

HAREBRAINED

PURE
CONJECTURE



...YES

BY AMY
GREY



Harebrained

Ideas for Smarter Minds

by Amy Grey

amygreylak@gmail.com

reasonablediscourse.substack.com

Instagram: @reasonable.discourse

"Quite fascinating."

- Dr. Stacy Trasancos

"I very much enjoyed reading it and pondering some of the ideas presented. I especially liked the balance suggested between openness and direction."

-Anna Pearson, Quantinuum, Doctor of Philosophy

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Preface

In early 1940, John Wheeler called Richard Feynman with an idea. Feynman, in his December 1965 Nobel Lecture, described the phone call this way:

"I received a telephone call one day at the graduate college at Princeton from Professor Wheeler, in which he said:

'Feynman, I know why all electrons have the same charge and the same mass.'

'Why?'

'Because they are all the same electron!'

I did not take the idea that all the electrons were the same one from him as seriously as I took the observation that positrons could simply be represented as electrons going from the future to the past in a back section of their world lines. That, I stole!"

John Wheeler's enthusiasm inspired me to write out and share ideas that truly excite me, even with the risk of them being wildly incorrect.

My mind naturally worked towards a synthesis of several concepts I was studying simultaneously. I took some liberty in playing around with ideas on efficient causation to write this work.

Major influences on this essay:

Pope Benedict XVI (Joseph Ratzinger)

Ideas of anthropology, human identity in relationship, individuation, Christ as “Last Man”, Eucharistic unity, paschal stamp of Creation

St. Thomas Aquinas

Five proofs as presented by Ed Feser in *Aquinas*

Jeremy England

Ways of describing thermodynamics, energy flow, and ideas around abiogenesis

John Wheeler

Delayed choice experiment as articulated in the NPR Article “Can We Change the Past?” by Marcelo Gleiser

“<https://www.npr.org/sections/13.7/2018/02/21/587249333/can-we-change-the-past>” | Notable phrase: “impervious to time”

Charles Darwin

Thoughts on pleasure outweighing pain in the section on religion in his autobiography| Notable phrase: “pleasurable sensations serving as habitual guides”

Amalgamation of concepts in theoretical physics as understood by a layperson

Myriad concepts from various episodes from PBS Spacetime

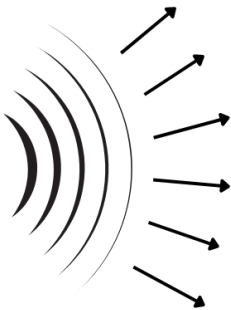
Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (Sofia Cavalletti)

Moral formation; History of the Kingdom of God

Concept 1: Creation of Delineated Time

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters.” -Genesis 1:1-2

The potency created and pushed by the First Mover is infinite in possibility and “comes before” the creation of the natural world. While the First Mover and subsequent movers are “before” potency and “push” it forward, the First Efficient Cause and subsequent efficient causes are “ahead” of potency, “pulling”, “drawing”, “attracting” it towards a single point, actualizing time and matter and directing their arrangements. If we liken potency to a wavefunction that continuously expands, then efficient causes continuously “collapse” the wave function into a specific path in actuality. Although potency moves outward in countless directions, it is continuously being actualized as it is drawn toward that fully actual point where it reaches its final completion. First Cause is preeminent in the hierarchical causal order as it places a limit on potency and creates an arrowed “line” of demarcation. The range of “chance” or “random” events is thus limited and must occur within the demarcation lines. The closer the universe gets to its completion— the end of sequential time, marked by the First Cause— the less likely it becomes that truly random events will occur.



Potency time goes infinitely in all directions



Potency time is limited by a line of demarcation as it draws continuously closer to the Efficient Cause

This is the case for the universe as a whole, which is patterned toward the First Efficient Cause. However, each substance has potency and so also has its own individual “time” within the delineated time of the universe. As the universe continuously draws closer to the final point of actuality by way of secondary efficient causes, it places a limit on individual potencies of different substances inside the line of demarcation. The individual potency of a substance also interacts with the potencies of other substances, combining to a certain degree and creating an additional spatial limit on the potencies of each.

