experiences that created those blocking beliefs. Those four steps are: Identify the belief; clear the interference; Repattern the beliefs; and lastly; Anchor the new belief for lasting effect.

#### Humans, if living, can adapt to create happiness

Diener, Biswas-Diener ’08-psychologist, professor, and author, senior scientist for The Gallup Organization, BA in Psychology from California State University at Fresno, PhD from the University of Washington, was a faculty member for the University of Illinois, honorary PhDs from Free University of Berlin and Eureka College, psychologist, researcher, managing director at Positive Acorn, professor at Portland State University, PhD from University of Tromso, author of many books and articles, on the editorial boards of the Journal of Happiness Studies and Journal of Positive Psychology, co-founded The Strengths Pro (Ed, Robert, “Happiness Unlocking the Mysteries of Psychological Wealth”, Blackwell Publishing, 2008)

While you may not be a climber, you can likely recognize the metaphorical implications of this story. In so many ways, and for so many people, the pursuit of goals is like a climb up the side of a mountain. There are better routes and worse routes; there are hazards and setbacks; effort is required; and there is the hope ultimate success. Perhaps most important, the summit is only one small part of the climb. Just as climbers eagerly anticipate their expedition, enjoy the relief of an occasional rest, and savor the memory of their trips. Happiness is often less about achieving goals than it is about enjoyment along the way, and fond recollections afterward. In this way, Art Kramer's story beautifully illustrates one of the main points in this book: happiness is not just a destination. That's right: despite the fact that many people seek out lasting fulfillment - and it is natural and understandable to do so - happiness is not an emotional finish line in the race of life. We should repeat that; happiness should not be looked at just as a destination we try to reach, but as a beneficial way we leant to travel. A key to psychological wealth is to understand the importance of the journey itself to happiness. What does it mean to that happiness is a process, not a place? There are several important lessons in the dictum. The Art Kramer story illustrates one meaning – that happiness often comes from doing rather than having. If we enjoy the activities needed in working for our goals, many hours and years of pleasure are provided, whereas reaching summits provides only the occasional short-term high. Another important meaning of the "process, not a place' maxim is that no matter what good life circumstances we obtain, things can still go wrong. Furthermore, even in good circumstances we need to find new challenges and goals, or things will grow boring. We adapt to good things and need to move on to new goals to continue to enjoy life to the fullest.

### Fear Good

#### Nuclear fear is vital to prevent nuclear conflict

Child, 86 (James W., professor of philosophy, Bowling Green State University, “Nuclear War: The Moral Dimension,” Transaction Publishers, pg. 176, Tashma)

Likewise, **we must develop strong**, **unfrightened**, **affirmative attitudes toward** the **risk of nuclear war**. Only then can we disenthrall ourselves from myths and perhaps lessen the danger. We must see the threat of nuclear war as it is: of large but still human dimensions; a very difficult but ultimately tractable problem. But like all really important problems of human existence, the solution will come in bits and pieces to be slowly and patiently assembled: a more secure deterrent force replacing a vulnerable one here; a mutually adopted measure against accidental war there. In this painstaking process, we must dare to bear the risk of nuclear war if we are ever to make that risk go away.

#### Fear of death solves extinction

Beres 96 - Professor of Political Science and International Law at Purdue University

Louis Rene, Feb., Scholar

Fear of death, the ultimate source of anxiety, is essential to human survival. This is true not only for individuals, but also for states. Without such fear, states will exhibit an incapacity to confront nonbeing that can hasten their disappearance. So it is today with the State of Israel. Israel suffers acutely from insufficient existential dread. Refusing to tremble before the growing prospect of collective disintegration - a forseeable prospect connected with both genocide and war - this state is now unable to take the necessary steps toward collective survival. What is more, because death is the one fact of life which is not relative but absolute, Israel's blithe unawareness of its national mortality deprives its still living days of essential absoluteness and growth. For states, just as for individuals, confronting death can give the most positive reality to life itself. In this respect, a cultivated awareness of nonbeing is central to each state's pattern of potentialities as well as to its very existence. When a state chooses to block off such an awareness, a choice currently made by the State of Israel, it loses, possibly forever, the altogether critical benefits of "anxiety."

### Death Bad – AT: Schopenhauer

#### Schopenhauer is wrong – ignores the positive aspect of happiness and bases his analysis in his mental disorder

Magee 83 – Fellow @ Harvard, Yale and Oxford

Bryan, fellow at Yale, Harvard, Oxford, Cambridge, Sydney in philosophy, "The Philosophy of Schopenhauer," 1983, page 241-242

