Panpsychism as personal experience: Resolving a paradox

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Panpsychism as Personal Experience: Resolving a Paradox

By

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Abstract

The thesis of panpsychism is that throughout the natural universe there is mentality, although I prefer the term “mind”. We human beings experience this mentality in everyday consciousness and by analogy we are able to assert that mentality is not confined to the human experience alone. The extent to which this mentality penetrates, or is imbued by, our natural world has been a subject for discussion in western schools of philosophy since the ancient Greeks and in the even more ancient eastern schools of theosophy, such as Buddhism and the Hinduism of the Upanishads. I use the term “theosophy” here to bring a sense of esoteric speculation to the panpsychism debate (Oxford English Dictionary). A recent resurgence of interest in panpsychism has recognised the inadequacy of the materialist perspective, and attempts have been made to resolve the main stumbling block, the mind-body/mind-matter problem, and to provide a realistic and adequate account of panpsychism. But, it is generally accepted by most of those interested in the debate and whose works I review, that so far this has not succeeded. Therefore, a new and more radical approach is required.

It is the intention of my thesis to demonstrate that only when we break free from our dualistic perspective, a perspective reflective of our thinking mind, our language, and our cultural/social constructs, can we intuitively understand the true nature of the mind-body relationship. I will argue that the truth of this intuitive understanding becomes apparent when we experience what I have termed “personal panpsychic experiences,” and that these experiences are epistemologically valid. These experiences give rise to knowledge of reality that I have called the “dual-aspect singularity” perspective. The “dual-aspect singularity” perspective acknowledges the dual nature of reality but asserts that any duality as such is merely aspectivism. As such everything that exists has both a mental and material aspect, neither of which is ontologically real, as together they form a singularity. I will argue that the “dual-aspect singularity” perspective resolves the mind-body mind-brain paradox.
Declaration

I certify that this thesis does not, to the best of my knowledge and belief:

1). Incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or a diploma in any institution of higher learning.
2). Contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in text, or
3). Contain any defamatory material.

Name

Date

13/04/05
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Preface

The panpsychic thesis is an intuitive proposition. It has found its expression in poetry, art, and spirituality, as well as in philosophy. As such I hope to be able to demonstrate that it is not possible to argue the case for panpsychism to a satisfactory conclusion without recourse to an intuitive perspective. It was personal experience that has led me to consider this question well before I came to understand the definition of the term “panpsychism.” It is the intention of this thesis to argue for a position that draws on intuitive knowledge gained from the “personal panpsychic experience.” To demonstrate the kind of experience I am talking about, let me recount the following story:

I was standing in about twenty-five centimetres of water when something bit me on the ankle. As I jerked my foot up and out of the surf a sea snake moved quickly away, headed out to sea. Two tiny spots of blood were all the evidence I needed to convince myself that I had indeed been bitten. I had been travelling in South East Asia and Australia long enough to know that when you get bitten by a sea snake you die, and the length of time before you die was always discussed in terms of seconds, not hours or minutes, but seconds. For some reason I decided at that moment that I had seven seconds left. You cannot imagine, unless you have been in a similar situation, the rush of thought and feeling that pulsated through me, as my heart exploded in my chest and feelings of dread and anger overwhelmed my entire being. But then, as I reached the inevitable conclusion that there was no way out of this, after exhausting every possible option in mere flashes of a second, acceptance took over and calmness came to me. I turned to look back for the last time at the beach and the land beyond the dunes. I let myself go and the landscape dissolved.

This was not unfamiliar territory; I had been there before and have been there since that eventful day in 1974. When only four years old I was playing with friends in a field near the village where I lived on the East Coast of England. We were running after a tractor that was making its way down a furrowed track alongside a freshly rolled field. The driver was unaware that he was being chased by a bunch of kids. He was towing a heavy rib roller. On the back of the roller was a steel mud scapper bar. It ran the length of the roller just wide enough for the foot of a small child. I ran and managed to step up onto the bar. I was only there for a moment before I tumbled down between the tractor and the roller. My body, luckily, landed in the furrow and was saved from the wait of the roller, but my head was not so lucky. It
came to rest more on the centre of the track and the rollers did a nice job of opening up the side of my skull.

After being carried by the tractor driver to a nearby farmhouse, my mother came and I travelled in her arms, in a taxi, to Ipswich Town Hospital. What is remarkable is that, although no longer conscious, I was completely aware of the whole journey. My consciousness was outside my body observing the rush across the field to the farmhouse, being laid out on a settee in the parlour, my mother’s arrival and the final taxi journey to hospital. I was not four years old and I was not the ‘me’ I had thought I was. I was detached, impassive, and in some sense indifferent. This experience has remained with me all my life. My mother has complained about my indifference to pain since the accident. An indifference that nearly took my life again when I was ten years old, when my appendix burst after I had ignored the stomach pains for several days, much to the amazement of the Doctors. So, here I was again, standing on a lonely beach on the East Coast of Fraser Island, far from help and certain of death, detached and smiling.

I was smiling, not just another smile, or an ordinary smile one shows to friends or loved ones, but a smile of complete and utter contentment and joy. The beach, the water, the land, all disappeared; dissolved back into the original mind. And in that mind was absolutely everything that ever was, that ever is, and that ever will be. Every possible musical note, every possible melody, every possible thing, hung suspended within its own potential to become. There was no ‘I’. There was no ‘me’, and no ‘it’ or ‘that’. There was nothing, yet within that nothing there was something, and together they made everything. And I knew, and have known ever since that day: that, there is only ‘one thing’ happening here.
Introduction

The panpsychism thesis has always been a difficult, if not slightly taboo subject for philosophers to discuss, let alone promote in some way, especially since the Enlightenment. It is difficult to overstate the impact that the Enlightenment philosophy of reason has had on intellectual life in the West. Out of the turmoil of the 16th and 17th centuries, a period some consider to be the birth of modern civilisation, we have witnessed, according to Martin Heidegger (Krell, 1977, pp.243-282), a complete reversal in the way we see ourselves in our relationship with our environment. He notes that, at this time, the very meaning of the terms "subject" and "object" underwent a reversal. Prior to the Renaissance, it was the surrounding world that had been subject, as supporting one's identity, one's sense of self: "...the word object denoted what one cast before himself in mere fantasy..." (Krell, 1977, p.280). This changed worldview, reinforced by Rene Descartes' arguments that split mind and body, was not simply a minor adjustment in Western intellectual thought. It has been argued that it "was symptomatic of a sweeping change in consciousness, in human being itself" (Rosen, 1994, p.116). Many philosophers, language theorists, writers, and art historians have noted the profound change that occurred during that time. I mention this because it is historically significant to the history of the mind/body mind/matter problem. This is where Humpty-Dumpty fell off the wall so to speak, for no one has managed to put mind and body back together again in such a way that resolves this paradoxical problem.

Paradoxes are important because they point out logical contradictions in our assumptions. But, why bother with the mind/body paradox when discussing panpsychism? Because the mind/body problem holds the key to understanding the panpsychism thesis. There is no point, and no way possible in my view, to try to resolve the issue of mind in matter as a metaphysical theory in general, whilst attempting to ignore the mind/body problem, sometimes referred to as the "hard" problem (Chalmers, 1996, pp.xi-xiii). Ever since Rene Descartes’s dictum "I think therefore I am," probably the most famous in the history of philosophy, philosophers have struggled to reconcile the mind/body split.
My argument for a “dual-aspect singularity” is an attempt to introduce an intuitive element into the debate. It is an attempt to redefine the way we see our world, and it is an attempt to re-evaluate our relationship with it. According to Heidegger, the dynamic unity of experience existing prior to the Renaissance was not utterly obliterated but regulated to oblivion, forgotten, or repressed. This act of forgetting divided self from other and mind from body, we were left to wonder how such “fundamentally different” entities could interact (Rosen, 1994, p.117).

"Is it not obvious,” Rosen asks rhetorically, “that as long as we continue to operate within the Renaissance framework of forgetfulness, the mind-matter problem cannot authentically be solved, since operating within that framework is precisely what is responsible for the problem?” (Rosen, 1994, p.117).

My thesis, and the arguments for it, are attempts to understand the mind-matter problem from a new perspective. It is a perspective that embraces “being” rather than “thinking”. I have not tackled this problem because I think I know the answer necessarily, but because I believe a significant area of inquiry has not yet been fully explored. I believe my “dual-aspect singularity” perspective and the justification for it, which I will explore in this thesis, will help open up that new approach to the problem. In the light of the latest discoveries in quantum physics, new research into the human brain activity, and a general acknowledgment that science with its mechanistic world view can not answer all of our questions, we need to consider alternative approaches1. The alternative approach that I will be arguing for in this thesis is one that validates human experience as not merely a thinking being, separate and distinct from our universe, but one of becoming, involved and integrated within our universe. I will be drawing on examples of the kind of experiences humans can have, and have had, that suggest our ordinary worldview is flawed, that it is dominated by a divisive egotistical thinking mind/brain that, in its effort to establish its own sense of subjective self-importance, separates itself from a now objectivised world. I intend to demonstrate that it is only because we are unable, in normal circumstances, to experience the world in a holistic way, incorporating both subjectival and objectival dimensions, that we mistake our shackled dualistic perspective for a

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1 For further discussion see bibliography, in particular Griffin, Jacobs, de Quincey and Clarke.
true interpretation of our universe and our relationship within it. Below is a brief outline of my arguments for the thesis:

1) It is possible, and I suggest desirable, to have experiences in which our normal perception, dominated by our thinking mind, ceases. I have referred to these experiences as "personal panpsychic experiences". A "personal panpsychic experience" is one in which the individual is no longer aware of the past or the future, and consequently time appears to stand still. It is "panpsychic" because the individual becomes aware that the mind has expanded to include everything, leaving one with a deep sense of oneness or completeness. I will argue that knowledge acquired through "personal panpsychic experiences" is epistemologically valid. That is, that ontological knowledge of unity and wholeness, acquired under this kind of non-conceptualised personal experience(s), is valid and needs to be taken into account when considering the mind/body mind/matter problem.

2) As a result of having such experiences those persons come to see the world differently from their previously established dualistically orientated worldview. The perceived dualism, from our normal experience of subject-objective reality, can now be considered to be dual aspectivism. That is, by seeing the world around us in light of the intuitive knowledge acquired through "personal panpsychic experiences" we are able to understand that the dualism we normally experience is simply a dual-aspect of the same thing, a universal singularity.

