

# A Defense Of The Explanatory Argument For Physicalism

The Causal Argument for Physicalism Physicalism and Mental Causation Consciousness and the Prospects of Physicalism Physicalism and Mental Causation The Causal Argument for Physicalism Philosophy of Mind The Knowledge Argument Locke's Religious Epistemology and Its Critics The Argument from Reason and the Problem of Mental Causation Propositional Attitudes and Physicalism Mind, Cognition, and Neuroscience Physicalism and Its Discontents Interpretations and Causes Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society for the Systematic Study of Philosophy E-Physicalism Physicalism, or Something Near Enough Physicalism and Phenomenal Consciousness The Linguistic Review Consciousness and Physicalism David Yates Sven Walter Derk Pereboom Daniel Stoljar Sven Walter David Yates (Senior research fellow) William Jaworski Sam Coleman Nathan Rockwood Joseph A. Baltimore Bryan Reed Stewart Frances Benjamin D. Young Carl Gillett Mario de Caro Aristotelian Society (Great Britain) Reinaldo J. Bernal Vélez Jaegwon Kim Adam Curran Reid Andreas Elpidorou

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physicalism can be thought of as the view that the mental is nothing over and above the physical i defend a formulation of this view based on supervenience physicalism may be supported in two ways either by providing an explanatory account of the mind in physical terms or by philosophical argument since we have only a rudimentary scientific understanding of the mind physicalism needs argument the most promising such argument is the causal argument which may be summarised thus i mental properties have physical effects ii physics is causally complete all physical effects have physical causes iii effects are not generally overdetermined so iv mental properties are physical of these premises i relies on common sense ii relies on empirical support and iii is a priori i consider the merits of this argument by articulating two kinds of mental property emergence weak and strong both of which are incompatible with physicalism i show that the premises of the causal argument are compatible with weak emergence and that the argument is therefore not deductively valid the causal argument establishes that one of physicalism or weak emergence is true however weak emergence is problematic in ways that physicalism is not if these problems are serious then physicalism is to be preferred on other grounds such as theoretical elegance and simplicity however i proceed to show that the soundness of the argument is questionable as premise ii is unsupported by the available evidence strong emergence is inconsistent with ii so evidence for ii must on reasonable assumption be evidence against strong emergence but all currently available evidence is consistent with strong emergence and so this evidence does not support ii

physicalism the thesis that everything there is in the world including our minds is constituted by basic physical entities has dominated the philosophy of mind during the last few decades but although the conceptual foundations of the physicalist agenda including a proper explication of notions such as causation determination realization or even physicalism itself must be settled before more specific problems e g the problems of mental causation and human agency can be satisfactorily addressed a comprehensive philosophical reflection on the relationships between the various key concepts of the debate on physicalism is yet missing this book presents a range of essays on the conceptual foundations of physicalism mental causation and human agency written by established and leading authors in the field

the deepest relation between the psychological and the microphysical is constitution where this relation is not to be explicated by the notion of identity

physicalism the thesis that everything is physical is one of the most important yet divisive problems in philosophy in this superb introduction to the problem daniel stoljar focuses on three fundamental questions the interpretation truth and philosophical significance of physicalism

this book presents a range of essays on the conceptual foundations of physicalism mental causation and human agency

philosophy of mind introduces readers to one of the liveliest fields in contemporary philosophy by discussing mind body problems and the various solutions to them it provides a detailed yet balanced overview of the entire field that enables readers to jump immediately into current debates treats a wide range of mind body theories and arguments in a fair and balanced way shows how developments in neuroscience biology psychology and cognitive science have impacted mind body debates premise by premise arguments for and against each position enable readers to grasp the structure of each argument quickly and easily diagrams and illustrations help readers absorb the more complex ideas bibliographic essays at the end of each chapter bring readers up to date on the latest literature written in a clear easy to read style that is free of technical jargon and highly accessible to a broad readership the only book to explain systematically how a hylomorphic theory such as aristotle s can contribute to current mind body debates and vie with current mind body theories online chapters on free will and the philosophy of persons make the book a flexible teaching tool for general and introductory philosophy courses available at wiley com go jaworski

