

## Australian Dualism

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It is widely recognised that Australia has produced a number of prominent physicalists, such as D.M. Armstrong, U.T. Place and J.J.C. Smart. It is sometimes forgotten, however, that Australia has also produced a number of prominent *dualists*. This entry introduces the views of three Australian dualists: Keith Campbell, Frank Jackson and David Chalmers. Their positions differ uniquely from those of traditional dualists because their endorsement of dualism is based on their sympathy with a naturalistic, materialistic worldview rather than with a supernaturalistic, spiritual worldview.

### Campbell

In his book *Body and Mind* (1970, 2nd ed. 1984), Keith Campbell defends a version of property dualism, which he calls the new epiphenomenalism. According to traditional epiphenomenalism, mental states are causally inefficacious nonphysical by-products of physical states. Campbell's new epiphenomenalism, however, disagrees with this. He argues that "some bodily states are also mental states and that the causal mental properties are physical properties of these bodily states." The new epiphenomenalism differs then from physicalism because, unlike physicalism, it affirms that "the enjoying or enduring of phenomenal properties is not a physical affair" (1984: 127). In sum, Campbell's epiphenomenalism is not epiphenomenalism about all mental states but epiphenomenalism exclusively about phenomenal properties.

### Jackson

Frank Jackson (1982, 1986) defends a version of epiphenomenalism that is similar to Campbell's. While Jackson finds physicalism initially attractive, he believes that it ultimately fails. He expresses his intuitive refutation of physicalism poetically as follows:

Tell me everything physical there is to tell about what is going on in a living brain, the kind of states, their functional role, their relation to what goes on at other times and in other brains, and so on and so forth, and be I as clever as can be in fitting it all together, you won't have told me about the hurtfulness of pains, the itchiness of itches, pangs of jealousy, or about the characteristic experience of tasting a lemon, smelling a rose, hearing a loud noise or seeing the sky. (Jackson 1982: 127)

Jackson claims that this intuition can be used to construct three arguments against physicalism: (i) the knowledge argument, which is based on the well-known imaginary scenario of Mary, who is confined in a black-and-white environment, and the scenario of Fred, who can recognise one more shade of red than ordinary people can; (ii) the modal argument, according to which there is a possible world with organisms exactly like us in every physical respect that lack consciousness; and (iii) Nagel's 'what it is like to be a bat' argument. Honouring their Australian proponents,

Robert Van Gulick calls these ‘boomerang arguments’ (Van Gulick 2004: 367). The distinctive feature of boomerang arguments is, according to Van Gulick, that they reach across to the epistemic domain of the world and then circle back to the metaphysical feature of the corresponding reality. That is, they derive the ontological conclusion about the nature of the world from epistemic premises about what we can know or what we can conceive of.

Convinced thusly of the falsity of physicalism, Jackson defends epiphenomenalism. His epiphenomenalism has two important features. First, exactly like Campbell, Jackson rejects the idea that mental *states* are inefficacious in the physical world. He holds instead that “it is possible to hold that certain *properties* of certain mental states, namely...qualia, are such that their possession or absence makes no difference to the physical world.” Second, he denies that the mental is *totally* causally inefficacious. He allows that “the instantiation of *qualia* makes a difference to *other mental states* though not to anything physical” (1982: 133).

Jackson is, however, no longer a dualist. In 1998 he declared that he had come to think that the knowledge argument failed to refute physicalism and, accordingly, that physicalism is true. However, Jackson’s former dualist position remains very influential.

## **Chalmers**

Despite Jackson’s retraction, Australia continues to produce prominent dualists. In 1996 David J. Chalmers published *Conscious Mind*, which now represents one of the most important contemporary defences of dualism. Chalmers maintains that there are two distinct problems of consciousness: the hard problem and the easy problem. The easy problem is to explain the function, structure and mechanism of the brain; in other words, to answer questions that cognitive scientists and brain scientists ordinarily work on. The hard problem, on the other hand, is concerned with fundamental relationships between physical processing in the brain and the rich phenomenal experiences that it gives rise to. Chalmers claims that the existence of the hard problem exposes the limitations of the physicalist approach to consciousness. He also appeals to various arguments against physicalism, such as Jackson’s knowledge argument and various forms of the modal argument, and concludes that phenomenal properties do not supervene on physical properties.

While Chalmers describes his position as “the disjunction of panprotopsychism, epiphenomenalism and interactionism,” he states that his “preferred position on the mind-body problem...is not epiphenomenalism but the ‘panprotopsychist’ (or ‘Russellian’) position on which basic physical dispositions are grounded in basic phenomenal or protophenomenal properties” (Chalmers 1999: 492-93). Panprotopsychism is the view that physical objects have protophenomenal properties, which are such that, while they are not themselves phenomenal or experiential, a proper combination of them constitutes phenomenal properties. He believes that panprotopsychism solves various metaphysical perplexities of consciousness.

## **Dualism as a Revised Form of Physicalism**

One might find it peculiar that dualism has flourished in Australia, where physicalism has traditionally been so influential. Once we look more closely at the contents of these Australian dualisms, however, we can see that this is not peculiar at all. Contrary to traditional dualists, most Australian dualists adopt their version not

because they are attracted to a supernaturalistic, spiritual worldview but because, perhaps paradoxically, they are attracted to a naturalistic, materialistic worldview. Campbell, Jackson and Chalmers all start with physicalism, which they find *prima facie* most plausible, and amend it, almost reluctantly, into dualism in accordance with persistent problems that evince the intractable nature of consciousness. The following passage by Campbell exemplifies this point:

The account given of awareness by phenomenal properties is the only point where the new epiphenomenalism diverges from Central-State Materialism. Perhaps the new Epiphenomenalism could be called Central-State Materialism Plus. (Campbell 1970: 125)

Similarly, Alec Hyslop, another Australian epiphenomenalist who influenced Jackson's commitment to epiphenomenalism, writes as follows:

Epiphenomenalism's appeal is to those who are convinced that the Materialist view of human beings is false, but regret this, regretting that the case for Materialism fails, overwhelmed by qualia. Epiphenomenalism gets as near to Materialism as is decent, so it is thought. It is a (more than) half way house: not Materialism but deeply Materialist, giving us a world of purely material causes. (Hyslop 1998: 61)

Even Chalmers' panprotopsychism, which appears initially even more extraordinary than Cartesian dualism, can be construed as a form of physicalism. Chalmers remarks:

From one perspective, [panprotopsychism] can be seen as a sort of materialism. If one holds that physical terms refer not to dispositional properties but the underlying intrinsic properties, then the protophenomenal properties can be seen as physical properties, thus preserving a sort of materialism. (Chalmers 2002: 265)

Australian dualism is therefore consistent with the naturalistic character of Australian philosophy of mind. It is based on a firm conviction that even if the physicalist approach to the problem of consciousness fails, there is no reason to jump to the conclusion that supernaturalism is true.

## References

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