3) From this position I will argue that everything that exists has both a mental and a material aspect and that neither is ontologically real. The term I have adopted to describe this perspective is the "dual-aspect singularity" perspective. This perspective acknowledges the apparent dualism of mind-matter but argues that it is merely illusory, and, because this duality is illusory, we are left with the conclusion that the nature of reality is singular. Even though this account does not readily appeal to our normal rational mental states of mind, which are subject to restrictive dualistic mental language, there are ways of intuitively approaching the mind-matter dilemma. So the last part of my argument in support of my thesis for a "dual-aspect singularity" is a discussion about how we might be able to approach the mind/body paradox. I
assert that one of the ways we can intuitively understand this thesis is in the application and consideration of the Moebius Principle. The Moebius Principle is important to my argument because it demonstrates that there are aspects and dimensions in reality that we have difficulty comprehending through our normal senses, and yet obviously exist. Once the thesis is accepted panpsychism can also be understood as a realistic and understandable thesis in physical and mental terms.

As you can see from the diagram in Appendix 1, I have located my argument as an argument from realism. Although there might be a tendency to claim my position is monistic, because of the "singularity" aspect, and therefore should more appropriately be considered to be either idealistic or materialistic. To consider either to be appropriate would be to miss the essential point that neither matter nor mind is ontologically real. Further more, qualifying its monistic tendency by suggesting it has a "dual-aspect" avoids any argument about what exactly any monism might be made up of, either mind or matter. "Dual-aspectivism" incorporates both. Neither matter nor mind holds supreme position in the equation. They are considered to be, in simplistic terms, both entirely necessary in the construction of the real universe, even though they are aspects of a "singularity" only.
Chapter 1- The Panpsychism Thesis and the Debate

1.1 The Significance of the Panpsychism Debate

The significance of the panpsychic thesis can not in my view be overstated; it is one of the most important and exciting philosophical positions. The arguments for and against the position address two unresolved questions: What exactly is the relationship between mind, as experienced by human beings, and body, understood as a complex organisation of matter? And how far, if at all, does this mind extend to other material objects or penetrate into the structure of the universe? Ideas on these problems range from one end of the philosophical spectrum to the other. From the materialist’s perspective, that the mind is purely a product of the brain, to the view that mind is separate from matter, and yet somehow connected to it, and manifesting only as an epiphenomenon peculiar to humans. The materialist’s view holds that all is matter and that out of matter everything is made manifest. Others see the world in dualistic terms, of which there are two basic types: “substance dualists,” who think that mind and body name two kinds of substances, and “property dualists,” who think mind and body are two separate properties of one thing – a human being for example (Searle, 1997, p.135). The other monistic perspective, the idealist’s view, says that mind may be considered as a unified whole, or God, and that matter is illusory.

It has been acknowledged by some of the current thinkers in this area that there needs to be some kind of breakthrough in the mind-body debate before further progress can be made. Thomas Nagel has said that the drive to develop a physicalist account of mind has led to “extremely implausible positions” (Griffin, 1998 p.4). Other authors have also pointed out the problems faced in attempting to resolve the mind-body question. David Chalmers rather eloquently suggests that “you can’t have your materialist cake and eat your consciousness too” (Chalmers, 1996, p.28). Colin McGinn argues that our present perplexity is terminal, that we will never be able to resolve the mystery of how consciousness could emerge from the brain. He says that “somehow, we feel, the water of the physical brain is
turned into the wine of consciousness, but we draw a complete blank on the nature of this conversion... The mind-body problem is the problem of understanding how this miracle is wrought" (McGinn, 1982, pp.99-120). Dave Ray Griffin goes as far as to suggest that a new and entirely radical approach is necessary to address the problem, agreeing with Nagel, who asserts that "nothing but radical speculation gives us hope of coming up with any candidates for truth", and Galen Strawson, who declares that "the enormity of the mind-body problem" requires a "radical solution" (cited in Griffin, 1998, p.5).

Panpsychism has enjoyed a long controversial history, and has been presented in a variety of guises and formulations. Although the term itself is relatively new, the concept has been around since ancient times, long preceding any western philosophical systematic records. Versions of the thesis are well recorded in Buddhist and Hindu texts. But, the first time the word 'Panpsychism' was used in the English language, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, was in 1879, in a book by G. H. Lewes: *Mind as a Function of Organism*. Paul Edwards, in his excellent but highly critical essay on panpsychism in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Edwards, 1967), traces the lineage of eminent thinkers in antiquity, where evidence of panpsychist ideas can be found endorsed in the teachings or writings of "Presocratic" philosophers such as Thales, Anaximenes, Pythagoras and Anaxagoras.

The two most important players in early modern panpsychism would have to be Baruch Spinoza (1632-77) and Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646-1716). "Spinoza regarded both mind and matter as simply aspects (or attributes) of the eternal, infinite and unique substance he identified with God" (Seager, 2001, p.5). Leibniz, on the other hand, saw the cosmos as made up from many separate substances he called monads. These monads he considered were essentially mentalistic.

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1 Other writers have made similar suggestions: William S. Robinson, in *Brains and People* (1988), suggests that there is no story that can account for the phenomenon of the experience of pain and the relationship of brain neurones to pain. William Seager in *Metaphysics of Consciousness*, who says that in spite of holding that physicalism "still deserves our allegiance" (p.224), he says that "the degree of difficulty in formulating an explicate version of physicalism which is not subject to immediately powerful objections is striking" (cited in Griffin, 1998, p.4).

2 For a more detailed discussion see Thomas Nagel's *A View from Nowhere* (1986).

3 For a more detailed discussion see Galen Strawson's *Mental Reality* (1994).
It was Rene Descartes who, after his most famous assertion "I think therefore I am," delivered the greatest blow to the panpsychic thesis. Cartesian dualism posited the mind-body split; claiming that mind or souls are separate from matter just because they have sentience, whereas "matter is a 'dumb' thing, without intrinsic sentience" (de Quincey, 2002, p.21). This dualistic perspective has had the effect of restricting our thinking and as a consequence our language, leaving us to describe our world in objectival terms.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the thesis was extensively discussed under the influence of Charles Darwin's theory of evolution, with one of the more sensible discussions provided by William James (Clarke, 2003, p.vii). In his 1890 publication of *Principles of Psychology*, James asserts, "If evolution is to work smoothly, consciousness in some shape must have been present at the very origin of things" (James, 1950, p.149). He goes on to suggest that:

> Each atom of the nebula, they (clear-sighted evolutionary philosophers) suppose, must have had an aboriginal atom of consciousness linked with it; and, just as the material atoms have formed bodies and brains by massing themselves together, so the mental atoms, by an analogous process of aggregation, have fused into those larger consciousnesses which we know in ourselves and suppose to exist in our fellow animals.

James, of course was working from the cosmological knowledge of the day. Yet even today, as Clarke (2003, p.viii) points out, "the transition from bare matter to material systems with a mental perspective on things remains an unexplained puzzle." Others advocating some version of the panpsychic thesis during this period were Royce, Lotze, and Schopenhauer, to name a few. According to Clarke, whether influenced by Hegelian idealism or not, they all regarded any philosophical endeavour in providing an explanation for matters outside the scope of the empirical sciences as an essential mission of philosophy (2004, p.107). Karl Popper, and A. J. Ayer, "regarded panpsychism as an obstacle to the progress of scientific inquiry," and according to Ayer, "meaningless" as it violated what was referred to as the "verifiability criterion of meaningfulness" (Clarke, 2004, p.107). In other words, "any meaningful hypothesis must be capable of being empirically tested."
1.2 Terms Defined

The etymology of the term “panpsychism” is the best place to start. Pan is Greek for “all,” and Psyche to the early Greek philosophers, means “soul,” the principle of life, distinguishing it from all that is inanimate or dead. In my thesis I use the term consciousness to denote all levels of the human experience of consciousness and mentality as cognitive activity within human consciousness. The term mind, I suggest denotes that which is held as equal to, and married to matter. This is not a preliminary definition of a human mind. It is, rather, a description that distinguishes the human experience of mentality from the broader idea of mind being involved in all matter. Other authors have used these same terms but with different meanings. I have suggested the above to try to avoid confusing the mental activity we experience in our everyday consciousness with any kind of mentality that might go on outside our own consciousness. In philosophy, in general, the mind-matter, mind-world, mind-body, and mind-brain problems have been treated separately. In my thesis I consider them all to be one and the same problem, that is, that “world” “body” and “brain” are all “matter,” and that the duality of all those relationships is the problem, and not the various kinds of matter discussed in those relationships.

1.3 Current Thinking: A Review

Little philosophical work has been carried out on panpsychism over the last seventy years. The same cannot be said for the mind-body problem which has been the subject of enormous debate since the nineteen sixties. It is possible to count the number of serious contributors to the current panpsychism debate on two hands. Although several other writers, whilst not providing a full scale defence of panpsychism, have, nevertheless, been sympathetic towards it, when dealing with the problem of consciousness (Seager, 2001, p.9). The philosophers
that have vigorously entered the debate in recent times are authors such as David Ray Griffin, Colin McGinn, Christian de Quincey, D. S. Clarke, Thomas Nagel, William Seager, Timothy Sprigge, and Freya Mathews (For references see bibliography).

Any review of the current panpsychism argument, in its various forms, and with its various positions and conclusions, would not be complete without acknowledging the works of philosopher Alfred North Whitehead, whose defence of panpsychist philosophy in the early part of the twentieth century was significant. After the publication of Whitehead’s *Process and Reality* in 1929, and along with a flourish of other works dealing with panpsychism, such as C.D. Broad’s *Mind and Its Place in Nature* in 1925, one would have expected an ongoing robust and engaging debate to ensue. However, the debate was short lived at that time. And, as Seager (2001, p.9) points out, the world took a different direction. With the advent of such great advances in technology and science, philosophical inquiry into the nature of reality was now deemed somewhat unnecessary, and certainly, to the new wave of scientific materialists, unwarranted, unless of course the results of such inquiry were science-friendly. In anticipation that science would indeed sort out these problems of mind and matter, and with the advent of a new logical positivist philosophy dominating philosophical thinking at that time, nothing of any significance in terms of a philosophical defence of panpsychism happened for some fifty years.

