

**Phil 397
The Mind/Body Problem**

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Owens: Psychological Externalism

§ Argument Against Self-knowledge (the incompatibility of externalism and self-knowledge)

1. The externalists claims that the content of one's beliefs is a function of the way the world is.
2. But a subject does not have any special access to this external world (The Cartesian intuition).
3. Therefore, according to externalism, the subject has no special access to the contents of his occurrent beliefs.

*** Owens' Counter Argument**

1. My self-knowledge is the knowledge expressed in the form: [F] I know that I believe that P.
2. [F] is the second-order belief about the first-order belief [G]: I believe that P.
3. If I come to have the first-order belief [G] in virtue of the way the world is, then I should also come to have the second-order belief [F] in virtue of the same way the world is. (My first-order belief and my second-order belief must be of the same world).
4. Therefore, if I can utter [G], then [F] must be true; i.e. I have self-knowledge concerning the content of my belief.

§ Argument Against Skepticism

1. According to externalism, our mental states have the content that they do *only if* the external world is of a certain kind (If I have the belief that aluminum is light, then the world must be a world with aluminum).
2. Through introspection, I can know the content of my thoughts.
3. Therefore, according to externalism, I can know the way the world is through introspection of my own thoughts.

§ Argument Against Causal Explanation

1. Causal explanation follows physical determinism, such that two individuals identical in physical history cannot be physically different in the next stage in the absence of any difference in physical input.
2. Alf and Alf* are identically on physical aspects and their physical states have the *same* causal power.

3. But under externalism, their psychological states are different and these different states are such as to explain *different* kinds of behaviors.
4. Therefore, under externalism, psychological explanation is not causal explanation.