This brings us to a shortcoming of Schopenhauer's theory of the arts in general which derives from his pessimism. He asserts that the appeal of art as such resides in the fact that art provides a temporary escape from the otherwise almost intolerable unhappiness of life. But it seems to me an obvious empirical fact that we are not as unhappy as all that, most of us, for most of the time. Here, as in the case of music, we are confronted with an instance of Schopenhauer's personality disorder distorting the contents of his philosophy. If anything – and there are places in his writings where he says as much – what is typical of human beings is to drift through life in a somewhat neutral, equable mood which for much of the time tends to look hopefully, if also uncertainly, on the bright side. This weak, tentative optimism maybe unjustified by the realities of our situation, and may therefore be facile, but it is a wholly different state of mind from the frustrated misery which Schopenhauer attributes to us as our normal condition. Like-wise, his purely negative definition of happiness as the absence of suffering, or boredom, or anxiety, or unsatisfied longing – and his related definition of pleasure as the absence of pain – run counter to direct experience. We are indeed exhilarated by relief from pain or danger, and it can be a marvelous feeling, but in the enjoyment of great art, or love, or friendship, there is something altogether more outgoing than this. These things involve us in a relationship with something or someone outside ourselves, a gratified extension of ourselves which is self-enhancing, and thus life-enhancing, and in that specific sense positive. Something of the sort is true of even our purely physical pleasures. When confronted with good food and drink we do not usually push them aside the moment our hunger and thirst are assuaged, but carry on eating and drinking for the sheer enjoyment of it. And this is normal behavior. Addictions provide examples of pleasure in Schopenhauer's sense, but they also illuminate the difference between that and something more positive. A compulsive smoker (I have been one) rarely feels 'My God, I am enjoying this cigarette!' For most of the time that he is smoking he is only subliminally aware of the fact. It is when he is not smoking that smoking fills his consciousness, in the form of an almost intolerable craving to smoke. He smokes in order not to suffer this craving – the reason why he keeps lighting cigarettes is not that he enjoys them so much but that he cannot bear not smoking. Thus far, the, the analysis confirms Schopenhauer: the so-called 'pleasure' of smoking is the perpetual staving-off of an intolerable craving. But the fact is that, in addition to this, there are times – after a good meal, very often, or with the first cigarette of the day – when the compulsive smoker does feel 'My good, I am enjoying this cigarette!' And that is an altogether different kind of experience, as anyone who has had both will testify. Among other things, it is an unmistakably positive pleasure. But the Schopenhauerian analysis rules out the possibility of it. And this is an inadequacy of the Schopenhauerian analysis across the whole range of pleasure in activity, happiness in life, and appreciation of the arts.

#### Death is bad, and nonexistence is worse – deprivation account

Kagan 12 – Professor of Philosophy @ Yale

Shelly, professor of philosophy at Yale University, "Is Death Bad for You?" 5/13/12, http://chronicle.com/article/article-content/131818/

In thinking about this question, it is important to be clear about what we're asking. In particular, we are not asking whether or how the process of dying can be bad. For I take it to be quite uncontroversial—and not at all puzzling—that the process of dying can be a painful one. But it needn't be. I might, after all, die peacefully in my sleep. Similarly, of course, the prospect of dying can be unpleasant. But that makes sense only if we consider death itself to be bad. Yet how can sheer nonexistence be bad? Maybe nonexistence is bad for me, not in an intrinsic way, like pain, and not in an instrumental way, like unemployment leading to poverty, which in turn leads to pain and suffering, but in a comparative way—what economists call opportunity costs. Death is bad for me in the comparative sense, because when I'm dead I lack life—more particularly, the good things in life. That explanation of death's badness is known as the deprivation account. Despite the overall plausibility of the deprivation account, though, it's not all smooth sailing. For one thing, if something is true, it seems as though there's got to be a time when it's true. Yet if death is bad for me, when is it bad for me? Not now. I'm not dead now. What about when I'm dead? But then, I won't exist. As the ancient Greek philosopher Epicurus wrote: "So death, the most terrifying of ills, is nothing to us, since so long as we exist, death is not with us; but when death comes, then we do not exist. It does not then concern either the living or the dead, since for the former it is not, and the latter are no more." If death has no time at which it's bad for me, then maybe it's not bad for me. Or perhaps we should challenge the assumption that all facts are datable. Could there be some facts that aren't? Suppose that on Monday I shoot John. I wound him with the bullet that comes out of my gun, but he bleeds slowly, and doesn't die until Wednesday. Meanwhile, on Tuesday, I have a heart attack and die. I killed John, but when? No answer seems satisfactory! So maybe there are undatable facts, and death's being bad for me is one of them. Alternatively, if all facts can be dated, we need to say when death is bad for me. So perhaps we should just insist that death is bad for me when I'm dead. But that, of course, returns us to the earlier puzzle. How could death be bad for me when I don't exist? Isn't it true that something can be bad for you only if you exist? Call this idea the existence requirement. Should we just reject the existence requirement? Admittedly, in typical cases—involving pain, blindness, losing your job, and so on—things are bad for you while you exist. But maybe sometimes you don't even need to exist for something to be bad for you. Arguably, the comparative bads of deprivation are like that. Unfortunately, rejecting the existence requirement has some implications that are hard to swallow. For if nonexistence can be bad for somebody even though that person doesn't exist, then nonexistence could be bad for somebody who never exists. It can be bad for somebody who is a merely possible person, someone who could have existed but never actually gets born. It's hard to think about somebody like that. But let's try, and let's call him Larry. Now, how many of us feel sorry for Larry? Probably nobody. But if we give up on the existence requirement, we no longer have any grounds for withholding our sympathy from Larry. I've got it bad. I'm going to die. But Larry's got it worse: He never gets any life at all. Moreover, there are a lot of merely possible people. How many? Well, very roughly, given the current generation of seven billion people, there are approximately three million billion billion billion different possible offspring—almost all of whom will never exist! If you go to three generations, you end up with more possible people than there are particles in the known universe, and almost none of those people get to be born.