The resurgence of interest in panpsychism is a relatively recent affair, for as I have suggested, the matter lay resting, and some no doubt thought finally put to bed, albeit unresolved. But, Whitehead’s ideas of a “process” or “event” orientated panpsychism nevertheless provided a springboard from which today’s panpsychism debate has sprung. Theologian and philosopher David Ray Griffin prefers the term “panexperientialism” to describe this process-based ontology (Griffin, 1998, pp. 27-116). Also, ideas coming out of the new sciences, such as Quantum and Complexity theories, did not put to rest any of the old questions about the nature of reality; they simply, once reasonably understood, changed the way we now think about the same old ‘hard’ problem questions.

It must be said, however, that there have been a few philosophers who were reluctant to let things drop. The most important was Charles Hartshorne, whose reformulation of Whitehead’s technically cumbersome process philosophy kept
the subject alive through those barren years, and provided present day philosophers such as David Ray Griffin and Christian de Quincey with enough grist to develop their own versions of the panpsychism argument. Griffin's "panexperientialism" was derived from Whitehead's and Hartshorne's process philosophy, and has much in common with de Quincey's "radical naturalism" which asserts that matter-energy is considered fundamental and real, but to its roots intrinsically sentient (de Quincey, 2002, pp.217-218). Whitehead was not happy with either the "universal mechanism" model that was being heavily promoted at the end of the nineteenth century as the correct view of our natural world, or with the alternative "humanism" model derived from the Greek philosophers and promoted through Descartes' Cartesian dualism (Clarke, 2003, p.30). The problem Whitehead and many others had, and still have, with universal mechanism is that it seems inconsistent with our own self-evident experience of a sense of freedom in our decision making, and subjectivity in general.

Whitehead and Hartshorne on Process Philosophy

According to Clarke (2003, p.31), Whitehead's process or "events" orientated philosophy was derived from Leibniz's Monadology. After rejecting the two dominant philosophical positions on the nature of reality as unacceptable, Whitehead proposed replacing them with an unrestricted panpsychism. Understanding that Leibniz's metaphysical system was flawed in that it didn't explain fully or adequately the relationship between the mental and the physical, Whitehead tried to correct these problems by replacing the concept of monads or

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5 "Universal mechanism" holds that any event or behaviour, human or otherwise, has determining antecedent causes. In universal mechanistic terms, mind, as an epiphenomenal experience, is the direct result of brain activity.

6 The perspective of philosophical humanism holds that human beings are metaphysically different from other lower forms of life. It is dualistic in nature and Whitehead referred to this as the "bifurcation of nature."

7 Leibniz's Monadology is based on the understanding that every appropriately organised body has what Leibniz calls a "dominant monad", and any parts of this body in turn have their dominant monads. Reality consists of arrangements of monads within monads ad infinitum. The regression does not stop at simple particles without parts, instead Leibniz suggests the concept of a "simple substance", the most primitive of souls without extension or form. As each monad is a perfect reflection of the universe, synchronised in a perfect harmony, therefore, there is no need for one monad to act in any way upon another monad (Russell, 1946, pp.563-576).
souls with psychic events called “actual entities” or “actual occasions.” These events had two component aspects or “poles”: a physical aspect that relates to the immediate environment and a conceptual aspect that allows for anticipating the future (Whitehead, 1978, pp.107-109). Whitehead is trying to account for what was then regarded by many as a natural “logic of relations” in causal processes. However, some have been critical of Whitehead’s adaptation of common terms used to describe his complex process philosophy. Clarke claimed that “difficulties and uncertainties of interpretation serve to obscure the analogies that are the basis for ascribing mentality to subhuman forms in a way required by panpsychism” (Clarke, 2003, p.34). However, it has to be said, and is acknowledged by some of the current philosophers in the panpsychism debate, that to see the universe in terms of “events” rather than as a composite of individual particles has a certain appeal to panpsychists. To see the cosmos as “cosmosing” rather than as a static thing, to understand the universe as a verb rather than as a noun introduces, according to Whitehead, subjectival interiority. This idea clearly appeals to modern philosophers seeking a new panpsychic/panexperiential direction.

Hartshorne reformulated Whitehead’s process philosophy, whilst retaining his “conception of mentality as an ordered sequence of psychic events or experiential occasions” (Clarke, 2003, p.37). He eliminates Whitehead’s technically complex terminology, and instead of taking up Whitehead’s notions of Leibniz’s monads, he used the term “feelings” to help describe these psychic events, immediately making it possible to then argue for panpsychism from analogy from human experience. He appeals to our own experiences of being lost in “feeling”, losing all sense of subject and object, in that, when so immersed in the experience, subject and object become one. By analogy we are able to attribute mentality or “feelings” to various other forms of natural life. But to what extent, or at which point in the regression down through material life, can we take this analogical argument? Arguments for panpsychism from human analogy become

8 See Bertrand Russell’s chapter on Leibniz in History of Western Philosophy. Whitehead was well aware of Russell’s criticism of Leibniz’s metaphysical system. Whitehead was Russell’s teacher and mentor at Trinity College Cambridge in the 1890s.

9 Whitehead’s process philosophy develops the idea that each event has both a subjectival and objective aspect in that it is seen as a process that allows for past “now” event to stream into the now “now” event in order to produce the future “now” event. This “now” event contains within it both the physical pole of the past and now and the conceptual pole of the now and future, and as such is both subjective and objective.
pretty thin when we get down to simple molecular components or fundamental
particles, simply because we are organised structures made up from parts which
are also in themselves organised structures. The analogical extension of feelings
or mentality, when there is no observed learning behaviour at primitive levels, or
when the behaviour of fundamental particles is so different from our own, an
essential criterion for the argument from analogy, is not viably justified.\textsuperscript{10} D. S.
Clarke rejects Hartshorne’s appeal to indeterminacy as an indication of
spontaneous behaviour at the quantum level (a spontaneity that Hartshorne
declares is evidence of “faint degrees of feeling”) on the grounds that 1) it does
not conform to the basically accepted view of the behaviour of quantum
particles\textsuperscript{11}, and that 2) “feelings” can not be analogically extended into the
quantum world from human experience (Clarke, 2003, p.40).

\textit{Thomas Nagel}

Thomas Nagel can be credited with fuelling the revival of the panpsychism
debate. In his book \textit{Mortal questions}, he suggests four simple premises underlying
the concept of panpsychism. 1). Material composition: That no constituents
besides matter are needed in the many simple and complex ever-changing
arrangements in the universe. In other words, matter exists as the only building
substance of the universe, 2). Non-reductionism: That mental, or feeling, or desire
states, are not, or cannot be, reduced to physical properties. Mental subjective
states as well as physical objective states also exist. 3). Realism: That those states
are properties of the organism. 4). Non-emergence: That mind does not emerge
from the workings of the universe (Nagel, 1979, pp.181-182). Nagel suggests that
panpsychism seems to follow from these four premises. He makes the point that:

\begin{quote}
If the mental properties of an organism are not implied by any physical properties
but must derive from properties of the organism’s constituents, then those
constituents must have non-physical properties from which the appearance of mental
properties follows... (Nagel, 1979, p.182).
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{10} See D. S. Clarke’s chapter 2 “Versions of Panpsychism”, in \textit{Panpsychism and the Religious
Attitude} (2003) and Hartshorne’s appeal to Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle.
\textsuperscript{11} The indeterminacy of quantum particles is not attributable to anything internal to the particle
itself, as it is understood today, but is a result of an external observer.
He concludes that since any matter can compose an organism, all matter must have these properties and that those different combinations of matter produce different kinds of mental life as a kind of "mental chemistry."

Nagel goes on to discuss the various problems that the argument can encounter in light of the four premises first postulated. From the perspective of realism, "conscious mental states are real states of something" and Nagel admits difficulties in establishing exactly what those mental states really are (Nagel, 1979, p.193). Offering three alternative interpretations he finds dissatisfaction with: 1) that they are states of the body, 2) that they are states of the soul, and 3) that all we can say about their essence is to give criteria or conditions for their ascription, he asks: "But what is left?" He is ultimately led back to what he calls the "weakest premise in the argument", realism, suggesting that it is more plausible at the moment than its denial (Nagel, 1979, p.193). He goes on to suggest that by simply denying any of the premises postulated, panpsychism becomes unacceptable as a solution to the mind-body problem. Denial of the first premise results in dualism. Denial of the second premise, according to Nagel, is motivated by the desire by philosophers to make the mind-body problem go away. Denial of the third premise, realism, is in his view more attractive, but awaits development of a viable alternative. And, denial of the fourth premise, non-emergence, results in very difficult questions about how, when and why mental states arise.

**David Ray Griffin's Panexperientialism**

David Ray Griffin offers us an alternative to the cul-de-sac arguments posited by both the materialists and the dualists that have dominated the debate to the present. He makes the claim, borne out by the very recent flourish of authors entering the fray that a new situation has arisen. It is a situation not resulting from any particular new discovery or decisive progress towards a solution to the mind/body problem, but one that has arisen by default: recognition, from prominent thinkers in this field, that it is unlikely that a solution will be found under the current predominate paradigms. As previously mentioned in section 1.1, Thomas Nagel has said that the drive to develop a physicalist account of mind has
led to "extremely implausible positions" (Griffin, 1998, p.4), and Colin McGinn argues that our present perplexity is terminal, that we will never be able to resolve the mystery of how consciousness could emerge from the brain. He says: "Somehow, we feel, the water of the physical brain is turned into the wine of consciousness, but we draw a complete blank on the nature of this conversion...The mind-body problem is the problem of understanding how this miracle is wrought" (McGinn, 1982, pp.99-120). Griffin goes as far as to suggest that a new and entirely radical approach is necessary to address the problem, agreeing with Nagel, who asserts that "nothing but radical speculation gives us hope of coming up with any candidates for truth", and with Galen Strawson, who declares that "the enormity of the mind-body problem" requires a "radical solution" (cited in Griffin, 1998, p.5). Griffin's answer, although not claiming to have a radical solution but rather a direction not leading into a cul-de-sac, is panexperientialism.

Panexperientialism takes the position that all individual instances of reality in the universe are intrinsically experiential. It is the idea that the universe as such is experiencing, and not only experiencing, but experiencing itself in its entirety, permeating all levels of existence and being. This way of thinking about the world, although difficult at first for those who are used to seeing and thinking in dualistic terms, at least allows for a different approach to the "hard problem", or "world knot" as Griffin calls it. Colin McGinn, arguing from a background in analytical philosophy, claims that the problem of consciousness is closed to human understanding (de Quincey, 2002, p.185). McGinn denies we have the cognitive capacity for understanding the nature of the interaction between mind and body, even though he accepts the plain and obvious fact that the interaction exists. Griffin on the other hand believes the mind-body problem is amenable to rational analysis.

