

Physicalism And Mental Causation The Metaphysics Of Mind And Action By Walter Sven Published By Imprint Academic Hardcover

The deepest relation between the psychological and the microphysical is constitution, where this relation is not to be explicated by the notion of identity.

"What is the mind?" "What is the relationship between brain and mind?" These are common questions. But "What is the brain?" is a rare question in both the neurosciences and philosophy. The reason for this may lie in the brain itself: Is there a "brain problem"? In this fresh and innovative book, Georg Northoff demonstrates that there is in fact a "brain problem." He argues that our brain can only be understood when its empirical functions are directly related to the modes of acquiring knowledge, our epistemic abilities and inabilities. Drawing on the latest neuroscientific data and philosophical theories, he provides an empirical-epistemic definition of the brain. Northoff reveals the basic conceptual confusion about the relationship between mind and brain that has so obstinately been lingering in both neuroscience and philosophy. He subsequently develops an alternative framework where the integration of the brain within body and environment is central. This novel approach plunges the reader into the depths of our own brain. The "Philosophy of the Brain" that emerges opens the door to a fascinating world of new findings that explore the mind and its relationship to our very human brain. (Series A)

This accessible volume sets an ambitious goal: to help people better understand the nature of mental illness. The term itself is a problem for most who believe, consciously or not, that

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individuals have both a mind and a body. Ronald Chase is interested in the roots of this thinking about mental illness, and finds it in philosophical dualism, famously promoted by René Descartes in the seventeenth century. Chase believes this perspective contributes to the stigma associated with mental illness, and argues for a different conceptual understanding. He describes and evaluates several alternatives, including behaviorism, physicalism, and functionalism. He also explores whether mental states can be reduced to brain states, and whether mental events cause things to happen. His provocative answers suggest mind-body dualism is outdated and misleading, and some version of physicalism is more likely to help us understand mental illness. Chase presents a concise outline of the science of mental illness, with a focus on schizophrenia, noting that faulty brain development is the fundamental cause of major mental illness. Using detailed, but non-technical language, Chase describes how genes combine with environmental influences to produce changes in brain structures and functions. Chase insists on the need to understand mental illness as a biological phenomenon, yet accepts that people use mental terms and concepts in everyday discourse. This scientifically sound challenge to major assumptions currently in vogue with respect to mental illness will initiate a new dialogue on the subject. It will be important to academics, psychiatric professionals, and those affected by mental illness—victims, family members, and caregivers.

Physicalism and Mental Causation
The Metaphysics of Mind and Action
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There have long been controversies about how minds can fit into a physical universe. In *Emergence in Mind* a distinguished group of philosophers discuss whether mental properties can be said to 'emerge' from physical processes. The discussion is extended to cover the role emergence may

play in free will and agency, and in the special sciences.

It has been argued extensively in contemporary philosophy of mind and neuroscience that physicalism precludes the possibility of robust mental causation. "Exclusion arguments" of the sort offered by Jaegwon Kim present the physicalist with an apparent dilemma: either all putatively "mental" causation reduces to mere "bottom-up" causation, or else it is epiphenomenal. However, the purportedly "scientific" premises that bolster these arguments can be argued are metaphysically overladen, smuggling in assumptions about the fundamental nature of matter that are not warranted by our best current data. By examining the evidence against such assumptions and the feasibility of alternative metaphysical frameworks, serious doubt can be cast on the validity of Exclusion arguments. Accepting the plausibility of causal entanglements leading from the "top down," so to speak, also turns out to be a better fit with experimental practice, especially in explaining psychosomatic medical phenomena.

Minds, Causes, and Mechanisms questions the internal consistency of causal physicalism, and vindicates a novel approach to mental causation.

A comprehensive reference guide to current research in Philosophy of Mind, assembled by an international team of leading scholars in the discipline.

The mind-body problem has two essential aspects - the problem of mental causation and the problem of consciousness. Dualism is able to address the latter but not the former aspect adequately. Reductive physicalism is able to address the former but not the latter aspect adequately. Non-reductive physicalism,

which aims to address both aspects of the mind-body problem adequately, has established itself as the orthodox position. However, Jaegwon Kim asserts that non-reductive physicalism is an inherently unstable position in holding both the mutually incompatible non-reductivism thesis and physicalism thesis. This argument introduces a dilemma in non-reductive physicalism, which leads to its inevitable collapse into dualism, epiphenomenalism or reductive physicalism. To avoid this collapse, I propose a version of non-reductive physicalism based on the contentious notions of constitution and emergence. In my view, constitution is neither the identity of parts and wholes nor the co-location of two distinct objects. And emergence is neither a strong ontological thesis which affirms downward causation nor a weak epistemological thesis which denies relational properties.

Physicalism is the philosophical view that everything in the space-time world is ultimately physical. This collection of new essays offers a series of "state-of-the-art" perspectives on this important doctrine and brings new depth and breadth to the philosophical debate. A group of distinguished philosophers, comprising both physicalists and their critics, consider a wide range of issues including the historical genesis and present justification of physicalism, its metaphysical presuppositions and

methodological role, its implications for mental causation, and the account it provides of consciousness.