a cutting edge and groundbreaking set of new essays by top philosophers on key topics related to the ever influential knowledge argument

this book offers a sustained defense of locke s religious epistemology it puts locke into conversation with leading figures in contemporary religious epistemology and shows that locke s views are more plausible than many philosophers of religion and epistemologists realize locke has become the villain in contemporary religious epistemology in recent years locke has often been singled out and criticized for insisting that religious belief requires evidence and for failing to provide adequate evidence that would support rational belief in god and christianity this book defends a broadly lockean religious epistemology the author argues that we need evidence for religion and that there is good evidence supporting belief in god and christianity he discusses locke s views on the evidence from natural theology religious experience the testimony of miracles and scripture in each chapter the author contrasts locke s view on a type of evidence with one of his critics michael bergmann david hume alvin plantinga richard swinburne and linda zagzebski at the end of each chapter the author shows how a bayesian analysis of evidence can support locke s evidence for religious belief specifically a belief in christianity this defense of locke s position shows how his religious epistemology continues to be relevant in contemporary debates locke s religious

epistemology and its critics is a historically informed contribution to religious epistemology it will appeal to researchers and graduate students working in epistemology philosophy of religion and history of philosophy

this carefully designed multi authored textbook covers a broad range of theoretical issues in cognitive science psychology and neuroscience with accessible language a uniform structure and many pedagogical features mind cognition and neuroscience a philosophical introduction is the best high level overview of this area for an interdisciplinary readership of students written specifically for this volume by experts in their fields who are also experienced teachers the book s thirty chapters are organized into the following parts i background knowledge ii classical debates iii consciousness iv crossing boundaries each chapter starts with relevant key words and definitions and a chapter overview then presents historical coverage of the topic explains and analyzes contemporary debates and ends with a sketch of cutting edge research a list of suggested readings and helpful discussion topics conclude each chapter this uniform student friendly design makes it possible to teach a cohort of both philosophy and interdisciplinary students without assuming prior understanding of philosophical concepts cognitive science or neuroscience key features synthesizes the now decades long explosion of scientifically informed philosophical research in the study of mind expands on the offerings of other textbooks by including chapters on language concepts and non conceptual content and animal cognition offers the same structure in each chapter moving the reader through an overview historical coverage contemporary debates and finally cutting edge research packed with pedagogical features like defined key terms suggested readings and discussion questions for each chapter as well as a general glossary provides readers with clear chapter long introductions to cognitive neuroscience molecular and cellular cognition experimental methods in cognitive neuroscience philosophy of mind philosophy of science metaphysical issues and epistemic issues

a collection of essays by physicalists and their critics on the important doctrine of physicalism first published in 2001

many articles and books dealing with donald davidson s philosophy are dedicated to the papers and ideas davidson put forward in the sixties and seventies in the last two decades however davidson has continued to work in many areas of philosophy offering new contributions many of which are highly regarded by philosophers working in the fields concerned for instance davidson has considerably developed his ideas about interpretation theory of meaning irreducibility of the mental causation and action theory he has proposed an innovative externalist conception of the mental content and a new analysis of the concept of truth and he has partly modified his theses about event and the supervenience of the mental on the physical in interpretations and causes some of the leading contemporary analytic philosophers discuss davidson s new ideas in a lively relevant useful and not always entirely sympathetic way davidson himself offers and original contribution

includes report of the executive committee for 1887 88 1914 15 list of members in each volume

this work advances a theory in the metaphysics of phenomenal consciousness which the author labels e physicalism firstly he endorses a realist stance towards consciousness and physicalist metaphysics secondly he criticises strong ai and functionalist views and claims that consciousness has an internal character thirdly he discusses hot theories the unity of consciousness and holds that the explanatory gap is not ontological but epistemological fourthly he argues that consciousness is not a supervenient but an emergent property not reducible and endowed with original causal powers with respect to the micro constituents of the conscious entity fifthly he addresses the zombie argument and the supervenience argument within the e physicalism framework finally he elaborates on the claim that phenomenal properties are physical and discusses the knowledge argument