12 See note 2.
13 For a more detailed discussion see Thomas Nagel's A View from Nowhere (1986)
14 For a more detailed discussion see Galen Strawson's Mental Reality (1994)
15 Griffin prefers this term "panexperientialism" for two reasons: (1) The term "psyche" suggests that the basic units endure through long stretches of time, whereas they maybe momentary experiences; and (2) "psyche" inevitably suggests a higher form of experience than would be appropriate for the most elementary units of nature (Griffin, 1998, p.78).
16 "Pan" means "all of", "everywhere", or "the whole", or "universal". Therefore pan-experience means experience as an ingredient all through the universe, permeating all levels of being, and incorporating a degree of subjective interiority (de Quincey, 2002, p.183).
De Quincey attempts to steer a line of argument that acknowledges McGinn's assertion that it is beyond human rationality to deduce a solution, but appeals to Griffin's notion in that it is knowable, albeit in an intuitive sense. De Quincey claims that:

In order to know consciousness, and to know the relation between consciousness and the physical world, we will need to cultivate an alternative epistemology beyond the faculties of rational analysis and conceptual understanding. (de Quincey, 2002, p.187)

_Chrisitan de Quincey’s Radical Naturalism_

In Christian de Quincey’s book _Radical Nature: Rediscovering the Soul in Matter_, he puts forward a strong argument for radical naturalism being the only real and viable solution to the puzzle of consciousness in matter, the “hard problem”. This puzzle is not resolvable, he claims, by holding onto the “old story”. The “old story” is de Quincey’s tale of mechanism that posits matter as dead and insentient, a story based on ontological dualism that has been built slowly over the ages and handed down to us as scientifically based fact. It has been recognised, however, that the story’s major premise: that matter is dead and devoid of consciousness, is also its major problem, because we do have minds. Which in turn raises the issue: how can mind emerge from matter if matter is inherently dead without mind? How can something that is inherently subjective realise itself out of something that is objectively dead? This old mechanistic story that matter is dead and insentient, and the phenomenon of mind as experienced by humans is merely the result of some kind of epiphenomenon of brain activity, is no longer acceptable to de Quincey. Let it be noted here, as de Quincey does, that Neo-Darwinians such as Richard Dawkins still argue that all life-forms were the sole result of chance mutations, and the blind selection of a dumb and “blind natural watchmaker”\(^\text{17}\), and that mind, soul or consciousness was viewed as a “by product of chance events in mechanical nature” (de Quincey, 2002, p.23). But, de Quincey says, the story started to unravel when “gaps or anomalies in the

mechanistic worldview appeared with the advent of the new sciences – relativity, quantum, and complexity theories (2002, p.24). Einstein may have started this re-understanding of the nature of matter, but the greatest challenge to the ‘old story’ so far, as de Quincey points out, is Quantum theory. If, as de Quincey points out, the universe can not be so observed without the observer affecting the actual event being observed, then how can the universe be objectified, a prerequisite for the mechanistic scientific method? De Quincey puts it like this: “Clearly, if the subjectivity or the consciousness of an observer is somehow responsible for ‘collapsing’ quantum probabilities into an actual event, objectivity is compromised at a fundamental level” (de Quincey, 2002, p.26). Not only do quantum events collapse into being; they are also unpredictable and indeterminable. This, de Quincey rightly observes, brings into question the whole notion of a scientifically measurable observable universe.

We cannot control that of which we are a part, without ourselves participating in the outcome(s). Because, as de Quincey points out, “every part contributes to the changes of the whole, and therefore the parts themselves” (de Quincey, 2002, p.31). De Quincey asserts that the old story is severely compromised, with “the old ideals of mechanism, reductionism, causal-determinism, and objectivity undermined” (2002, p.33).

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18 Einstein’s theory of relativity, although not suggesting any need for sentience, subjectivity, or consciousness in matter, did start to break down the generally accepted view of a mechanistic universe made up from solid particles of ‘stuff’ or ‘things’. Einstein presented a picture of events (energy) rather than things (solid matter). A picture, not of “solid little bits of matter interacting mechanistically”, but of “swirling dances and fluxes of energy exchanges” (de Quincey, 2002, p.24).

19 Experiments in “quantum mechanics” have demonstrated that two subatomic physical events occurring at the same time and related, that respond to each other, can happen even when they are at a ‘super-luminal’ distance. In other words, requiring communication beyond light speed contact. Further, quantum events occur, that is to say the world of actualities manifests, only when they are observed, in that, in the quantum universe it is the observer that collapses the quantum gaps (these gaps or waves contain “an infinite sea of quantum potential”) into actuality (de Quincey, 2002, p.25). In these theories, quantum and chaos, it becomes meaningless to isolate individual parts -- a cornerstone in mechanism theories, for everything relates to the whole.

20 This indeterminacy, intrinsic to quantum events, has been expressed in Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle (Heisenberg, 1958). The principle in effect states that it is impossible to predict, or measure with one hundred percent accuracy, where, at any given time, a particle is or will be in time and space and, as de Quincey suggests, this uncertainty is ontological, not merely epistemological uncertainty.
D. S. Clarke asserts that the only realistic position to take when we are considering mentality/mind and its relation to matter is the view supported by his “Origination Argument”, and that is that mind/mentality has always existed. The argument from analogy allows us to consider the idea that mind is not unique to humans. By analogy we are able to posit that other life forms, whether they are complex or somewhat less complex, have mentality. But, we are hard pressed to extend that analogy down into the world of fundamental particles, as there is very little, if anything, that could be considered analogous with human behaviour, except possibly the observed spontaneity or freedom with which these particles appear to move.

Clarke’s discussion regarding extending the panpsychist thesis down to fundamental particles admits this difficulty in establishing an analogical link to these universal building blocks. “Fundamental particles by definition are not organised wholes with parts,” he says, “they are individuals persisting through time, but individuals so different in nature as to apparently exclude them from the scope of the panpsychist thesis” (Clarke, 2003, p.112). The problem is, as he notes later, if we exclude fundamental particles from the thesis, we have undermined the Origination Argument and are left with the same problem the argument is supposed to solve. De Quincey on the other hand actively promotes Quantum theory in relation to fundamental particles, as it turns the universal picture ‘upside down’ in terms of the way we have observed and consequently theorised, in the past, about the nature of matter. De Quincey uses the ideas surrounding the behaviour of fundamental particles to refute the mechanist account of reality. Quantum theory, he suggests, threatens all notions about casual activity, as quantum events are ‘non-local’ and ‘non-causal’, in that they are unhindered by distance (de Quincey, 2002, p.25). Clarke, on the other hand, appears to leave the matter of mind in fundamental particles somewhat unresolved, with an appeal to the incomplete knowledge of contemporary physics, suggesting that these fundamental particles might some day be discovered to be wholes with parts, hence allowing the argument from analogy to stretch down to them.

21 See note 17.
Clarke rejects the argument from universal mechanism that applies to evolutionary theory in an attempt to explain the origination of mentality or consciousness. Clarke (2003, pp.106-107), citing Fred Dretske, writes: “What natural selection starts with as raw material are organisms with assorted needs and variable resources for satisfying these needs. You don’t have to be conscious to have needs.” The argument here is that you don’t have to be conscious to have needs but you do have to have needs to become conscious. In other words, the epiphenomenon of mind is an evolutionary response to human need as we evolved. Clarke counters this with the observation that the need to process information, the claimed precedent cause for mentality, and the ability to process information could have just as easily produced a zombie or “robot-like combinations of molecules with the capacity for differential responses that also lacked mentality” (Clarke, 2003, p.108). The point that Clarke is trying to make in response to universal mechanism’s evolutionary argument, is that you can not treat mentality as if were similar to the horn on a rhinoceros; acquired through evolution, rather pretty to look at, handy when under attack, but could probably get along just fine without it. Clarke claims that the evolutionary theory of the advent of mentality does not adequately account for the antecedent or origination of consciousness. “We are confronted,” he asserts (Clarke, 2003, p.110), “with a totally new aspect apparently without biological explanation for its origination.” Following this and the apparent ongoing inability of mechanists to provide a reasonable explanation, including Daniel Dennett’s attempt, Clarke asserts that the only plausible alternative, apart from Locke’s notion of a Universal Mind that he subsequently rejects, is the Origination Argument.

Daniel Dennett, in his book *Darwin’s Dangerous Idea*, makes the claim that the origination of mentality is simply another evolutionary stage in the progression from primitive to more complex forms of organisation, with this progression to be explained by the combination of random genetic variation and forces of natural selection of Darwinian evolutionary theory (Clarke, 2003, p.103). Locke’s argument for God’s existence is founded on the fact of our own experience of our own selves. Locke asserts: “Thus from the consideration of ourselves, and what we infallibly find in our own constitutions, our reason leads us to the knowledge of this certain and evident truth, that there is an eternal, most powerful, and most knowing being: which whether any one will please to call God, it matters not” (Locke, 1959, Bk IV, Ch X, p.6).
Freya Mathews approaches the problem from a different perspective. Although claiming, as de Quincey does, that the old story is flawed in that it presupposes dualistic misconceptions, Mathews argues for a more personal and intimate relationship between ourselves and our universe. In her book, *For the Love of Matter*, Mathews develops a version of panpsychism that holds that the physical universe is an indivisible unity organised along the lines of a self-realising system. She claims that our responses to environmental crisis and our current environmental philosophy are flawed as they are based on misconceived assumptions. She uses the term *panpsychism* to describe a truly non-dualistic view of matter that “implicates the mentalistic in the material” (Mathews, 2003, p.27).

From this panpsychist perspective, all of reality has a subjectival dimension. Having a subjectival dimension is to say that matter, and all physical existence, are imbued with an inner principle that can be described in terms of subjectivity (Mathews, 2003, p.34).

Mathews argues that any adequate philosophical response to the ‘environmental crises’ cannot be encompassed within the minor discipline of environmental philosophy alone, but must instead appeal to a philosophical understanding that would address the full range of existential questions. She asserts that the Western retreat from a panpsychist ethos of “encounter” may be seen as a consequence of the Western experience of individuation, a direct and consequential result of a dualistic perspective. She urges us towards a more “passionate” and “erotic” encounter with the world, using a mythological and spiritual approach entwined with her arguments for a panpsychic worldview.