#### Link turn – sustaining *life* is necessary for people to learn to generate happiness through suffering

Gulla 10

Ashok, Masters and Pre Doctoral studies in Physics, During the past fifteen years, the author has developed an interest in spirituality. His spiritual practice has been useful to know about personal values, morals, attitudes and behavior; and how these impact all of us, "How Pain and Suffering Generate Happiness," 4/12/10, http://voices.yahoo.com/how-pain-suffering-generate-happiness-5821188.html?cat=34

Every one of us fears from pain and suffering and wish to avoid it at any cost. By avoiding pain and suffering, we fail to deal with it when it falls on us. It creates suffering and unhappiness. People who understands life and its grand purpose from the perspective of spirituality, do not shun pain but deal with it. They remain resilient and calm in dealing with pain. Pain and suffering cannot be completely separated from happiness. We cannot expect to be happy all the time without in some manner suffering pain. There are number of instances when a person experiences both pain and happiness simultaneously. As we strive for something, it gives us pain but the belief that it will lead to success provides us happiness. Happiness and pain are relative. If a person is happy with a particular event or possession, the same event or possession cannot continue to make him happy. It depends on his past experience. If a person always gets good experiences, these may not keep him happy as he does not feel anything different. However, a person after suffering from some bad situation feels happy if he gets better. A businessman who suffers a loss in previous years feel satisfied on his business turning around and showing even a nominal profit. Same amount of profit will not be of any much consequence for other businessman. We notice people who suffer from some ailment and once they show slight recovery in health make them feel cheerful and happy. A normal healthy person does not feel cheerful with a better condition than the person who has recovered. Similarly, two lovers after some misunderstanding when they patch up and live together feel more happiness. Every bad situation creates more scope to generate happiness with a slight upward improvement. With pain and suffering, we feel and enjoy happiness. All happy events lose its magnetic attraction after some time, and a person will not feel anything special with these events. This is the reason that wealth, fame, health and success after some time do not create any special impact on overall happiness unless the next event is more positive than the previous one. People often think that happiness and suffering are opposites, so if something is a real cause of happiness it cannot give rise to suffering. This is not always true. If food, money, and other comforts are causes of happiness, they can never be causes of suffering; yet we know from our own experience that they often do cause suffering. For example, one of our main interests is food, but the food we eat is also the principal cause of most of our ill health and sickness. How many of us are troubled by taking food we cherish but not suitable to health. Pain and suffering is good for understanding of inner self; helps to develop capacity to be sympathetic towards others and fosters many good virtues. We suffer with pain for variety of reasons; like not being treated properly by other people; feeling uncomfortable in a relation; stress from the job and other instability in life. We may not be able to fulfill demands of our life. All these externalities affect our calmness and provide us pain. We remain unhappy with the situation and helpless as it is not easy to change external environment. In difficulty and pain, we try to see within and try to find solace in seeking help from our creator. Pain makes us realize inner need to be in remembrance with our creator. In pain our attention from outside distractions gets reduced. We fill the need of our inner self to be in remembrance of God through prayer and be in love with all other human beings. This provides us strength to face pain and our expectation level comes down. Pain modifies ego level, brings soberness in our behavior, makes us humble while dealing with others and imbibes in us good virtues of life. A person who has all the comforts finds it difficult to understand and feel the pain and suffering of others. He may not be able to generate love when everything is going fine. This is the main reason why people who have risen and become wealthy and renowned personality from humble background have been found to devote enough in philanthropy. They have understood the real values of life out of pain and suffering during early childhood; it has made them strong and determined to face the odds with courage, and helped to create a feeling of love and care for others. Pain and suffering teaches us certain lessons and can serve as a purpose in life. One obvious way is that it helps us to recognize happiness. Without suffering, we cannot have happiness, because we would have nothing to measure our happiness against. Therefore, suffering provides us with the ability to be happy and experience the good of life. Another way is that it can inspire others. When people undergo suffering, no matter what they are, they like knowing that they are not alone and that others can relate to them. These people would not be able to relate if they had not undergone suffering themselves. Hopefully the suffering person will later be able to help someone else and make that person feel happy. Let us not always think of comforts in life. It makes us feel jittery with the slightest pain. Both pain and happiness lies in our mind. We observe people who face lot to troubles in life, but still remain calm whereas another person with the slightest pain breaks down. The true happiness comes not by striving for happiness but to stand calm during pain and suffering. Great saints were able to achieve long drawn happiness and peace not by aspiring for happiness, but treating all type of pain and suffering to be divine gift. At the highest level of spiritual attainment, both pain and comforts look alike. This is the stage of inner peace and calmness. Most of us, who lack such spiritual attainment, do get impacted by pain and suffering. However, people have to develop certain level of spiritual understanding to take pain and suffering as a step forward to eternal peace and happiness.

