

Background for views of substance

- Descartes’ distinction between minds and bodies as two completely different, but interacting types of things
 - Minds: essentially cognitive; immaterial
 - Principal attribute: thinking
 - Bodies: essentially taking up space; material
 - Principal attribute: extension
- Locke: challenges and adapts Cartesian dualism
 - No *principal* attributes; many properties/qualities
 - Ultimately agnostic about the existence of substance

Background for debates about materialism:

- Cartesian (substance) dualism:
 - Bodies (matter): extended in space, solid, measurable, publicly observable
 - Minds: Not spatially located, only personally observable
- Scientific worldview: understanding various aspects of matter as subjectively variable
 - Search for an objective description of these

What substances exist?

<u>Materialism</u> matter is the only substance	<u>Dualism</u> both minds & matter exist	<u>Immaterialism</u> mind is the only substance
Behaviourism Functionalism Identity theory Eliminative materialism	Descartes Locke	Berkeley

Problem: interaction of dual substances

How could two independent and radically different substances interact if they can have no contact with one another?

If the actions of the mind can only be understood in terms of the brain, they seem to have no explanatory power

How can material & immaterial substances interact?

Dualism (Descartes): Mind & matter are distinct substances, but are able to interact causally.

Immaterialism (Berkeley): It cannot, so only immaterial substance exists. Matter is reducible to mind.

Materialism (Churchland & others): It cannot, so only material substance exists. Mind is reducible to matter.

Bishop George Berkeley, Principles of Human Knowledge
Part I, Paragraphs 1-45

An Objection:

There once was a man who said, "God
Must think it exceedingly odd
If he finds that this tree
Continues to be
When there's no one about in the quad."

A Reply:

Dear Sir, Your astonishment's odd,
I am always about in the quad
And that why the tree
Will continue to be
Since observed by me, yours faithfully, God.

Berkeley's Project:

- Show that realism is false
 - Berkeley doesn't just make the claim that if realism were true, we couldn't tell whether there were material objects or what they are like
 - BUT* the much stronger metaphysical claim that mind-independent reality is impossible, cannot be conceived without contradiction, or isn't something we can intelligibly think of

Berkeley's challenge to naïve realism:

- All of our ideas come from experience
- Any sensible quality or object we have immediately experienced is one we have experienced
- So*, we cannot even conceive of any sensible quality or object apart from its being experienced

Berkeley's Idealism:

- Objects and qualities exist in the mind
- Ideas are from sensation, introspection, & memory
- Things are real, but not material
- Two kinds of minds:
- Objects of sensation are copies in finite minds of ideas in the infinite mind

Berkeley on the cause of our ideas:

Only minds can have causal power (not objects)

Our ideas of body and sensible things derive from sense experience
We have no sensory experience of causal power, only of succession or contiguity
Our notion of causality comes from our reflection on our own agency and will
So, the only notion of causal power we have is the power of minds to act on their will

'Real' versus 'imaginary' objects:

Experiences of 'real' objects as opposed to imaginary objects are vivid, clear, forceful, and independent of our will
So, they are the effect of the power of another mind and are copies of similar ideas or qualities in God, who perceives them all along

Berkeley's arguments:

- Berkeley offers three main arguments for his position that attack Locke's distinction between primary and secondary qualities
 - Resemblance
 - Inseparability
 - Perceptual Relativity
- He also offers an argument concerned with conceivability

Berkeley vs. Locke's Primary/Secondary Quality Distinction: *Resemblance*: (I, 8)

Only something like an experience of color can resemble an experience of color
 So, only another idea can resemble an idea
 But, ideas are mind-dependent
 So, there can be no idea that resembles qualities of mind independent reality that we cannot be immediately aware of in sense experience

Berkeley vs. Locke's Primary/Secondary Quality Distinction: *Inseparability* (Principles I, 10)

We cannot experience primary qualities apart from experiencing secondary qualities
 So, we cannot conceive of any extended thing that lacks secondary qualities as we experience them

Berkeley vs. Locke's Primary/Secondary Quality Distinction: *Perceptual Relativity* (I, 10-11)