Most of the philosophical debate concerning dualism has in the main centred on the relationship between mind and body in sentient beings and not around matter per se. As Mathews points out, matter per se remains, for most thinkers, the province of physics, and, as such, captive to the old dualistic presuppositions (Mathews, 2003, p.26). She holds that even though few scientists or philosophers these days subscribe to a dualistic theory of mind, in the sense of regarding mind as existing completely independently of matter, most of us still have a dualist way of seeing the world held together by old dualistic presuppositions. Mathews claims that materialism and idealism are in fact flip
sides of dualism itself, since “materiality is dualistically conceived from the perspective of materialism and ideality is dualistically conceived from the perspective of idealism” (Mathews, 2003, p.26).

Mathews defends her argument for panpsychism from the perspective of realism, suggesting that subjectivity, as a field (of self-presence), as such, is ultimately indivisible. Although, bearing in mind that all material objects can be said, from a panpsychist perspective, to have a subjectival dimension, it is not true to say of all objects that they are subjects (Mathews, 2003, p.33). The idea that the universe is imbued with both subjectival and objectival dimensions is central to Mathews’ argument for a panpsychist perspective of the universe. She asserts that “subjectivity is that field of self-presence out of which awareness springs” (2003, p.73). Although such self-presence is here ascribed to reality at large, she makes the point that it may be understood in “systems-theoretic terms” as a function of reflexivity of certain kinds of systems, namely those capable of making themselves the object or goal of their own activities. Such systems, which she describes as “selves”, are, in other words, systems that are directed to their own perpetuation. They are, she says, in this sense, “self-referential” (2003, pp.47-48). According to Mathews the universe has to be able to refer to itself. This referentiality must occur at the level of intention, if it is to “pick itself out of the domain of possibilities and select itself for actualisation”. She goes on to explain it further. “It is on account of the necessary self-referentiality that reality is as irreducibly subjectival as it is physical” (2003, p.74). In order to explain how the universe is constellated as such Mathews argues that as there can be no others external to itself to which the world can reach out, it creates such others out of the fabric of itself. It is as if in reaching out for another it finds only itself, as it is only One, and has no other choice other than to create that which it reaches for. These others, of its own creation, Mathews asserts, consist of finite sub-systems that are also relatively self-realising: “out of the primordial desire of the global system/self an endless stream of relatively individuated finite systems/selves is constellated” (2003, p.74).

Mathews makes the claim that it is fair to assume that the universe is self-realising, and it follows that any universe that is self-realising is to the same extent self-actualising, otherwise how would it come into existence? But if something can bring itself into existence, then it must also be self-referential,
since it is *itself* that it brings into existence (2003, p.52). And, any universe that has a self-referential capacity entails that it necessarily has a subjectival dimension. It can be said that being a self-realising system, it proposes *reflexivity* and to this extent the universe is imbued with a subjectival dimension. This universal subjectivity, that Mathews promotes, is as fundamental to its metaphysical nature as is its physicality since its physicality is given only in the context of the self-referentiality, the reflexivity, required for its self-actualisation. According to Mathews (2003, pp.60-61), the "capacity of self-referentiality admits of twin aspects" and she has chosen two terms to help describe what she is getting at here: the "conative" and the "orectic". Conatus is the will to self-realisation and self-preservation, self-maintenance, and self-increase. Orexis, a Greek word meaning appetite, but including three conceptualised functions: desire, spirit, and wish, is the impulse to reach out to world. She describes it as "the desire for contact and connection with other-than-self" (Mathews, 2003, pp.60-61).

According to Mathews, the interiority of matter can not be without drive or purpose. Understanding this, Mathews has attempted to find suitable terms in an effort to capture these conceptual ideas. There not only has to be self-referentiality, conativity, and its necessary subjectival capacity attributed to a systems framework, but there also has to be some kind of drive or will or desire, in order that it moves, evolves, always inviting change. Evolution simply would not work without such drives or capacities. The world would not turn. The universe would be static, standing still, nil. In a systems framework these capacities or drives, conativity and orexis are dialectically entwined, and she explains that the "conativity of the global self drives the cosmological expansion of space whilst its orecticity manifests as the self-differentiation of the physical manifold" (Mathews, 2003, p.73). She describes it as the self seeking both to articulate itself, distinguishing itself from its ontological matrix, and at the same time to lose itself, subsiding back into that matrix by mixing itself with others. And she makes the point that indeed, in order to articulate itself the self must enter into relations of mutuality with elements of its environment (Mathews, 2003, p.59). It (the universe) must respond to the orectic imperative, the 'self' reaching out. And she makes a vital point here, that one cannot be separated from the other, since orexis is itself an expression of intentionality, and is hence the province of a
self, it can make itself felt only within a conative context. Conatus and orexis thus converge in the need of selves to engage in basically mutualistic relations.

In trying to capture the inter-relationships in the cosmos, Mathews has borrowed from the ancient Chinese wisdom teachings of the Way, the Tao, to help her describe what she refers to as "The Way of the One and the Many". This Way is the means by which the Many, so long as they are left to follow the orectic course of their innate conatus, promote the self-increase of the One (Mathews, 2003, p.64). According to Mathews, this gives rise to:

...the metaphysical pattern of mutual self-articulation that unfolds when global self (the One) and finite selves (the Many) are allowed to follow their innermost promptings to engage mutualistically with one another. Given the conative vector at the core of creation, a tendency to generate ever-deeper possibilities of self-realisation will be discernible in the unfolding of world (Mathews, 2003, p.74).

Self-increase, gives rise to the possibility of self-decrease and Mathews explains how this, in some sense, is self-controlling. As any individual subjectival entities whose self-realisation causes self-decrease in the wider system will be "selected out of creation, not by conscious fiat, but by the exquisite ecological logic of the Way" (Mathews, 2003, p.66). However, Mathews asserts, since inter-subjective forms of contact and connection exceed merely appetitive forms in the degree of "self-potentiation" they are capable of producing the tendency towards self-increase, rather than self-decrease, and will translate into an evolution of levels of awareness that allow for eros in addition to appetite. The Way of the One and the Many is thus, according Mathews, ultimately a path of erotic adaptation to reality.

1.4 Monism, Dualism and Non-dual Dualism

In the literature review we have traced the argument for a "dualistic" mind/body relationship through to the "panexperiential" "non-dual duality" perspective. But, like the paradox of the disappearing mast outlined in section 2.2, there is something absurd about a notion of a "non-dual duality". D. S. Clarke
posits his argument for panpsychism, the "Origination Argument", that is that mind/mentality has always been there, is based on his assertion that it is the only realistic position to take when we are considering mentality/mind and its relation to matter. Both his argument from realism and the argument from analogy allow us to consider, with confidence, the idea that mind is not unique to humans. By analogy we are able to posit that other life forms, whether they are complex or somewhat less complex, have mentality. But, as Clarke notes, we are hard pressed to extend that analogy down into the world of fundamental particles, as there is very little, if anything, that could be considered analogous with human behaviour, except possibly the observed spontaneity or freedom with which these particles appear to move. But surely, if the "Origination Argument" has any merit we must ascribe subjective mentality to even the smallest fundamental particles. Otherwise we are still dealing with the problems associated with emergence and ultimately some form of dualism. And that is where Clarke has failed to convince. Unless the apparent dualistic relationship between mind and matter can be sufficiently explained you still have some form of dualism, in this case a "non-dual dualism."

In Chapter 2, I will explain that with the "dual-aspect singularity" argument, mind and matter are the same thing. Mind does not emerge from matter and matter does not emerge from mind. They cannot be separated, as you cannot have one without the other. Any appearance of interaction between mind and matter is an experience of the singularity's dual-aspect. Mind and matter only appear as being separate.

Why does this solution, the "dual-aspect singularity" argument, work when other solutions such as monism, dualism, and non-dual duality, have not? Because it recognises the basic dualistic nature of our perceived world but understands it as "dualistic aspectivism." That is, two aspects of the same thing. Neither materialist nor idealist monism provided an adequate philosophical base. Monistic materialism fails because it has been unable to account for mental facts. Once all the material facts have been deducted from the universe there appears to be certain undeniable mental facts left over that refuse to be reducible to material states. Monistic idealism fails for two different reasons 1). Idealism's association with pantheism and theism in general has muddled the waters, as it introduces the issue of good and evil and their relationship with God, perfect or otherwise. Dealing with problems of good and evil and providing an adequate explanation of the
obvious dualistic nature of the universe has found most philosophers declaring various formulations of monistic idealism indefensible (Levine, 1994, p.217). Monistic idealism also has trouble explaining away matter just as monistic materialism has trouble explaining away mind.

One might suggest that the problem with monism is that we have difficulty in pulling it apart to explain the dualistic nature of the universe and, likewise, the problem with dualism is that we have difficulty in sticking it back together again. Just as monistic materialists spend a lot of time and effort trying to prove mind does not exist in mental terms, so too do dualists, who spend an awful lot of time attempting to explain the relationship between mind and matter once both have acknowledged existence. It can be argued that the "dual-aspect singularity" is a form of monism, rather than a dualism, and this would be true. But, it is a monism that has not taken sides. The "dual-aspect singularity" is neither matter nor mind. Yet both are the dual aspects of it.

The pure materialist would say nature may appear dualistic but everything in it can be reduced to matter, therefore there is only matter here. Most scientists and mainstream philosophers hold this materialist position. The problem is, as we have previously suggested, after all the so-called material facts have been added up, there seems to be a lot of other stuff, mental facts left over. These mental facts are a problem for materialists, as they do not readily reduce down to matter. Mental facts might be beliefs, desires or pains, etc. How to hang onto the basic tenets of materialism and at the same time explain mentality has been a quandary for many philosophers. As we will discuss in the second part of this thesis, the "dual-aspect singularity" argument has none of the above mentioned problems as it explains the dual nature of reality, but resolves that duality into a singularity by understanding it as a dual-aspectivism.
Chapter 2 - Experiencing the Whole Picture

2.1 Personal Knowledge: Epistemologically Valid or Not?

In the current panpsychism debate due consideration of actual panpsychic experiences, in the sense that I am proposing, has not been taken into account. A "panpsychic personal experience" is one in which mind and matter are experienced as one. It is an experience that is usually initiated by some kind of crisis, as described in the preface, or one that can happen when one is in deep contemplation or meditation, as recorded by Christian, Buddhist, Hindu and other practitioners, as well as by modern psychologists or individuals who practice meditation or deep forms of concentration. Freya Mathews' appeal to a more joyful and intimate relationship with the world on a personal level moves the debate in that direction, as she urges us towards a "passionate" and "erotic" encounter with the world, but she fails to analyse the experience in a way that need not appeal to passion or eroticism. A state of deep concentration and meditation requires neither.