### Death Bad – AT: Lanza – Generic – 2AC

#### Life is more than just energy – Lanza's theories are nonsense

Myers, 9(Paul Zachary, associate professor of biology, University of Minnesota Morris, “The dead are dead,” 12/10/09, <http://scienceblogs.com/pharyngula/2009/12/10/the-dead-are-dead/>, Tashma)

**We are not just** “**energy**”. We are a pattern of energy and matter, a very specific and precise arrangement of molecules in movement. That can be destroyed. When you’ve built a pretty sand castle and the tide comes in and washes it away, the grains of sand are still all there, but what you’ve lost is the arrangement that you worked to generate, and which you appreciated. Reducing a complex functional order to nothing but the constituent parts is an insult to the work. If I were to walk into the Louvre and set fire to the Mona Lisa, and afterwards take a drive down to Chartres and blow up the cathedral, would anyone defend my actions by saying, “well, science says matter and energy cannot be created or destroyed, therefore, Rabid Myers did no harm, and we’ll all just enjoy viewing the ashes and rubble from now on”? No. **That’s crazy talk**. We also wouldn’t be arguing that the painting and the architecture have transcended this universe to enter another, nor would such a pointless claim ameliorate our loss in this universe. The rest of **his argument is quantum gobbledy-gook**. The behavior of subatomic particles is not a good guide to what to expect of the behavior of large bodies. A photon may have no rest mass, but I can’t use this fact to justify my grand new weight loss plan; quantum tunnelling does not imply that I can ignore doors when I amble about my house. **People are not particles**! We are the product of the aggregate behavior of the many particles that constitute our bodies, and you cannot ignore the importance of these higher-order relationships when talking about our fate.

#### His theory is tainted by personal trauma – reject it even if he's qualified

Myers, 9(Paul Zachary, associate professor of biology, University of Minnesota Morris, “The dead are dead,” 12/10/09, <http://scienceblogs.com/pharyngula/2009/12/10/the-dead-are-dead/>, Tashma)

**Lanza has respectable credentials** as a stem cell biologist, **but he’s** also **the author of** one of those **all-encompassing**, total-explanation-of-the-universe, **crackpot theorie**s, which is his, and which belongs entirely to him, called “biocentrism.” We know this because his tag line in the article is “Robert Lanza, MD is considered one of the leading scientists in the world. He is the author of “Biocentrism,” a book that lays out his theory of everything.” I’ve noticed that leading scientists tend not to have to introduce themselves by declaring that they are a leading scientist, but that’s another issue. Lanza recently lost a sister in an accident, and most of **his article seems to be** a kind of **emotional denial**, that this tragedy cannot have happened and his sister really is alive and well somewhere. I feel for him — I’ve also lost a sister, and wish I could see her again — but this is not a reason to believe death doesn’t happen.

### Death Bad – AT: Lanza – Generic – 1AR

#### Lanza is a clown – even a second grader would agree

Wadhawan and Kamal, 9 (Vinod, Raja Ramanna Fellowship, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Mumbai, and Ajita, “Biocentrism Demystified: A Response to Deepak Chopra and Robert Lanza’s Notion of a Conscious Universe,” 12/14/09, <http://nirmukta.com/2009/12/14/biocentrism-demystified-a-response-to-deepak-chopra-and-robert-lanzas-notion-of-a-conscious-universe/>, Tashma)

The chemical elements needed for life were forged in stars, and then flung far into space through supernova explosions. This required a certain amount of time. Therefore the universe cannot be younger than the lifetime of stars. The universe cannot be too old either, because then all the stars would be ‘dead’. Thus, **life can exist only when the universe has** just the **age** that we humans measure it to be, **and** has just the **physical constants** that **we measure** them to be.

#### His so called “theories” are laughable

Zajonc, 7 (Arthur, physicist at Amherst University, “A Biotech Provocateur Takes On Physics,” 3/9/07, <http://www.forbes.com/2007/03/09/lanza-theories-physics-biotech-oped-cx_mh_0309lanza.html?partner=yahootix>, Tashma)

"I don't see it as a new theory, I don't even see it as a new philosophy," says Arthur Zajonc, a physicist at Amherst University, who says that many of Lanza's arguments have been made by others over the last century. "I see it as a new voicing. He pushes hard. He makes dramatic statements. Whether it's convincing is another question." Zajonc's own work relates to an idea called Wheeler's delayed choice experiment, which forms part of the basis for Lanza's idea. In this experiment, which was originally a thought experiment but has recently been conducted, time seems to run backward. The decision of whether or not to observe a light particle affects how the light behaves beforehand. "I do think the issue for me that he's raising is an interesting one," says Zajonc. "**The role of subjectivity is** too easily **dismissed**, even now."