contemporary discussions in philosophy of mind have largely been shaped by physicalism the doctrine that all phenomena are ultimately physical here jaegwon kim presents the most comprehensive and systematic presentation yet of his influential ideas on the mind body problem he seeks to determine after half a century of debate what kind of or how much physicalism can we lay claim to he begins by laying out mental causation and consciousness as the two principal challenges to contemporary physicalism how can minds exercise their causal powers in a physical world is a physicalist account of consciousness possible the book s starting point is the supervenience argument sometimes called the exclusion argument which kim reformulates in an extended defense this argument shows that the contemporary physicalist faces a stark choice between reductionism the idea that mental phenomena are physically reducible and epiphenomenalism the view that mental phenomena are causally impotent along the way kim presents a novel argument showing that cartesian substance dualism offers no help with mental causation mind body reduction therefore is required to save mental causation but are minds physically reducible kim argues that all but one type of mental phenomena are reducible including intentional mental phenomena such as beliefs and desires the apparent exceptions are the intrinsic felt qualities of conscious experiences qualia kim argues however that certain relational properties of qualia in particular their similarities and differences are behaviorally manifest and hence in principle reducible and that it is these relational properties of qualia that are central to their cognitive roles the causal efficacy of qualia therefore is not entirely lost according to kim then while physicalism is not the whole truth it is the truth near enough

the following thesis is concerned with the contemporary debate in the philosophy of mind surrounding the nature of phenomenal consciousness viz subjective experience or qualia my primary aim is to adjudicate the ongoing dialectic between dualists and physicalists regarding the ontological status of phenomenal consciousness physical or nonphysical by examining the two major arguments most commonly deployed against physicalism namely the zombie argument chalmers and the knowledge argument jackson i conclude by showing that once physicalism has been shorn of the various doctrines that it need not and ought not accept that is once we are clear about what precisely the fundamental doctrine of physicalism actually is it becomes clear that these arguments do not go through and that the case for dualism has not been made i also argue that the task of actually disarming these arguments in the right way is potentially critically instructive to contemporary physicalists as this helps to nourish a clearer overall understanding of what physicalism properly understood is and is not committed to in chapter one i lay the groundwork for the aforementioned anti physicalist arguments by explaining precisely what is meant by the phrase phenomenal consciousness and its various synonyms i then briefly summarize the mind body problem and articulate the so called explanatory gap therein chapter two looks at the zombie argument as articulated by david chalmers 1996 and finds that the argument itself as stated actually has very little to do with defending dualism against physicalism but rather is ultimately an argument for epiphenomenalism which i argue is untenable chapter three examines frank jackson s knowledge argument against physicalism 1982 here i show why the argument itself fails to support property dualism but also why the standard physicalist objections to it fail i argue that mary does indeed learn facts about the world upon her release and that physicalists must face up to this squarely i then suggest that physicalism properly understood is entirely compatible with this admission chapter four examines a kind of rehabilitated version of the zombie argument in the context of a larger discussion about the relation between conceivability and possibility

consciousness and physicalism a defense of a research program explores the nature of consciousness and its place in the world offering a revisionist account of what it means to say that consciousness is nothing over and above the physical by synthesizing work in the philosophy of mind metaphysics and philosophy of science from the last twenty years and forging a dialogue with contemporary research in the empirical sciences of the mind andreas elpidorou and guy dove advance and defend a novel formulation of physicalism although physicalism has been traditionally understood to be a metaphysical thesis elpidorou and dove argue that there is an alternative and indeed preferable understanding of physicalism that both renders physicalism a scientifically informed explanatory project and allows us to make important progress in addressing the ontological problem of consciousness physicalism elpidorou and dove hold is best viewed not as a thesis

metaphysical or otherwise but as an interdisciplinary research program that aims to compositionally explain all natural phenomena that are central to our understanding of our place in nature consciousness and physicalism is replete with philosophical arguments and informed through and through by findings in many areas of scientific research it advances the debate regarding the ontological status of consciousness it will interest students and scholars in philosophy of mind metaphysics philosophy of cognitive science and philosophy of science and it will challenge both foes and friends of physicalism

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