My thesis for a "dual-aspect singularity" as a conceptualised perspective of the mind/body mind/matter relationship, a conundrum when considered in "dualistic" or "non-dual dualistic" terms, is an attempt to provide a definitive description of the mind/body mind/matter mind/world relationships. This perspective can be intuitively arrived at following what I have termed a "personal panpsychic experience". This type of experience has been well researched. Psychologist Abraham Maslow spent the latter part of his career studying and writing extensively about what he called "peak experience." Maslow describes characteristics of the peak experience:

1. Perception is relatively ego-less. The individual fuses with objects into a new, larger whole. Objects are seen as free from relations, purpose, or usefulness to anything else.

2. Awareness of the past and future is lost. The person lives only in the moment, totally immersed in the here-and-now. A distortion of time and space occurs.
3. Normal, everyday consciousness is widened and enriched, and one feels that one has experienced a higher, more direct state of consciousness, that one has perceived the true essence of things. (cited in Jacobs, 2003, p.70)

As Maslow points out, the ego orientated “I” disappears, or as he puts it, it “fuses with objects into a new, larger whole”, and “our dualistic perception dissolves into a single experience (Jacobs, 2003, p.70).” I have given further examples of “personal panpsychic experiences” in section 2.4 of this thesis. After having had this type of experience myself, along with several years of meditative practice, I have come to the conclusion that 1) everything that exists has both a mental and a material aspect that allows for both objectival and subjectival capacities; 2) that neither the mental nor the material are ontologically real; and 3) that the normal experience of reality is dualistic, but reality itself is singular and indivisible.

I will now argue that the way to understand the mind/matter relationship is to consider the non-conceptualised experience of wholeness and unity, as defined in this thesis and described by Maslow, as reality and self-evident as long as it is grounded in the moment of the experience. If it can then be demonstrated that the experience is available to anyone who so chooses to pursue it through well documented methods, and if the records of those who have had the experience are also well documented, then this adds weight to my thesis. It provides us with a solution that allows the debate to move forward yet still acknowledges the dualistic nature of reality as we experience it in everyday life. I offer my argument for a “dual-aspect singularity” in three parts:

1) That knowledge acquired through “personal panpsychic experiences” is epistemologically valid. That is, that ontological knowledge of unity and wholeness, acquired under certain kinds of non-conceptualised personal experience(s), which I have called “personal panpsychic experiences”, is epistemologically valid and needs to be taken into account when considering the mind/body mind/matter problem.

2) That the perceived dualism, from our normal experience of subject-objective reality, is merely dual-aspectivism. That is, that by seeing the world around us in light of the knowledge acquired through “personal panpsychic
experiences,” knowledge that is epistemologically valid, we are justified to understand the dualism we normally experience as simply dual-aspectivism, a dual aspect of the same thing, a universal singularity.

3) That the nature of some dilemmas puts them beyond our normal rational mental states of mind, which are subject to restrictive dualistic mental language, and as such we are often unable to resolve intuitively based knowledge problems. So the last part of my argument in support of my thesis for a “dual-aspect singularity” is a discussion about how we might be able to approach the mind/body paradox. I assert that one of the ways we can intuitively understand this thesis is in the application and consideration of the Moebius Principle. The Moebius Principle is important to my argument because it demonstrates that there are aspects and dimensions in reality that we have difficulty comprehending through our normal senses, and yet they obviously exist. Once the “dual-aspect singularity” thesis is accepted, panpsychism can also be understood as a realistic and understandable thesis in physical and mental terms.

1. Ontological knowledge of unity and wholeness, acquired under certain kinds of non-conceptualised personal experience(s), “personal panpsychic experiences,” is epistemologically valid and needs to be taken into account when considering the mind/body mind/matter problem. I argue that these particular “personal panpsychic experiences” are in fact epistemologically justifiable and can be claimed as rational as they do in fact adhere to the criteria demanded by the “evidentialists” where it applies. “Classical foundationalism,” broadly speaking, is the epistemological requirement that any belief should be supported by evidence that is self-evident, or evident to the senses, or incorrigible. I argue that the kinds of panpsychic experiences we are taking about are self-evident, in that once understood one sees them as true. It is evident to the senses in that it is not based on a conceptualised argument or thing, but is a real life event or

24 “Evidentialism”, the roots of which can be found in the Enlightenment demand that all beliefs be subjected to searching criticism of reason; if a belief cannot survive the scrutiny of reason, it is irrational (Clark, 2004, p.2)
25 “Classical Foundationalism” is the demand that belief in God, or belief in anything rational, should be support by a foundation of certitudes that in general have to comply to the following: that the belief is self-evident, that it is evident to the senses, or that it is incorrigible (Clark, 2004, p.3).
experience in which one participates completely. I will go so far as to argue that in fact there is a heightening or enhancing of the senses. And, I will argue that it is incorrigible in that once experienced the world will always appear as "one" and "whole" to the individual.

There can be no realistic argument in my view against the first condition: it is sufficient for a "belief" to be considered rational if it is self-evident. For one thing I am presenting this type of knowledge, not as a "belief," but as direct ontological knowledge or knowledge acquired as a result of a real experience. As it is self-evident to the one who has had the experience it is therefore deemed rational. If I knowingly step into a hot bath the result of which is that I am now hot, that knowledge that I am hot requires no rationality assessment. I know I am now hot. It is only if I need to explain the experience to another, say a child for instance, then I might appeal to rationality. The bath is hot; if you get in you will feel hot. But, again it will only become evident to the child when he or she gets into the bath. Until such time any "belief" the child might have about the hot water is conjecture and open to question and demand for evidence.

One possible argument against the idea that "personal panpsychic experiences" are self-evidential is that the knowledge of "unity" gained from such experiences is not available (to be self-evident) to anyone who has not had the experience just like the child who does not get into the bath. This may be true but this can not be a valid argument against the notion itself, but rather an acknowledgment that for those who have no self-evidentiary experience of a panpsychic nature the matter becomes one of "belief" only. Just as the child who refuses to believe the water is hot, but instead insists the water is cold, but refuses to get into the bath, the onus is now on the child to provide a rational explanation for the belief that the water is cold when it is in fact hot, rather than on the person who simply experienced a hot bath.

On the second point that it is a sufficient condition for a belief to be rational if it is evident to the senses, I reiterate that it is not a conceptualised belief but an actual experience that takes place. One might argue that it is not evident to the senses because the experience might be considered elusive or in some sense visionary. It is true that during these experiences the senses are not operating in normal mode so to speak. As we shall see later from descriptions, time seems to slow down. Solid objects such as mountains and walls may appear penetrable and
plastic. And, as the sense of "I" fades away, I smell, I see, I hear etc., become a redundant relationship, because the smell, or the sight, or the noise, and I, become one and the same. Subject and object merge together into a unity. If anything I would suggest that the senses become enhanced.

The only counter arguments to the above might be one of questionable sensory perception. Like the child who does not get into the bath we might also suggest that the person having the experience has got it wrong, that their senses have misinterpreted the event. But, these experiences are well documented if not well understood. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, a psychologist, after interviewing literally thousands of individuals over a twenty year period, describes in his book *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, that when people have these optimal experiences, most report that time proceeds much faster than usual; hours seem to pass by in minutes. In Csikszentmihalyi's words:

> What slips below the threshold of awareness is the concept of self. People stop being aware of themselves as separate from the actions they are performing. And being able to forget temporarily who we are seems to be very enjoyable. Loss of the sense of a self separate from the world around it can lead to a feeling of union with the environment, self-transcendence, and a feeling that the boundaries of our being have been pushed forward, so that the person is transported into a new reality, to previously undreamed-of states of consciousness. (cited in Jacobs, 2003, p.69)

As we are talking about a sensory experience, one that is well documented and recognised as such, any argument against it not being evident to the senses would surely fail.

On the third point that it is incorrigible: I argue that one is left in no doubt about the validity of the experience, and that the “personal panpsychic experience” is grounded in “real” experience. It is not merely a state of euphoria, although one might feel euphoric at the same time. If I were to suggest that the world seems to be “one” or “whole”, then seeming to be “one” could be considered not incorrigible, for tomorrow it may seem different. But, again the experiences we are suggesting are not “seeming to be” or “it appears as if” type beliefs or assertions. They are well-documented “direct experiences” of reality once the cognitive part of the brain shuts off. As Dr Gregg Jacobs points out, in his book *The Ancestral Mind*: “A hallmark of the mystical state is an intuitive
sense of ‘realness’ in which one ‘sees’ rather than thinks. The world is perceived more directly, and the vividness and richness of normal waking consciousness are greatly enhanced” (Jacobs, 2003, p.72). The belief one forms from “personal panpsychic experiences” are incorrigible because they are direct knowledge experiences. After the experience, one is left in no doubt about the experience, just as the experience of a hot bath leaves no doubt about the temperature of the bath water.

2). In the second part of my thesis I argue that perceived dualism is merely dual-aspectivism. This is my assertion: that by perceiving the world around us in light of the knowledge acquired through “personal panpsychic experiences” we are able to understand dualism as simply dual-aspects of the same thing, a universal singularity.

The cognitive part of our minds constantly reinforces the dualistic nature of our world. We see our world as object. In an ordinary state of everyday consciousness we feel separate from the world and experience it as such. Even the language we use supports this view. “I love you,” “You made me angry,” “I see the mountain” etc. We experience the world as in “relationship” to us, and our mentality is very good at relationships. But this “I” that I associate with “myself” or “me” can be considered somewhat of a philosophical mystery. Peter Strawson in his chapter “Persons,”26 asserts that “the I occurs in philosophy through the fact that the ‘world is my world.’ The philosophical “I” is not the man, not the human body, or the human soul...but the metaphysical subject, the limit – not a part of the world” (cited in LeDoux, 2002, p.19). My argument is that the “I” asserts itself when we are using our reasoning or cognitive mentality and consequently disappears when we are simply just being. In a state of deep meditation, as we can see from the examples I provide in the thesis, all mental chatter (thinking) ceases. The thinking “I” no longer dominates our conscious interaction with the world and we are simply being. My assertion is that being is a “one thing” experience, whereas thinking is always a “two things” experience. In thinking we are able to divide, separate, and isolate. In being, once thinking has

ceased and is no longer able to create a veil of dualism, we are simply whole and experience the world as such.