#### And he lacks explanation of anything

Wadhawan and Kamal, 9 (Vinod, Raja Ramanna Fellowship, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Mumbai, and Ajita, “Biocentrism Demystified: A Response to Deepak Chopra and Robert Lanza’s Notion of a Conscious Universe,” 12/14/09, <http://nirmukta.com/2009/12/14/biocentrism-demystified-a-response-to-deepak-chopra-and-robert-lanzas-notion-of-a-conscious-universe/>, Tashma)

One criticism of **biocentrism** comes from the philosopher Daniel Dennett, who says “It **looks like an opposite of a theory**, because he doesn’t explain how consciousness happens at all. He’s stopping where the fun begins.” The logic behind this criticism is obvious. Without a descriptive explanation for consciousness and how it ‘creates’ the universe, biocentrism is not useful. In essence, **Lanza calls for** the **abandonment of** modern theoretical **physics and** its **replacement with a magical solution**. Here are a few questions that one might ask of the idea:

#### More evidence – Lanza is flat out wrong

Wadhawan and Kamal, 9 (Vinod, Raja Ramanna Fellowship, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Mumbai, and Ajita, “Biocentrism Demystified: A Response to Deepak Chopra and Robert Lanza’s Notion of a Conscious Universe,” 12/14/09, <http://nirmukta.com/2009/12/14/biocentrism-demystified-a-response-to-deepak-chopra-and-robert-lanzas-notion-of-a-conscious-universe/>, Tashma)

However, if you dig into what Lanza says it becomes clear that he is positioning the relativistic nature of reality to make it seem incongruous with its objective existence. His reasoning relies on a subtle muddling of the concepts of subjectivity and objectivity. Take, for example, his argument here: “Consider the color and brightness of everything you see ‘out there.’ On its own, light doesn’t have any color or brightness at all. The unquestionable reality is that nothing remotely resembling what you see could be present without your consciousness. Consider the weather: We step outside and see a blue sky – but the cells in our brain could easily be changed so we ‘see’ red or green instead. We think it feels hot and humid, but to a tropical frog it would feel cold and dry. In any case, you get the point. This logic applies to virtually everything.“ There is only some partial truth to Lanza’s claims. Color is an experiential truth – that is, it is a descriptive phenomenon that lies outside of objective reality. No physicist will deny this. However, the physical properties of light that are responsible for color are characteristics of the natural universe. Therefore, the sensory experience of color is subjective, but the properties of light responsible for that sensory experience are objectively true. The mind does not create the natural phenomenon itself; it creates a subjective experience or a representation of the phenomenon. Similarly, temperature perception may vary from species to species, since it is a subjective experience, but the property of matter that causes this subjective experience is objectively real; temperature is determined by the average kinetic energy of the molecules of matter, and there is nothing subjective about that. Give a thermometer to a human and to an ass: they would both record the same value for the temperature at a chosen spot of measurement. The idea that ‘color’ is a fact of the natural universe has been described by G. E. Moore as a naturalistic fallacy.

### Death Bad – AT: Lanza – Falsifiability – 2AC

#### Lanza's theories are unfalsifiable

Wadhawan and Kamal, 9 (Vinod, Raja Ramanna Fellowship, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Mumbai, and Ajita, “Biocentrism Demystified: A Response to Deepak Chopra and Robert Lanza’s Notion of a Conscious Universe,” 12/14/09, <http://nirmukta.com/2009/12/14/biocentrism-demystified-a-response-to-deepak-chopra-and-robert-lanzas-notion-of-a-conscious-universe/>, Tashma)

No matter what the facts about the nature of time, Lanza concludes that time is not real. **His model is unfalsifiable and** therefore **cannot be** a **part of science**. What Lanza doesn’t let on is that Einstein’s special-relativity theory removes the possibility of absolute time, not of time itself. Zeno’s Arrow paradox is resolved by replacing the idea of absolute time with Einstein’s relativistic coupling of space and time. Space-time has an uncertainty in quantum mechanics, but it is not nonexistent. The idea of time as a series of sequential events that we perceive and put together in our heads is an experiential version of time. This is the way we have evolved to perceive time. This experiential version of time seems absolute, because we evolved to perceive it that way. However, in reality time is relative. **This is a fundamental fact of** modern **physics**. Time does exist outside of the observer, but allows us only a narrow perception of its true nature.

#### Comes first and should be rejected

Wadhawan and Kamal, 9 (Vinod, Raja Ramanna Fellowship, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Mumbai, and Ajita, “Biocentrism Demystified: A Response to Deepak Chopra and Robert Lanza’s Notion of a Conscious Universe,” 12/14/09, <http://nirmukta.com/2009/12/14/biocentrism-demystified-a-response-to-deepak-chopra-and-robert-lanzas-notion-of-a-conscious-universe/>, Tashma)

Much confusion and uncalled-for debate has been engendered by the (scientifically unsound) ‘strong’ or cosmological version of the anthropic principle, which is sometimes stated as follows: Since the universe is compatible with the existence of human beings, the dynamics of the elementary particles and the initial conditions of the universe must have been such that they shaped the fundamental laws so as to produce human beings. This is clearly untenable. There are no grounds for the existence of a ‘principle’ like this. **A scientifically untenable principle is no principle at all**. No wonder, the Nobel laureate Gell-Mann, as quoted above, described it as ‘so ridiculous as to merit no further discussion.’

