

Living On Earth, Online Notes

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Chapter 9. Seamount

265 *In rare and fascinating cases, physically conjoined twins*: I have in mind especially Tatiana and Krista Hogan. They are described in Tom Cochrane, “A Case of Shared Consciousness,” *Synthese*, 2020.

265 *Could the mind, as a feature of life on Earth*: Stanislaw Lem’s *Solaris* (1961) explores this theme.

265 *Here is a broad distinction between kinds of living things*: I discuss this distinction in my *Darwinian Populations and Natural Selection* (2009), and apply it to the evolution of the mind in “Individuality, Subjectivity, and Minimal Cognition,” *Biology and Philosophy*, 2016. For discussion of the spatial and temporal dimensions of this topic, I am indebted to Rebecca Mann and her forthcoming PhD dissertation, “Complex Individuality: The Spatial, Temporal, and Agential Dimensions of the Problem of Biological Individuality.”

268 *The “immortal jellyfish,” Turritopsis*: See Stefano Piraino et al., “Reversing the Life Cycle: Medusae Transforming into Polyps and Cell Transdifferentiation in *Turritopsis nutricula* (Cnidaria, Hydrozoa),” *Biological Bulletin*, 1996.

270 *Thinking all this through, Parfit came to see*: See his *Reasons and Persons* (1984). The glass tunnel passage is from chapter 13.

271 *Nagel opposes Parfit’s view of survival and death*: This material is from his book *The View from Nowhere* (1986).

272 *One reply to this argument applies an idea from another philosopher, Bernard Williams*: “The Makropulos Case: Reflections on the Tedium of Immortality,” in his *Problems of the Self* (1973). Thanks to Christine Korsgaard for alerting me to this discussion.

276 *Some parts of the poem*: This is the original 1865 version. Later versions have small changes, including deleting the word “beautiful” in the line that begins “My dead absorb.”

PENSIVE, on her dead gazing, I heard the Mother of All,
Desperate, on the torn bodies, on the forms covering the battle-fields gazing;
As she call'd to her earth with mournful voice while she stalk'd:
Absorb them well, O my earth, she cried—I charge you, lose not my sons! lose not an
atom;
And you streams, absorb them well, taking their dear blood;
And you local spots, and you airs that swim above lightly,
And all you essences of soil and growth—and you, O my rivers' depths;
And you mountain sides—and the woods where my dear children's blood, trickling,
redde'n'd;
And you trees, down in your roots, to bequeath to all future trees,
My dead absorb—my young men's beautiful bodies absorb—and their precious,
precious, precious blood;
Which holding in trust for me, faithfully back again give me, many a year hence,
In unseen essence and odor of surface and grass, centuries hence;
In blowing airs from the fields, back again give me my darlings— give my immortal
heroes;
Exhale me them centuries hence—breathe me their breath—let not an atom be lost;
O years and graves! O air and soil! O my dead, an aroma sweet!
Exhale them perennial, sweet death, years, centuries hence.

276 *Whitman also tried to have some things both ways*: This discussion of Whitman's attitudes to death draws on David Reynolds, “Fine Specimens,” *The New York Review of Books*, March 11, 2018.