We have evolved and survive today as either an individual or as a species in part because of our ability to handle relationships. The human mind isn’t just cognitive but also has several other states of consciousness, such as subconscious or emotional states. According to LeDoux, cognitive scientists now reject the view handed down from Descartes that mind and consciousness are the same thing (LeDoux, 1996, p.29). They recognise that there are many levels of consciousness within mind and this has given rise to a whole new area of cognitive research sometimes referred to as “emotional intelligence”. This realisation that mind is more than just cognition and that there is a direct correlation between the mind and the biological self still has cognitive researchers and consequently philosophers puzzling for an adequate and philosophically descriptive solution. Antonio Damasio, Van Allen Distinguished Professor and head of neurology at the University of Iowa, summed up his latest perspective on the mind body relationship after years of research: “...the mind is part of that well-woven apparatus. In other words, body, brain and mind are manifestations of a single organism” (Damasio, 2003, p.195).

This “single organism” simply creates the “I” in order to get the cognitive job done, and in so doing, and by default, generates its own division, creating its own duality. There is no duality; there is simply a dual aspect of the one and the same thing.

3). This leads me to my third point; that the nature of some dilemmas puts them beyond our normal rational mental states of mind, which are subject to our restrictive dualistic mental language, as such we are unable to resolve intuitively based knowledge problems. So the last part of my argument in support of my thesis for a “dual-aspect singularity” is a discussion about how we might be able to intuitively approach the mind/body paradox. I assert that one of the ways we might intuitively understand this thesis is the Moebius Principle. The Moebius Principle is important to my argument because it demonstrates that there are aspects and dimensions in reality that we have difficulty comprehending through our normal senses. Once the Moebius Principle is accepted, panpsychism can also be understood as a realistic and understandable thesis.
The Moebius Principle is a modern quandary found in the branch of qualitative mathematics known as topology. Steven Rosen, in his book *Science, Paradox, and the Moebius Principle*, illustrates the paradox extremely well (1994, pp.7-9). If you take a sheet of normal office paper and cut a one-inch strip off one side and then simply join the ends of the cut strip together with a piece of tape, you will have a cylindrical ring with an inside surface and an outside surface. If you now draw a line in the centre all the way around on the inside, and another line all the way around on the outside, again in the centre, you will now have a good representation of dualism. The outside line we might designate as representing matter and the inside line as representing mind. If you press together your finger and thumb with the paper between and your fingers on the line anywhere on the ring, you have in some sense taken a slice of reality indicating a duality. You have matter and mind separate by virtue of the two surfaces of our cylinder and yet immediately and correspondingly together captured between your thumb and forefinger. Now, if you undo the tape holding the paper in a cylinder shape and turn one end over and then re-attach the tape you will now have a twist in the paper slip. This is called the Moebius strip and it is fundamentally different from the cylinder strip. Certainly we can still place the thumb and the forefinger, as before, anywhere along the centre of the strip and they will appear to have again captured our duality of mind and matter. But this time there are no two surfaces, inside and outside. To prove this, take a pen and redraw the line and you will discover only one line and therefore only one surface! This time there is no duality as such, only two aspects of the same thing as you place your thumb and finger together anywhere on the strip, because both the surfaces you touch are in fact the same surface. This is an excellent analogy for the nature of the “dual-aspect singularity.” As Rosen asserts, “the two sides of the Moebius are but one side...and we begin to see in the Moebius surface a visual/geometric representation of the union of opposites” (Rosen, 1994, p.9).

*Problems with Rationality*

Ever since the Enlightenment and the elevation of Reason (with a capital R), any rationality associated with beliefs in religion, not to mention paganism, or mysticism, has been denied by some. And as a result, an extraordinary and
unwarranted demand has been placed on such beliefs; that the levels of evidence required claiming rationality far out strip that required of other philosophical positions. Even though I have argued that knowledge derived from “personal panpsychic experiences” passes the test for rationality, the question remains, is rationality necessary and sufficient for this knowledge? If rationality is neither necessary nor sufficient for truth, and this particular knowledge encapsulates a truth, then it can be argued that rationality is neither necessary nor sufficient for this particular knowledge. The problem requires a more intuitive approach. The Moebius Principle demonstrates this point well. Our normal rational mind has difficulty working out the dimensional spaces in the workings of the Principle, but the truth of it can not be denied. And yet, the experience of placing our fingers either side of the strip or following the centre line to discover it is one line and not two, is an experience of this truth that is known intuitively.

If we applied classical foundationalism’s demands to our own beliefs of the past or inductive beliefs about the future we would soon come to the inevitable conclusion that they can not be rationally justified. Again, moral beliefs, as Clark points out (2004, p.6), are not well justified on the basis of argument or evidence in the classical foundationalist sense. Another criticism of classical foundationalism comes from Alvin Plantinga, claiming that the criteria demanded by classic foundationalism are self-referentially inconsistent, in that classic foundationalism is in itself neither self-evident or evident to the senses, nor is it incorrigible (Clark, 2004, p.6). Clark describes incorrigible beliefs as “first person states (seeming or appearance beliefs) about which I cannot be wrong.”

The main problem with the evidentiary demand to demonstrate rationality is that rationality is no harbinger for the truth. Rationality merely reflects the status quo of any particular population at any one time. Firstly I would make the point, as Clark does in his essay on Religious Epistemology, that “rationality is more a matter of how one believes than what one believes” (Clark, 2004, p.1). In other words and as we have already stated, rationality does not equate to truth. It is quite possible to hold that something is true but to have come by that belief irrationally. For example I might believe the world is round because every night I flap my arms and fly around it. Conversely, at one time it was rational for people to believe that the earth was flat. And finally as this suggests and as Clark points out, “rationality is person and situation specific” (Clark, 2004, p.1). In other words,
what might be rational for someone at one time and one place, given certain socio-historical circumstances, may be quite irrational for another in a different time and place; or, for that matter, what is rational for a person in the same time and place may be quite irrational for another, due to different experiences.

Let me repeat; in order to solve intuitively based knowledge problems we need to include intuitively based knowledge, or at least allow this form of knowledge to be considered. If reasoned thinking and rational arguments are the very constructs that prevent us from understanding our reality in this regard, if they are the very things that create this perceived duality, then we need to put thinking aside and attempt to intuitively grasp the true nature of our reality.

Mind-matter Mind-brain

It might be argued that even though the panpsychic thesis addresses the mind-matter or mind-world problem, how does it resolve the mind-brain distinction? First, you would have to assert that the two issues, mind-matter and mind-brain are somehow unrelated. I reject this on the grounds that the brain is matter. Certainly it is a complex organisation of matter, but there doesn’t appear to be any reason to leave it outside the scope of the thesis or separate one kind of matter from another. If we accept that mind and matter are merely dual aspects of a singularity, and that any distinction between mind and matter is merely illusory, then we also have to accept that any distinction between mind and brain is also illusory. I do not see any problem with this view. The thesis takes into account all matter, including brain matter. If however, you assert that it is a brute biological fact that consciousness is a product of brain, as John Searle does (Searle, 1997, p.158), then you may consider there is a problem with accepting my thesis that mind and matter are in fact indistinct. But, I agree, as Searle asserts, that the brain causes consciousness, and is in fact responsible for all states of human consciousness. I agree because, I am not making a claim that consciousness and matter are indistinct. I am asserting that mind and matter are indistinct. I am using “mind” in a broader sense as defined in the section Terms Defined. This allows for the normal workings of consciousness to go about its mental workings but suggests that there is more to mind than mere consciousness. And, it is this
expanded mind that is one with matter, which we experience when we have a
“personal panpsychic experience.”

Paradox. Anomalies and the Dual-aspect Singularity

According to the Oxford Dictionary a paradox is a statement that, whether
ture or false, seems or is absurd. Any statement that is in conflict with a
preconceived idea or notion yet is in itself true, tends to be paradoxical. Anyone in
Europe who watched the tall masts of a boat disappear down gently over the
horizon, when it was widely believed that the world was flat, would have been
confronted with a paradox. On the one hand the earth was flat, and on the other
hand the boat’s masts would indicate that the vessel was ‘sinking’ over the
horizon and yet returning at a later date. The accepted notion and as such the
rational notion, that the earth is flat is a good analogy with the current generally
accepted notion that the mind and body are separate. But the paradox becomes
apparent when from a realistic point of view it becomes obvious that some crucial
observations simply do not fit into the framework provided by the so-called
known facts. This, in both cases, gives rise to all kinds of partial stories in an
attempt to fill the gaps in logic, whilst trying to remain faithful to the original
concept. Ultimately the paradox remains until such time as a new understanding is
brought to bear on the problem and all anomalies are resolved. The anomaly of the
disappearing mast is resolved when it is understood that the earth is round and not
flat. The anomaly of dualism and how it arises is resolved when it is understood
that there were never two things happening here, only one.
2.2 Examples of Personal Panpsychic Experiences

All phenomena are mind, mind is all. Mind contains
rivers, mountains, moon, and sun.

Japanese Zen master Dogen

My thesis for a "dual-aspect singularity" perspective is based on an argument validating non-conceptualised experience, the "personal panpsychic experience." It is based on a real experience that can either come about by virtue of an event, and possibly but not necessarily, a crisis event, or from a concerted effort of a supervised or not-supervised practice that results in an experience of a 'non-dual' unity or wholeness. The world is not made up from a chaotic and random mix of objectivised and individualised separated bodies, of varying complexities, some of which appear to interact, but, it is a world that is in fact "whole" and "one" and only fragmented and dualistic in appearance. I draw your attention to those who have had similar experiences to that which is in the preface and as a result of those revelations see the unity or oneness of the world. I do not wish to draw on the "religious experience" per se, as any individual conceptualised interpretation, religious or otherwise, is immaterial to the point being made here. Any experience of this nature, whether it is as a result of effort or crises may be interpreted in many different ways, but, and this is my assertion, the original experience is real, non-conceptual and ontologically valid, and, the nature of these experiences is one of non-duality, of unity or oneness.