### Death Bad – AT: Lanza – Not Falsifiable – 1AR

Lanza's theories have zero mathematical or scientific backingWadhawan and Kamal, 9 (Vinod, Raja Ramanna Fellowship, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Mumbai, and Ajita, “Biocentrism Demystified: A Response to Deepak Chopra and Robert Lanza’s Notion of a Conscious Universe,” 12/14/09, <http://nirmukta.com/2009/12/14/biocentrism-demystified-a-response-to-deepak-chopra-and-robert-lanzas-notion-of-a-conscious-universe/>, Tashma)

Can **Lanza deny** all the **evidence that**, whereas we humans emerged on the scene very recently, our Earth and the **solar system and the universe** at large **have been there all along**? What about all the objective evidence that life forms have emerged and evolved to greater and greater complexity, resulting in the emergence of humans at a certain stage in the evolutionary history of the Earth? What about all the fossil evidence for how biological and other forms of complexity have been evolving? How can humans arrogate to themselves the power to create objective reality? Much of **Lanza’s idealism arises from** a distrust/**incomprehension of mathematics**. He writes: “In order to account for why space and time were relative to the observer, Einstein assigned tortuous mathematical properties to an invisible, intangible entity that cannot be seen or touched. This folly continues with the advent of quantum mechanics.” Why should the laws of Nature ‘bother’ about whether you can touch something or not? The laws of Nature have been there long before Lanza appeared on the scene. Since he cannot visualize how the mathematics describes an objective universe outside of experience, Lanza announces that reality itself does not exist unless created by the act of observation.

#### And he defies empirics and science

Wadhawan and Kamal, 9 (Vinod, Raja Ramanna Fellowship, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Mumbai, and Ajita, “Biocentrism Demystified: A Response to Deepak Chopra and Robert Lanza’s Notion of a Conscious Universe,” 12/14/09, <http://nirmukta.com/2009/12/14/biocentrism-demystified-a-response-to-deepak-chopra-and-robert-lanzas-notion-of-a-conscious-universe/>, Tashma)

However, **Lanza’s definition is incomplete from a scientific perspective**. The truth is that there are difficulties in analysing consciousness empirically. In scientific terms, consciousness is a ‘hard problem’, meaning that its complete subjective nature places it beyond direct objective study. Lanza exploits this difficulty to deny science any understanding of consciousness.

### Death Bad – AT: Lanza – Falsifiability First – 1AR

#### More evidence – comes first

Wadhawan and Kamal, 9 (Vinod, Raja Ramanna Fellowship, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre at Mumbai, and Ajita, “Biocentrism Demystified: A Response to Deepak Chopra and Robert Lanza’s Notion of a Conscious Universe,” 12/14/09, <http://nirmukta.com/2009/12/14/biocentrism-demystified-a-response-to-deepak-chopra-and-robert-lanzas-notion-of-a-conscious-universe/>, Tashma)

Modern **physics is** a **vast and multi-layered** web that stretches over the entire deck of cards. All other natural sciences – all truths that exist in the material world- are interrelated, held together by the mathematical reality of physics. Fundamental theories in physics are supported by multiple lines of evidence from many different scientific disciplines, developed and tested over decades. Clearly, those who propose new theories that purport to redefine fundamental assumptions or paradigms in physics have their work cut out for them. Our contention is that the theory of **biocentrism**, if analysed properly, **does not hold up to scrutiny**. It is not the paradigm change that it claims to be. It is also our view that **one can find** much meaning, **beauty and purpose in** a naturalistic view of **the universe**, **without** having to resort to **mystical notions** of reality.

#### Animal and Suffering Death Bad

Schmidt 92 - Dr. Schmidt joined out department in 1969 and became ProfessorEmeritus in 2000 He has received substantial research grants primarily from CONACYT (Robert, “WHY BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD ANIMALS,” University of Nebraska, 1992, <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1066&context=vpc15&sei-redir=1&referer=http%3A%2F%2Fscholar.google.com%2Fscholar%3Fq%3D%2522suffering%2Bis%2Bbad%2522%26btnG%3D%26hl%3Den%26as_sdt%3D0%252C23#search=%22suffering%20bad%22>)

The Rockefeller and Weatherhead Foundations, and funding through the Inter American Development Bank. Additional formal training includes Purdue University's course in "Numerical Analysis of Remote Sensing Data", a Remote Sensing Workshop, and twice as a visiting scientist at the Office of Research and Application Group National Environmental Satellite Service, Maryland, and other related agencies in the Washington D.C. area. In addition he has served as a consultant to various organizations including the National Geographic Society (6 occasions; U.S.), AID/ERIM in Peru, various paleontological resource inventories (remote sensing and cartography), and Time-Life Books. Dr. Schmidt has served on boards of directors, executive councils, board of scientists, as President of the Association of Arid Lands Studies, and as a member of other support groups.

Where does this leave the professional natural resource manager? Well, for starters, understanding society's role in driving resource management decisions means that the professionals aren't surprised when the various values out there collide. In fact, these conflicts should be anticipated and even part of management decisions and processes. The National Environmental Policy Act recognizes this value-driven system, requiring a scoping process which allows the various values to become public information. We need to make sure that we understand the publics' values on a wide variety of issues. For the wildlife biologist, this means understanding the emerging role of animal welfare considerations in shaping social opinions and concerns (Schmidt 1990). Why do bad things happen to good animals? Because the collective human values of today say that animals are good, and that animal suffering is bad. Alas, we do not have the wisdom of a benevolent dictator to tell us what to do. Fallible, manipulable humans must plan their own destiny, and live with the results. We must learn from our mistakes, and from the mistakes of others, to do things right.

