# Intro to Philosophy

## February 26, 2013

* **Dualism**
  + Fits in the intuition that the mind (thoughts, feelings, experiences) is very different from physical properties (mass, velocity, electrical charge).
  + Fits with the pop-fiction idea that bodies might exchange ideas
  + Allows for the theoretical possibility that the mind might survive the death of the body (to go into reincarnation or an afterlife)
  + Examples:
    - For – It makes sense to talk about the north half of your brain but not the north half of your mind.
    - For – This view allows most easily for the possibility of an afterlife.
  + But. We have no evidence of brain events being caused by anything non-physical – as far as science can tell, brains are just physical things obeying the law of physics.
  + Furthermore we have ample evidence linking different cognitive functions to different events in the brain.
    - Against – There is evidence linking different cognitive functions to particular brain areas.
* Ockham’s Razor (A criterion for abductive arguments)
  + If two hypotheses do equally well to explain and predict all the data, then we should prefer the simpler hypothesis. If we can make sense of our minds without positing weird non-physical substances, then why posit them?
  + Against D – Ockham’s razor: we should prefer simpler explanations.
* Eliminativism
  + Traditional ways of thinking about “minds” have made no progress in 2000 years at explaining… sleep, creativity, memory, mental illness, infant or animal cognition.
  + Talk of “minds” is bad science, and should instead be replaced with neuroscience.
  + Examples
    - For – Folk psychological talk of beliefs and desires hasn’t progressed at all in 2000 years.
    - For - Traditional talk of minds offers no explanation for mental illness, dreams, memory, etc.
  + Problems for Eliminativism
    - Can’t we tell from the inside that we have mental states?
    - Isn’t this throwing out the baby with the bathwater?
    - It’s hard to be a coherent eliminativist. How can you persuade others to accept your view if you say you don’t believe it yourself?
    - Examples
      * Against – By introspection you can tell that at least one person has a mind (namely you)
      * Against – It’s hard to convince someone else of a view you say you don’t believe yourself.
* Behaviorism
  + Problems for Behaviorism
    - There’s no difference as if you’re behaving having pain and suffering and having pain and suffering.
    - Could a great actor be disposed to display pain-behavior without actually being in pain?
    - Cloud a super-spartan be disposed to behave perfactely normally in circumstances
    - Against Behavior – An actor might perfectly pretend to be in pain even though she isn’t.
    - Against Behaviorism – Some warriors might show no signs of being in pain even if they are.
* Identity Theory
  + Motivations for Identity Theory
    - Lightning = Electrical Discharge
    - Water = h2o
    - These are posteriori discoveries, not knowledable a priori
    - Conceivability argument that would fail: I might imagine that different things are true of water and h2o, but that doesn’t mean water isn’t h2o
    - The identity theorist thinks we’ll also discover that types of mental states are identical to physical types
    - Pain = C-fiber firings
    - For Identity Theory – Science often proceeds by discovering the hidden nature of things like water = h2o
* Multiple Reliability
  + Flight can be accomplished via many different physical mechanisms
  + We can’t identify flight with any particular kind of physical ingredient.
  + Instead flight should be understood in behavioral or functional terms: It’s a means for controlled locomotion through the atmosphere.
  + Are minds multiply realizable too?
  + Identity theory seems chauvinistic: It says the only way to have a mind like ours is to have a brain like ours. A more open-minded view would allow that creatures without brains like ours can still have mental states like ours.
  + Against I – Mental states are multiply realizable – they can be implemented in different ways.
  + Against I – It would be chauvinistic to assume that the way humans implement pain is the only way.
* Functionalism