#### Professor John Swinton

"Re-imagining Personhood: Dementia, Culture and Citizenship"

Sponsored by:



Re-imagining Personhood:

Dementia, Culture and Citizenship



#### Having dementia is a risky business!

Some people will want to hurt you

Some people will forget about you

You may lose your story in some people's eyes

People become inhospitable towards you



#### **Baroness Mary Warnock**

"If you're demented, you're wasting people's lives – your family's lives – and you're wasting the resources of the National Health Service."

People with dementia have a "duty to die." ...putting it rather brutally, you'd be licensing people to put others down. Actually I think why not, because the real person has gone already and all that's left is just the body of a person, and nobody wants to be remembered in this condition.

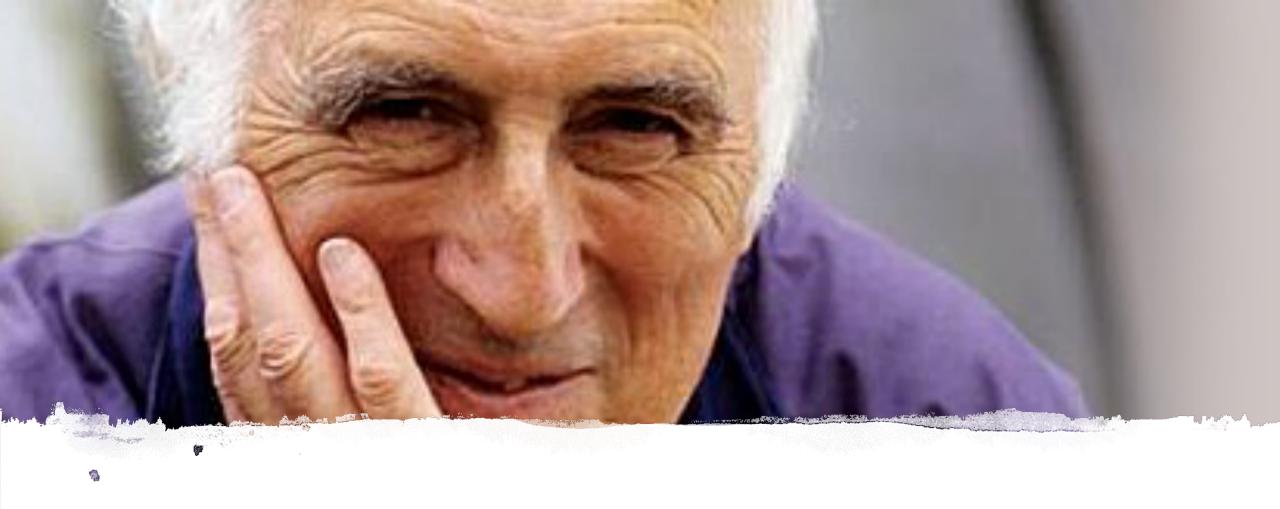
The problem of personhood

Personhood & Dementia: What Do YOU See?

person with

DEMENTIA

PERSON with dementia



Tears and violence can be ways of protecting ourselves from what is unbearable, from our own vulnerability, from our own pain

Culture is an important aspect of the experience of dementia





#### **Culture shapes**

- Perception
- Behaviour
- Personalities
- Descriptions





Culture shapes our

Intellect, reason, individualism, autonomy, freedom, choice and self-direction.

