

PHL 203

Theories of Reality

Lecture for
January 11 & 13, 2011
Prof. Borrowdale

The Mind-Body Problem

Ontology

- Idealism
- Materialism
- Dualism

If the mind and body are the same, why do they seem different?

If different, how do they interact?

Dualist Answers

Cartesian Interactionism

- Mind and brain interface in pineal gland
- Interaction mysterious like gravity
- We know THAT it happens but not HOW
- We know mind & body are distinct because they are conceptually different

Dualist Answers

- **Epiphenomenalism**
- **Parallelism/Occasionalism**

Eliminative or Reductive vs. Simple Materialism

A theory about

- **Mentalistic language**
- **Folk psychology**
- **How we talk about things**
- **Is talk about thoughts, beliefs and intentions “unscientific” or “misleading?”**
- **Reductive materialists suggest restricting ourselves to precise, quantifiable terms and observations**

Materialist Answers

Logical Behaviorism

- Gilbert Ryle
- Ghost in the machine criticism
- Descartes says that it's NOT like a pilot and his ship, more intimate and mysterious
- Category Mistakes
- The University Example
- The Baseball Game Example

Materialist Answers

Logical Behaviorism

- Mentalistic language refers to dispositions to behave in various ways under particular circumstances
- AI is angry =
- AI is behaving angrily (red in the face, yelling, pounding his fist on the desk)
- Objection: Confusing mental states with evidence for them in others

Materialist Answers

- The Mind–Brain Identity Theory
- Julien Offray La Mettrie, *Man: A Machine*



Arguments Against Dualism

1. **Vitalism analogy**
2. **Brain injuries cause mind injuries**
3. **Sophistication of nervous system correlated with sophistication of consciousness**
4. **Restoring dead bodies to life restores consciousness – why does the soul conveniently return?**