I wish to again make it quite clear at this point that I am not making any argument for the existence of God, or that the "singularity" is God, even though many in the past have identified God with the experience of unity or oneness. If you were to ask what is the "singularity" I would suggest it was absolutely everything, the dual aspects of which manifest as mind and matter. Many throughout history have had these experiences of oneness, completeness, and wholeness, and have attempted to interpret and describe the experience in many different ways. Whole new religions have blossomed from them, all with different
interpretations. And, in some cases, Buddhism for example, there are many different interpretations and schools of thought within the one religion. Having said that, it is to religion that I am obliged to turn for corroborating evidence of the “personal panpsychic experience,” and where we find a rich background of discussion surrounding the dualistic nature of ordinary human perception.

As stated, Buddhism has many different branches, but all branches are from the single tree and the roots of that tree are firmly embedded in the experience of the Buddha’s enlightenment. It is a state in which one is no longer entangled in duality. In Nagarjuna’s Treatise of Great Understanding (Mahaprajnaparamita Sutra) it is explained like this:

All phenomena can be understood to be in two categories: mind and matter. On the conceptual level, we distinguish mind and matter, but on the level of awakening, all is mind. Object and mind are both marvellous. Mind is matter, matter is mind. Matter does not exist outside of matter. Mind does not exist outside of matter. Each is in the other. This is called the non-duality of mind and matter (Hanh, 1974, p.89)

There is a clear statement resolving the duality on mind and matter in an ancient Buddhist text. Hanh goes on to explain that when we discriminate between subject and object, we are removed from Zen and its guiding principle of non-duality. The doctrine of Vijnanavada, one of the Mahayana Buddhist schools, says that “the word ‘knowledge’ (vijnana) indicates at the same time the subject and the object of knowledge. The subject and object of knowledge cannot exist independently of each other” (Hanh, 1974, p.90). In order to explain the non-conceptual experience of non-duality, Hanh uses the analogy of simply drinking tea. When we have some tea, we have a direct experience of the tea. The experience of drinking tea is not a concept. Only afterwards can we reflect on it and distinguish between this and other experiences. “At the moment of the experience, you and the taste of the tea are one. There is no differentiation. The tea is you, and you are the tea. There is not the drinker of the tea and the tea being enjoyed, because there is no distinction between subject and object in the real experience” (Hanh, 1974, p.88). At the core of Buddhism is the practice of meditation and the purpose of that meditation is to stop thinking, to cease the constant prattle that persists within us, constantly reinforcing itself and conceptualising the way we perceive our world. The Buddhist master Huang Po,
in speaking of the reality of true nature (what he called "the mind of unity and thusness"), said:

Buddhas and living beings participate in the same pure and unique mind. There is no separation concerning this mind. Since time immemorial this mind has never been created or destroyed; it is neither green nor yellow; it has neither form nor aspect; it is neither being nor non-being; it is neither old nor new, neither short nor long, neither big nor small. It transcends all intellectual categories, all words and expressions, all signs and marks, all comparisons and discriminations. It is what it is; if one tries to conceive it, one loses it. Unlimited like space, it has no boundaries and cannot be measured. This mind is unity and thusness. It is Buddha (Hanh, 1974, p.80).

It is not my purpose here to suggest that the above is "dual-aspect singularitivism" as such but, rather to provide examples of a parallel experience of reality that certainly endorses the monistic aspect of my thesis. D S Clarke, in his latest book *Panpsychism: Past and Present Selected Readings*, also draws our attention to Buddhism, and in particular to Tiantai Buddhism,27 and points out that the teachings of the Gotama Buddha, expressed in the early Buddhist sutras, can be regarded as an early expression of an unrestricted panpsychism (Clarke, 2004 p35). Sogyal Rinpoche, a Buddhist meditation master, in his book *The Tibetan Book of the Living and Dying* describes the two fundamental aspects of mind. The first is the ordinary mind *sem*: "That which possesses discriminating awareness, that which possesses a sense of duality – which grasps or rejects something external – that is mind. Fundamentally it is that which can associate with an 'other' – with any 'something', that is perceived as different from the perceiver (Rinpoche, 1992, p.46)." So "sem" is the mind that thinks, plots, desires, manipulates, that flares up in anger, that creates and indulges. It is the mind that goes on and on asserting, validating, and confirming its 'existence' by fragmenting, conceptualising, and solidifying experience. Then, according to Rinpoche (1992, p.47), "there is the very nature of mind, its innermost essence, which is absolutely and always untouched by change..." and later "...under

27 Tiantai Buddhism is a school within Mahayana Buddhism that flourished in China from the seventh to the tenth century, and was transmitted to Japan as Tendai Buddhism. In Jacqueline Stone's *Original Enlightenment and the Transformation of Medieval Japanese Buddhism*, Stone says that this variety of Buddhism claims that "all beings are enlightened inherently. Not only human beings, but ants and crickets, mountains and rivers, grasses and trees are all innately Buddha." (cited in Clarke, 2004, p.36)
certain special circumstances, some inspiration may uncover for us glimpses of this nature of mind”. He goes on to say that it can never be said too often that to realise the nature of mind is to realise the nature of all things.

These experiences are not confined to any one particular theosophy or theology. Christian mysticism also has many stories that confirm this type of knowledge. As a direct result of a “severe crisis” he had at the seminary at Barby, Friedrich Schleiermacher’s essays on religion reflect this idea. In his publication *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers*, Schleiermacher bewails the loss of the ‘religious experience’ in favour of a more orthodox and rational religion. Schleiermacher talks about “these systems of theology, these theories of the origin and the end of the world, these analysis of the notion of an incomprehensible Being, wherein everything runs to cold arguing, and the highest can be treated in the tone of a common controversy” (Schleiermacher, 1958, p.15). We are getting here the strongest assertion from Schleiermacher that religion is something to be experienced rather than learnt, that you will “find little in sacred books,” that it is more to do with “feeling” or “intuition” (Schleiermacher, 1958, p.16).

Another example of these life-changing experiences can be found in the life of Jacob Boehme, a 16th century Christian mystic in whose argument for the existence of God we can see his panpsychism flourish, as he establishes the premise of non-emergence of mind in the universe. For he writes (Waterfield, 2001, p.123): “Therefore now if the eternal mind were not, out of which the eternal will Goeth forth, then there would be no God. But now therefore *there is an eternal mind*, which generateth the eternal heart of God, and the Heart generateth the light, and the light the virtue, and virtue the spirit, and this is the Almighty God.” But, the eternal mind is in the darkness and it conceiveth its will to the light. Therefore: God, the universe and everything, emerges from mind (which is nothing). Any argument about Boehme’s panpsychism would revolve not around the issue of emergence of mind from the universe, but of the universe emerging from mind.
2.3 Conclusion

When I first started researching the panpsychism debate I was struck by the notion that the debate about mind/body was in some sense stuck and could not progress any further without a “radical solution” being found, as suggested by Galen Strawson (Griffin, 1998, p.5). As I detailed in the section The Significance of the Panpsychism Debate, several philosophers in the panpsychism debate share this view. Consequently, I set out to develop a radical solution to the mind-matter mind-body problem. That radical solution is the “dual-aspect singularity” perspective.

The premise for the “dual-aspect singularity” perspective lies in what I have termed the “personal panpsychic experience”. Within these “personal panpsychic experiences” the distinction between mind and the world of matter vanishes, and the individual is left with the deep-seated ontological knowledge that the nature of our universe is single and not dual. I have argued that this knowledge is epistemologically valid as it satisfies the criteria for evidential rationality. Even so, I acknowledge that individuals who have not had a “personal panpsychic experience” will have difficulty in reaching the same conclusion through a rational process. However, I have explained, using the example of the Moebius Principle as a visual/geometric representation of the union of opposites (Rosen, 1994, p.9), how we can approach this intuitively based (for those without direct panpsychic experience) knowledge problem. I have given examples of these types of experiences and even demonstrated that there is nothing new about them.

I have arrived at the “dual-aspect singularity” solution to the mind-body mind-matter paradox by way of the following argument: 1). After having had a “personal panpsychic experience,” an experience that I have argued as being epistemologically valid, one realises that the dualities we experience in our everyday thinking lives are illusory. This is because it is the cognitive part of our brain-consciousness that separates, divides, and isolates. It can do this by creating dualistic relationships between itself, the created “I,” and the rest of the world. However, what appears to be dualistic is merely dual in aspect only. This dual-
aspectivism becomes apparent when one has a "personal panpsychic experience" where the "I" falls away, as described in my thesis. 2). If dualistic relationships in the universe are ontologically not real, then we left with no choice but to conclude that the true nature of the universe has to be singular. Again this knowledge of a whole, or unified universe becomes apparent through having a "personal panpsychic experience." 3). If we now reduce the universe down to its essential elements/aspects of matter on the one hand and mind on the other, we can now say that (a). Everything that exists has both a mental and a material aspect. (b). But, neither the mental nor the material are ontologically real according to 1), that "personal panpsychic experiences" acknowledge this and are epistemologically valid. Therefore (c) both mind and matter exist as aspects of a singular universe. That is that the universe is in essence a "dual-aspect singularity" the nature of which becomes irrelevant because absolutely everything is contained within the "singularity" but manifests through its "dual-aspectivism."
Epilogue

No doubt some of you are wondering what exactly happened on that lonely beach on the East Coast of Fraser Island. Whenever I’ve told the story and finish at the same point as in the preface, it prompts the question: So what happened to you? To which I love to say “I died of course!” But, what really happened was this:

After a while my attention returned to the beach and I was wondering how long seven seconds was and whether or not the time had passed. Just a short way up the beach an angler was standing in waders in the small surf. I moved towards him, I must at this time have looked rather like I was in some sort of shock, because he asked me what was wrong? “I’ve been bitten,” I said. “How long have I been standing there?” I asked. “You’ve been standing there for over half an hour.” I was shocked. “For half an hour?” “Yep, at least.” He assured me. “I thought I was bitten by a sea snake,” I said, showing him the tiny bite marks. “That’ll be an eel mate. Lots of eels around here, that’s why I’m wearing waders, those buggers can hurt.” I moved away out of the surf and fell exhausted on the beach.

Since that day I have re-discovered the experience I had on the beach without the trauma of a near-death experience. And life has never been quite the same ever since.
APPENDIX

A general summary of the various philosophical, theological and psychological positions.

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Reference