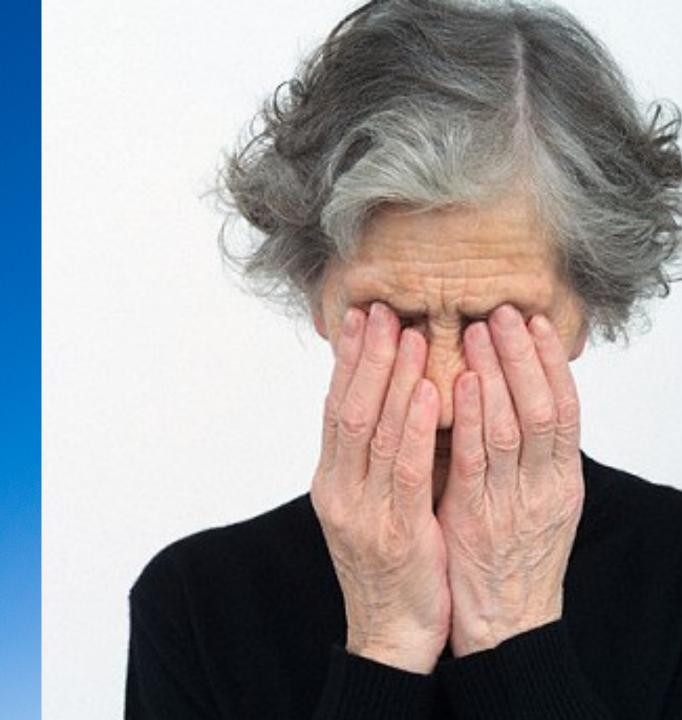
description

of humanness and personhood

 "If you're demented, you're wasting people's lives — your family's lives — and you're wasting the resources of the National Health Service."

People with dementia are a waste of time and resources ...

"People with dementia have a "duty to die."



# From Personhood to Citizenship?

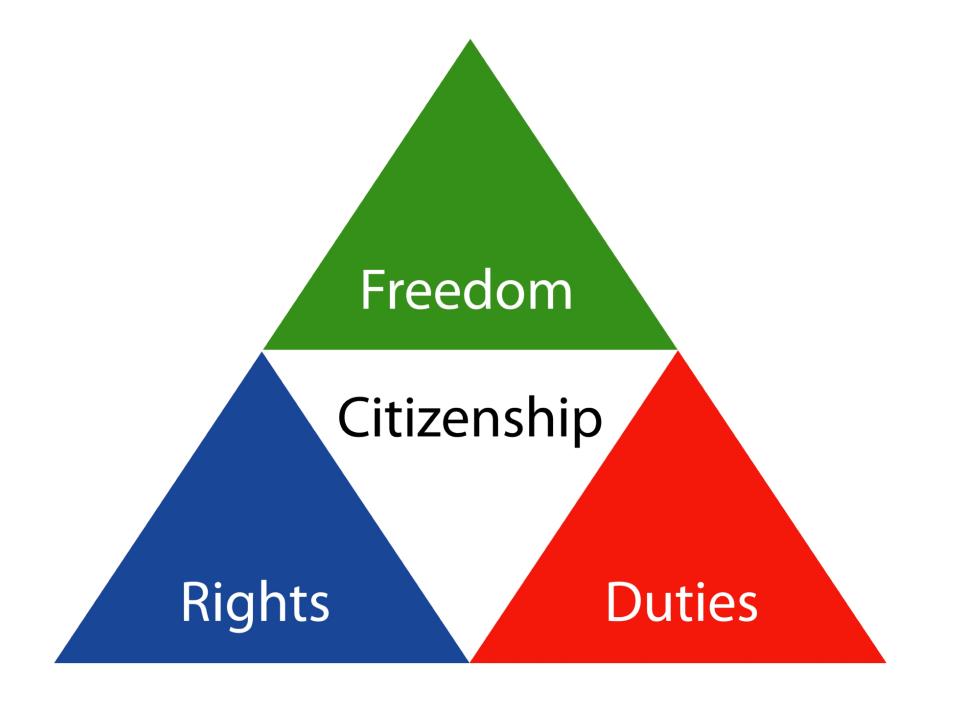
#### Justice

Equality

Inclusion

Access







Personal rights and the problem with Political Citizenship

Autonomy, Dignity, Freedom, Agency Self Representation

#### Reimagining Personhood:

Social Citizenship, Love and the Possibility of Belonging



#### Social Citizenship

• A relationship, practice or status, in which a person with dementia is entitled to experience freedom from discrimination, and to have opportunity to grow and participate in life to the fullest extent possible. It involves justice, recognition of social positions and the upholding of personhood, rights and a fluid degree of responsibility for shaping events at a personal and societal level.

