

**Phil 397
The Mind/Body Problem**

**Fall 1995
Professor JeeLoo Liu**

**Kim: *Can Supervenience and 'Non-Strict Laws' Save Anomalous Monism?*
[Handout #14]**

§ 1. The Main Dispute

___ Does AM ensure the causal efficacy of mental properties?

§ 2. Epiphenomenalism

Two claims:

- (1) AM + P entails the causal inertness of mental properties, and
- (2) AM + P fails to provide mental properties with a causal role.

Davidson: (1) is false.

Kim: (2) is true.

§ 3. Causal Relations

Davidson: Causation as an extensional binary relation whose relata are concrete events ('no matter how described')

Kim: Causal relation obtains between a pair of events *because they are events of certain kinds, or have certain properties.*

§ 4. Psycho-Physical Supervenience without Psycho-Physical Laws

Davidson: supervenience ---> e has a mental property p and e has physical properties Qs, such that if e did not have p, e would not have Qs.

But not: supervenience ---> if another event g does not have p, then g would not have Qs.

Supervenience (Kim):

___ whenever anything has mental property M there is some physical property Q such that it has Q and everything that has Q has M.

Q: Between Davidson and Kim, who is right?

[same physical properties → same mental properties

~ same mental properties → ~ same physical properties]

§ 5. Causal Relevance and Causal Efficacy

"causal relevance" -- A property p is *causally relevant* if and only if

- (i) p is causally efficacious; or
- (ii) p makes a difference to q *and* q is causally efficacious.

"causal efficacy" -- A property p is *causally efficacious* if and only if p is instantiated by event c *and* p plays a causal role in the causation 'c causes e'.

=> Supervenience shows that mental properties may be *causally relevant* but they are not causally efficacious.

§ 6. Non-Strict Psycho-Physical Laws

Davidson: Psycho-physical laws are not strict.

Fodor: Let F stand for some mental property and let G stand for some physical property of the body:

- (i) 'F-events cause G-events' is not a strict law; but
- (ii) F-events cause G-events, *ceteris paribus* 'is a strict law.
- (iii) Where C_1, \dots, C_m are the *ceteris paribus* conditions, we get a *disjunctive* law like (L): 'Under C_1^*, \dots, C_m^* , F events cause G-events', where C_i^* satisfies C_i , and (L) is strict.

Kim: Davidson's view and Fodor's view are incompatible.

* [Davidson's Argument Against Strict Psycho-Physical Laws] (according to Kim):

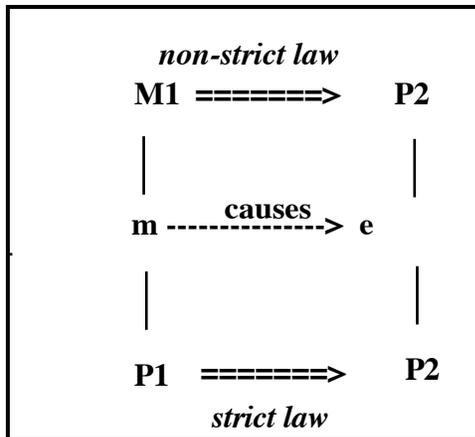
- ___ (1) The mental domain and the physical domain are each governed by their own special synthetic a priori constitutive constraints,
- ___ (2) But if there are strict laws connecting the two realms, then one could be reduced to the other and each domain cannot retain its own integrity.
- ___ (3) Therefore, there cannot be laws connecting the mental realm and the physical realm.

* Kim's criticism:

- ___ It isn't clear why this argument doesn't ban non-strict laws as well.

§ 7. The Problems with 'Non-Strict Psycho-Physical Laws'

[I] the problem of exclusion: $M1 \neq P1$ (not reducible to)



___ Q: *What causal work is there for M to do?*

[II] the problem of reductionism

___ *What's wrong with non-strict psycho-physical laws as 'bridge' laws ?*

§ Kim's Conclusion:

___ **If Davidson maintains that there are non-strict psycho-physical laws, then he may have to give up the "anomaly" of the mental.**