The First Efficient Cause’s interplay with infinite potency of the First Mover gives rise to other secondary efficient causes in the natural world, such as energy or another preeminent efficient cause, which exists hierarchically before time and matter in the causal order and helps pull them in a specific direction through time, creating spatial limits consistent with gravity.

Concept 2: Trinitarian (Reciprocal) Element of Creation

“So shall my word be, which shall go forth from my mouth: it shall not return to me void, but it shall do whatsoever I please, and shall prosper in the things for which I sent it.”

—Isaiah 55:11

First Mover is He who precedes potency, the infinite possibility which emanates outward from Pure Act. Potency exists but remains formless and void until the First Efficient Cause receives it and reciprocates. Potency “goes” out from the First Mover (i.e. time marches forward), but Efficient Cause “returns” in a type of eternal (i.e., outside of time) exchange, creating a sort of interconnectedness (energetic or otherwise) that runs through the center of time. This “exchange” between First Mover and First Cause “separates” potencies, thus causing and directing time. On this concept, God the Father is the First Mover, the Creator; and God the Son is the First Efficient Cause, through Whom all things were made. The creation of matter and of time exists in the center of that Trinitarian bed in which God is both the Alpha and the Omega, where total symmetry of the universe is achieved in total and eternal reciprocity.

In this creative unitive dynamism of the Trinity, creation is like a fountain which bubbles up or spirals upwards in its center. The days of Creation involve Trinitarian exchanges in which “God said” ten times: the Word of God goes out, is received, and returns— the Spirit hovering over the waters of potencies— leaving nothing void, but filling and shaping creation just as it was spoken.

Concept 3: Participation of *adam* in Time, Sequence, and Individuation (Fragmentation)

“Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned...”
—Romans 5:12

Humanity (*adam*) acts as an efficient cause, as an idea of God which bears His likeness, and so participates in shaping not just history but actual physical time— and the related concepts of sequence and individuation. By man’s primordial fall- which was a sin of heart before it was an external action occurring in time- humanity splintered in a way not known in Eden, which had its own time and its own individuation. Instead of a return to the Father as chosen by the Son, humanity chose his own creaturely power. When man crossed/crosses this event horizon, his own potency becomes a warped form of time, collapsing inward into his own efficient causal power. It is no longer reciprocal and so no longer creative, resulting only in privation and destruction of created realities and relationships. Because humanity is relational in essence, the isolated man who chooses only personal autonomy will never be fully actualized, but instead will remain permanently fragmented. It results in a total individuation: one man contained entirely in himself.

Concept 4: Effects of the Incarnation on Time, Sequence, and Individuation

“...and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.”
—John 12:32

Humanity *per se*, in its relational essence, was anchored in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4; John 8:58). Though complete and total individuation— or even the fragmentation of all Creation— would be expected due to the original sin of man, that is not the situation we know today; every human being depends on or has depended on another human for his very life. Humanity retains a certain interconnectedness. By entering into Creation and ordering it towards Christ, God placed temporal and spatial limits (demarcation lines) on the potency of sinful man and so also the effects of death, human isolation, destruction, and non-reason within Creation. In the creative moment of the universe, all of time and matter, and both reason and religion, moved towards and coalesced in Christ, the First Efficient Cause incarnate. The natural philosophy of the Greeks marks the narrowing of non-reason as time nears the Logos, the Word, God the Son. The ultimate perfection of Creation was achieved in Christ, who is the gate to total unity. This unity is an inverse reality in which the identifying marker of a human soul is not his individuation; instead the unique human soul is fully revealed in and through the full context of relationship. In Christ, harmonious unity is the primary reality; it is within this unity that the soul is discovered. In the redemptive moment of the universe, all creation is continually offered in, with, and through the Son to the Father in the Eucharist, pulling humanity out of an internal collapse into totally individual autonomies by directing fragmented time and sequence toward a whole and complete reality in accordance with the will of the Father. In the Eucharist, the known physical borders of human individuation and sequential time are broken down; time and matter touch the eschaton. Through Christ and His continual Eucharistic presence on earth, He continually draws all men through time towards Himself, until perfect and total union is achieved with the Creator and his Creation, God and Man. This perfection of Creation is what the Christian knows to be the Parousia, the Second Coming of Christ, where God will be all-in-all. At the end of time, the end of sequence, total union will be achieved in eternity, in which humanity, through Christ, participates in the creative Trinitarian ec-static exchange.