(Ruth Bartlett and Deborah O'Connor)

Political V Social Citizenship

### Voting, rights and duties

Rights, personhood and relationships



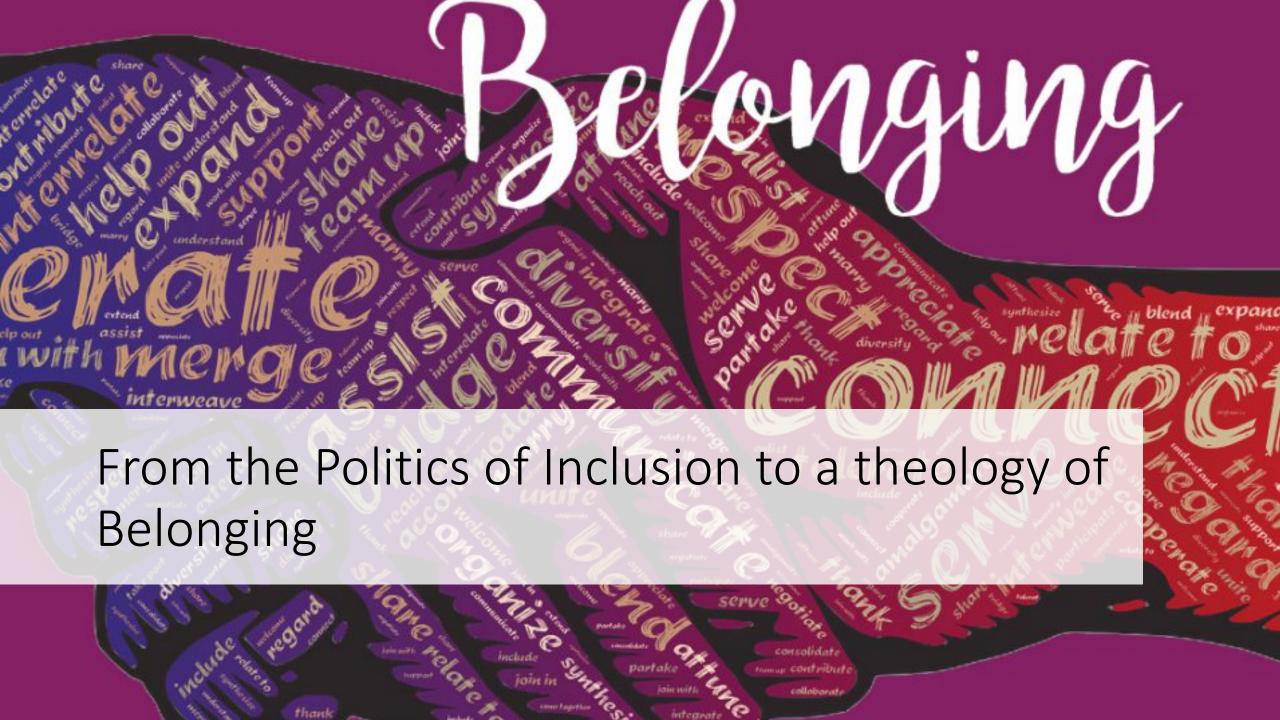
## Our CITIZENSHIP IS IN HEAVEN PHIL. 3:20-21

A theology of citizenship



Radical Political Hospitality

- "On earth as it is in heaven ..."
- All are welcome
- "But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!" (Amos 5:24)
- "God is love" (1 John 4:8)





#### A Politics of Gentleness

Matthew 12:29

Letting our thinking drop down into our hearts



The Person is the Heart

The heart is the deepest most fundamental aspect of the human being that is touched and transformed by the Spirit



Rights, Advocacy, Gentleness and Friendship



#### KINDNESS IS LOVE MADE VISIBLE





People *Living* with Dementia