Primary qualities such as figure or motion vary with circumstances of perception without change in the objects themselves as much as experiences of secondary qualities, such as color or heat
 So, primary qualities are no more real features of objects than are secondary qualities

'Inconceivability' Argument: (I, 23)

In trying to conceive of a tree that is neither experienced nor even conceived by anyone, I must be conceiving it
 But a tree cannot, without contradiction, be both conceived and not-conceived
 So, it is impossible, without contradicting ourselves, to conceive of an object existing neither experienced nor even conceived

Questions:

1. Do we believe that matter exists? Why or why not?
 - Can we imagine a world in which ideas come clumped together without anything sticking them?
 - Do we have any experience matter, or do we only experience its apparent properties?
2. The ideas we have of 'real things' do not differ for the Idealist from those of the Realist. The only difference is what we suppose is holding those ideas together. Having looked at Berkeley's views about matter, can we agree with him that our belief in matter is just an unfounded prejudice?

Paul Churchland, *Behaviorism, Materialism, and Functionalism*

Key term: Qualia

the qualitative aspect of mental experience

Singular: *quale*

Philosophical Behaviorism

theory about the vocabulary we use to talk about mental states, rather than a theory about what mental states are: talk of mental states is a way of talking about patterns of behavior
 mental states defined in terms of environmental input and behavioral output

Mental states are *nothing but* behavioural propensities

‘Mind’ does not designate a thing of any sort (material or immaterial).

- o strong version: any mental state can be expressed with no loss of meaning as a sentence about what observable behavior would result if a person were in a particular circumstance

Consistent with materialism or with dualism

Objections to Philosophical Behaviorism

Objection #1: Behaviorism cannot account for ‘inner’ experience: qualia

Objection #2: NO finite way of specifying the elements involved in a multitrack dispositional statement

Objection # 3: Even though we are more familiar with our behavioural patterns than others are, it seems we don’t know about our own psychological states by inference from our behaviour.

Possible solutions to the problems of Philosophical Behaviorism:

–Reductive Materialism; Eliminative Materialism; Functionalism

Reductive Materialism: Identity Theory

mental states are ‘numerically identical’ with some type of physical state or process within the brain or central nervous system

knowable/ discoverable in principle and will be eventually revealed with further brain research

The mind is **nothing but** the brain or central nervous system

There is a one-to-one correspondence between mental states and neural states.

Mental states are essentially material

Intertheoretic reduction:

We explain a phenomenon by showing that some new set of principles and entities are responsible for it. Our old terms are taken to refer to these new entities.

A new and powerful theory entails propositions or principles that mirror those of an older theory or conceptual framework
 neuroscience would need to advance to the point where brain-state terms mirror and replace mental-state terms

Eliminative Materialism

—a radical form of Identity Theory.

—**unlike** the Identity Theorists, they circumvent the problem of explaining the relationship between mental states and the neurophysiological state by *eliminating* the **mental state**.

- Folk psychology is not just an incomplete representation, it is a misrepresentation of our internal states and activities
- this older framework must simply be eliminated to make way for mature neuroscience

folk psychology: our commonsense theory of how minds work.

Problems with folk psychology:

Folk psychology is hopelessly primitive and deeply confused. Three main reasons:

1. Explanatory failure (poverty)
2. Argument from induction
3. There are so many more ways to be an explanatorily successful neuroscience that doesn't mirror folk psychology than to be one that does

Functionalism:

The essential or defining feature of any type of mental state is the set of causal relations it bears to:

1. environmental effects on the body
2. other types of mental states
3. bodily behavior

•**types of mental states** should be identified by **functional role** in a creature's life, psychological and behavioural (what the mental state does).

unlike behaviorism:

unlike identity theory:

—the structure of the material making up a brain is not important; but the structure of the internal activities sustained by that matter is important

—there does not seem to be a single type of physical state to which a given mental state must always correspond

Objections to materialism:

Qualia problem

—Introspection reveals something different than scientific study of the brain can reveal

—Even if we know everything there is to know about the physical aspects of the brain, our description of mental states will always be missing some component