

Phil 397
The Mind/Body Problem

Fall 1995
Professor JeeLoo Liu

Sydney Shoemaker: The Mind-Body Problem
[Handout #3]

§ Arguments Against Identity Theory and Functionalism

*** Argument from authoritative self-knowledge ("privileged access" to one's own mental states)**

- 1. We have a "privileged access" to our own mental states in the sense we have the authority on what mental states we are in.**
- 2. Through introspection, we are aware of our mental states but not aware of them *as* physical states of any sort or *as* functional states.**
- 3. Therefore, our mental states cannot be physical states.**

Argument from *qualia* [Jackson's "Knowledge Argument"]

- 1. If seeing red is imply physical facts (about the surface of the object, about light, about the optical function of the eyes, etc.), then once we gather all these information about seeing red, we know what it is like to see red.**
- 2. Someone could know all of the relevant physical facts about the seeing of red without knowing what it is like to see red.**
- 3. Therefore, there is something more to seeing red (the *qualia* of red sensation) that is left out by the physical explanation.**

Argument from the Inverted Spectrum

- 1. According to functionalism, a mental state M_1 of a functional system S_1 is identical to a mental state M_2 of a different functional system S_2 , as long as M_1 and M_2 play the same functional roles in their respective systems S_1 and S_2 .**
- 2. But it is possible to conceive a case where person A and person B perceive inverted spectrum, such that seeing red for A is seeing green for B, and vice versa.**
- 3. In a case of inverted spectrum, seeing red would play the same functional role for A as seeing green would for B.**
- 4. But seeing red \neq seeing green.**
- 5. Therefore, there is something wrong with functionalism.**

§ Shoemaker's reply:

- (1) "*qualia*" can be defined functionally**
- (2) Having awareness of one's mental states can also be defined functionally.**
- (3) Functionalism is compatible with the Cartesian intuition of the infallibility of one's self-knowledge:**

[Argument]

- 1. If I believe that I believe that it is raining now, then I would act on that assumption and bring an umbrella.**
- 2. But if I would act on that assumption, then I do believe that it is raining now.**
- 3. Therefore, if I believe that I believe that it is raining now, then I do believe that it is raining now (i.e. I can make no mistake about what I believe).**