### AT: Humans are Just Matter

#### We are more than matter – experiments prove

Bladon no date

[Lee, creator of esoteric science, "6a - The Multidimensional Human," no date, but after 2006, http://www.esotericscience.org/article6a.htm]

Dr Evan Harris Walker, author of The Physics of Consciousness, is regarded as one the pioneers of the modern consciousness research. Walker rejects the conventional physical explanations of consciousness and believes that consciousness is something outside the physical world and does not depend on the brain. He believes that consciousness transcends time and space, that our minds are all interconnected, that we are all part of the one quantum mind, and that our consciousness survives physical death. In his book World of Psychic Research, Hereward Carrington describes how Dutch scientists succeeded in weighing the physical body before, during and after out-of-body experiences. They measured an average weight loss of 2¼ ounces (63g) during out of body experiences, which is due to the self and the subtle bodies leaving the physical body. This is objective proof that we are more than just our physical bodies and brains. Here is a simple exercise you can use right now to determine who you really are: Just sit down, close your eyes and become aware of everything within you. Start off by noticing your physical body – the fact that you are aware of it means that you must be more than your body. Then become aware of your emotions – the fact that you are aware of how you feel means that you are more than your emotions. Finally turn your attention to your thoughts – you will notice that thoughts just pop in and out of your mind without you actively thinking them. Because you are objectively aware of the thoughts in your mind, you must be more than your mind. You will realise that whatever part of yourself you focus on there will always be a sense of awareness that is somehow above and beyond everything else. This inner awareness or inner essence is the real "you". It is the basis of all your experiences: asleep or awake, "dead" or "alive" – it is eternal.

### AT: Afterlife Good

#### After life claims are non-falsifiable and you should only evaluate actual evidence, their authors are only wishful thinkers

Carroll 11 (Sean Carroll is a physicist and author. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1993, and is now on the faculty at the California Institute of Technology, where his research focuses on fundamental physics and cosmology. “Physics and the Immortality of the Soul “ http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/2011/05/23/physics-and-the-immortality-of-the-soul/ )// CG

The topic of "life after death" raises disreputable connotations of past-life regression and haunted houses, but there are a large number of people in the world who believe in some form of persistence of the individual soul after life ends. Clearly this is an important question, one of the most important ones we can possibly think of in terms of relevance to human life. If science has something to say about, we should all be interested in hearing.¶ Adam Frank thinks that science has nothing to say about it. He advocates being "firmly agnostic" on the question. (His coblogger Alva Noë resolutely disagrees.) I have an enormous respect for Adam; he’s a smart guy and a careful thinker. When we disagree it’s with the kind of respectful dialogue that should be a model for disagreeing with non-crazy people. But here he couldn’t be more wrong.¶ Adam claims that there "simply is no controlled, experimental[ly] verifiable information" regarding life after death. By these standards, there is no controlled, experimentally verifiable information regarding whether the Moon is made of green cheese. Sure, we can take spectra of light reflecting from the Moon, and even send astronauts up there and bring samples back for analysis. But that’s only scratching the surface, as it were. What if the Moon is almost all green cheese, but is covered with a layer of dust a few meters thick? Can you really say that you know this isn’t true? Until you have actually examined every single cubic centimeter of the Moon’s interior, you don’t really have experimentally verifiable information, do you? So maybe agnosticism on the green-cheese issue is warranted. (Come up with all the information we actually do have about the Moon; I promise you I can fit it into the green-cheese hypothesis.)¶ Obviously this is completely crazy. Our conviction that green cheese makes up a negligible fraction of the Moon’s interior comes not from direct observation, but from the gross incompatibility of that idea with other things we think we know. Given what we do understand about rocks and planets and dairy products and the Solar System, it’s absurd to imagine that the Moon is made of green cheese. We know better.¶ We also know better for life after death, although people are much more reluctant to admit it. Admittedly, "direct" evidence one way or the other is hard to come by — all we have are a few legends and sketchy claims from unreliable witnesses with near-death experiences, plus a bucketload of wishful thinking. But surely it’s okay to take account of indirect evidence — namely, compatibility of the idea that some form of our individual soul survives death with other things we know about how the world works.¶

#### The afterlife has no root in physics

Carroll 11 (Sean Carroll is a physicist and author. He received his Ph.D. from Harvard in 1993, and is now on the faculty at the California Institute of Technology, where his research focuses on fundamental physics and cosmology. “Physics and the Immortality of the Soul “ http://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/2011/05/23/physics-and-the-immortality-of-the-soul/ ) //CG