Concept 5: Evolution as the Arrangement of Two Possible Archetypal Paths

"The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven." -1 Corinthians 15 :47-48

Abiogenesis as a historical and scientific fact, or as a specific arrangement of matter, could have occurred in a different way or ways. However, directed by efficient causality, matter was always going to arrange in the form of life somewhere within the lines of demarcation as described in Concept 1.

However, if for a moment, we stop sequentially at Adam and examine his participatory efficient causal role in Creation alone, life theoretically may not have occurred at all. This concept is based on the model of reciprocity as a necessary element of Creation in Concept 2. Or, it is possible that life may have come to total destruction, or that life may have been marked solely by pain.

As we see the evolution of life progress, however, we see that animals are not guided by pain, but by goodness, by pleasure.

Charles Darwin, in his autobiography, writes:

"Now an animal may be led to pursue that course of action which is most beneficial to the species by suffering, such as pain, hunger, thirst, and fear; or by pleasure, as in eating and drinking, and in the propagation of the species, or by both means combined, as in the search for food. But pain or suffering of any kind, if long continued, causes depression and lessens the power of action, yet is well adapted to make a creature guard itself against any great or sudden evil. Pleasurable sensations, on the other hand, may be long continued without any depressing effect; on the contrary, they stimulate the whole system to increased action. Hence it has come to pass that most or all sentient beings have been developed in such a manner, through natural selection, that pleasurable sensations serve as their habitual guides."

On Adam alone, the question should not be “Why suffering?” but rather “Why should any good exist?” Why should there be any outside pleasure for the animal to pursue?

But taking together the first man and the Last Man, evolution is not a story of meaningless suffering; it is a story of life fighting its way through the potency of non-life, of efficient causal collapse, of destruction. In the Creative moment of the universe, the elements arranged towards life, just as plants oriented toward the sun, just as animals sought out the desirable good. What the animal seeks that is good, it seeks through the chasm of time. Then in time’s fullness, similar to the argument from gradation, matter reaches that which is most good in Creation: the Incarnation of Christ. In Him, Creation has conquered death and achieves its perfection.

Human potencies are inextricably linked, limiting each other whilst simultaneously opening up new possible realities. While there are many paths that can be taken, only one path will be actual in spacetime, eventually “ending” with the First Efficient Cause. The potency of each person, or the wavefunction, interacts with those around it before becoming actual. Expected on the sin of *adam* is total fragmentation of mankind and creation itself, deprived of reciprocity and symmetry. This kind of sequencing never actualized because the potency of Adam was counteracted with that of Christ before the foundation of the world. Thus we see only a partial fragmentation, due to the interconnectedness between man and Creation that was achieved in Christ.

Additional Concepts (Unexplored)

Maleness as a mover, femaleness as efficient cause in a general sense. Anatomy, amongst other things, seems to reflect something along those lines.

Eve and Mary: sin/fiat occur first in sequence but lower in causal order.

Form as connected to efficient causation; whether animal form directs evolution by way of demarcation lines.

Whether individual souls have individual demarcation lines for arrangement of matter; i.e. conception of the individual soul could occur any number of ways; not restricted to specific parents.

Miracles as predetermined “events” that could have happened any number of ways. “Statistical likelihood” is only a measure of how close potency is to a demarcation line.

Prophets/Moses and “predestined” are souls higher in causal order, secondary efficient causes.

Whether the individual soul's being was made with reciprocity on his part. Despite St. Augustine's comments on the subject, perhaps in the creation of the human soul, a certain primordial reciprocity to his own being was in place for the individual man to come into being in time. I think of Jeremiah, whom God knew before forming him in the womb.

Temple as associated with the sustaining of the world in ancient Judaism
> Eucharistic causation sustains the world through time

alf person weighs down a picnic blanket in some key places , the tablecloth may billow in certain sections but ultimately remains. There are certain “events” in time that are analogous to well-placed weights. Parts of the cloth are still affected by the wind but ultimately bend down to the staple. In an imperfect similarity, so also certain events (and souls) ultimately were laid down before the foundation of the world, affecting and directing the “randomness” flow of time.

It could also be likened to an archer hitting his target; corresponds with “sin” as “to miss the mark”