Claims that some form of consciousness persists after our bodies die and decay into their constituent atoms face one huge, insuperable obstacle: the laws of physics underlying everyday life are completely understood, and there’s no way within those laws to allow for the information stored in our brains to persist after we die. If you claim that some form of soul persists beyond death, what particles is that soul made of? What forces are holding it together? How does it interact with ordinary matter?¶ Everything we know about quantum field theory (QFT) says that there aren’t any sensible answers to these questions. Of course, everything we know about quantum field theory could be wrong. Also, the Moon could be made of green cheese.¶ Among advocates for life after death, nobody even tries to sit down and do the hard work of explaining how the basic physics of atoms and electrons would have to be altered in order for this to be true. If we tried, the fundamental absurdity of the task would quickly become evident.¶ Even if you don’t believe that human beings are "simply" collections of atoms evolving and interacting according to rules laid down in the Standard Model of particle physics, most people would grudgingly admit that atoms are part of who we are. If it’s really nothing but atoms and the known forces, there is clearly no way for the soul to survive death. Believing in life after death, to put it mildly, requires physics beyond the Standard Model. Most importantly, we need some way for that "new physics" to interact with the atoms that we do have.¶ Very roughly speaking, when most people think about an immaterial soul that persists after death, they have in mind some sort of blob of spirit energy that takes up residence near our brain, and drives around our body like a soccer mom driving an SUV. The questions are these: what form does that spirit energy take, and how does it interact with our ordinary atoms? Not only is new physics required, but dramatically new physics. Within QFT, there can’t be a new collection of "spirit particles" and "spirit forces" that interact with our regular atoms, because we would have detected them in existing experiments. Ockham’s razor is not on your side here, since you have to posit a completely new realm of reality obeying very different rules than the ones we know.

### AT: Boredom

#### Humans aren’t bored

Dustin Wax 7/4/2010 - freelance writer and university instructor (“What Makes Life Worth Living?,” Stepcase Lifehack, <http://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifestyle/what-makes-life-worth-living.html>)

Instead, I think we need to address the question with our own actions, the things we do that make life worth living. Verbs, not nouns. When I think of how I would answer the question, the following behaviors come to mind: Creating: Writing, drawing, painting (though I’m not good at it), playing music (though I’m not especially good at that, either). For others, it might be inventing something, building a business, coming up with a clever marketing campaign, forming a non-profit. Relating: It’s not “family” that makes life worth living, I think, but the relationships we create with members of our family, and the way we maintain and build those relationships. Same goes for friends, lovers, business partners, students, and everyone else. Helping: Being able to lend a hand to people in need – however drastic or trivial that need may be – strikes me as an important part of life. Realizing: Making, working towards, and achieving goals, no matter what those goals are. Playing: Maybe this is a kind of “relating”, but then, play can be a solo affair as well. Letting go of restraints, imagining new possibilities, testing yourself against others or against yourself, finding humor and joy. Growing: Learning new things, improving my knowledge and ability in the things I’ve already learned. Those seem like more satisfying answers to me – they strike deeper into what it is I want for myself, what makes it worthwhile to get up in the morning.

#### The capacity to love, work, and play make human life intrinsically valuable – even if happiness isn’t achievable, the pursuit is valuable

Paul Thagard 2/25/2010 - Professor of Philosophy and Director of the Cognitive Science Program at the University of Waterloo, Canada. (“What Makes Life Worth Living?,” Psychology Today, <http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/hot-thought/201002/what-makes-life-worth-living>)

Here are some possible answers to the question of what makes life worth living: (1) nothing; (2) religion; (3) happiness; (4) love, work, and play. Evidence from psychology and neuroscience supports the fourth answer. (1) Nothing. A few despondent philosophers such as Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and David Benatar have cast doubts on whether life has any intrinsic meaning, and some people are driven to suicide by depression and negative events in their lives. But most people, fortunately, are able to find lots of reason to value their lives, and in surveys most people report themselves as pretty happy. So nihilism is not a plausible position. (2) Religion. Surveys also indicate that many people report that religion and spirituality are major sources of meaning in their lives. Unfortunately, however, these sources are bogus if there is no evidence to support claims for particular religious beliefs. Religious faith may be reassuring, but cannot objectively tell you whether you should adhere to Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, or some other religion. Faith cannot even tell you what version of Christianity (Catholic, Baptist, Morman, etc.) or Islam (Shia or Sunni) you ought to adopt. Hence religion and vague spiritual ideas like "everything happens for a reason" cannot provide a sound basis for living. (3) Happiness. Psychological research has identified many ways in which people can increase the happiness in their lives, as in Sonja Lyubomirsky's fine book, The How of Happiness. But happiness is usually the result of having a meaningful life, not what makes life worth living in itself. There are people whose lives are meaningful even though they may not be very happy, for example when struggling with a challenging job while raising a special needs child. On the other hand, happiness can be cheaply achieved by slacker serenity, a mindless bliss resulting from having minimal goals, access to drugs, or unlimited time for meditation. You can have happiness without much meaning, and meaning without much happiness; so happiness is not the meaning of life. (4) Love, work, and play. In my new book, The Brain and the Meaning of Life, I argue that these three activities make life worth living. Love includes friendships and family relationships as well as romantic ones. Work includes diverse productive activities such as community volunteering in addition to wage slavery. Play includes all forms of entertainment such as reading and watching movies, not just games. Surveys and other psychological studies indicate that love, work, and play do indeed enable people to have lives they value. Neuroscience provides a deeper understanding of how brain processes generate needs for relatedness, autonomy, and competence that can be satisfied by the successful pursuit of love, work, and play. Such satisfaction yields happiness, but even the pursuit is enough to give life meaning.