Russellian monism is a promising theory of consciousness that attempts to capture the strengths of both physicalism and dualism while avoiding their weaknesses. I begin by showing that the Russellian monist's chief anti-physicalist rival, emergentism, is unable to give an adequate solution to the exclusion problem. Specifically, they fall prey to what I call "the opacity problem." That is, because the emergentist is committed to there being both a sufficient physical cause and a sufficient mental cause for our actions, it is unclear what difference the mental cause is making in bringing about the effect. This is because, for the physical cause to truly be a sufficient cause, it must be sufficient to bring about the effect as it occurred. This distinguishes mental overdetermination from non-problematic kinds of overdetermination (like double rock throwing cases). I then show how the constitutive Russellian monist is able to avoid the exclusion problem, while the emergent Russellian monist faces similar opacity problems to emergentism. Finally, I give an account of how the constitutive Russellian monist can give a response to the strongest objection against the subject-summing problem. I argue that we only have translucent access to our conscious states--that is, only part of the essential nature of the state is

revealed to us through introspection. I then argue that we have reason to think that part of the essential nature of the conscious state not revealed to us is involved in subject-summing.

Gray Matters is a thorough examination of the main topics in recent philosophy of mind. It aims at surveying a broad range of issues, not all of which can be subsumed under one position or one philosopher's theory. In this way, the authors avoid neglecting interesting issues out of allegiance to a given theory of mind.

This ebook is a selective guide designed to help scholars and students of social work find reliable sources of information by directing them to the best available scholarly materials in whatever form or format they appear from books, chapters, and journal articles to online archives, electronic data sets, and blogs. Written by a leading international authority on the subject, the ebook provides bibliographic information supported by direct recommendations about which sources to consult and editorial commentary to make it clear how the cited sources are interrelated related. This ebook is a static version of an article from Oxford Bibliographies Online: Philosophy, a dynamic, continuously updated, online resource designed to provide authoritative guidance through scholarship and other materials relevant to the study Philosophy. Oxford Bibliographies Online covers most subject

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This work covers, in its subsequent parts, ontology, the metaphysics of causation, and the philosophy of mind. It provides a firm theoretical basis for believing that in our all-physical world mental causation is perfectly real, and that it can be understood.

Designed specifically for students with no background knowledge in the subject, this accessible introduction covers all of the basic concepts and major theories in the philosophy of mind. Topics discussed include dualism, behaviorism, the identity theory, functionalism, the computational theory of mind, connectionism, physicalism, mental causation, and consciousness. The text is enhanced by chapter summaries, a glossary, suggestions for further reading, and self-assessment questions.

This book demonstrates the importance of ontology for a central debate in philosophy of mind. Mental causation seems an obvious aspect of the world. But it is hard to understand how it can happen unless we get clear about what the entities involved in the process are. An international team of contributors presents new work on this problem.

Please note that the content of this book primarily consists of articles available from Wikipedia or other free sources online. Pages: 64. Chapters: Being John Malkovich, Causal closure, Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit, Dualism (philosophy of mind), Eliminative materialism, Emergence, Emergent materialism, Indefinite monism, Mental representation, Metaphysical solipsism, Naive realism, Neutral monism, On the Content and Object of Presentations, Open individualism, Personal identity, Phenomenalism,

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Physicalism, Problem of mental causation, Property dualism, Pure thought, Reduction (philosophy), Reflexive monism, Revisionary materialism, Self-model theory of subjectivity, Strong emergence, Subjective idealism, Supervenience.

Excerpt: In philosophy, systems theory, science, and art, emergence is the way complex systems and patterns arise out of a multiplicity of relatively simple interactions.

Emergence is central to the theories of integrative levels and of complex systems. The idea of emergence has been around since at least the time of Aristotle. John Stuart Mill and Julian Huxley are just some of the historical scientists who have written on the concept. The term "emergent" was coined by philosopher G. H. Lewes, who wrote: Every resultant is either a sum or a difference of the co-operant forces; their sum, when their directions are the same -- their difference, when their directions are contrary. Further, every resultant is clearly traceable in its components, because these are homogeneous and commensurable. It is otherwise with emergents, when, instead of adding measurable motion to measurable motion, or things of one kind to other individuals of their kind, there is a co-operation of things of unlike kinds. The emergent is unlike its components insofar as these are incommensurable, and it cannot be reduced to their sum or their difference. Economist Jeffrey Goldstein provided a current definition of emergence in the journal *Emergence*. Goldstein...

There are few more unsettling philosophical questions than this: What happens in attempts to reduce some properties to some other more fundamental properties? Reflection on this question inevitably touches on very deep issues about ourselves, our own interactions with the world and each other, and our very understanding of what there is and what goes on around us. If we cannot command a clear view of these deep issues, then very many other debates in contemporary

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philosophy seem to lose traction - think of causation, laws of nature, explanation, consciousness, personal identity, intentionality, normativity, freedom, responsibility, justice, and so on. Reduction can easily seem to unravel our world. Here, an eminent group of philosophers helps us answer this question. Their novel contributions comfortably span a number of current debates in philosophy and cognitive science: what is the nature of reduction, of reductive explanation, of mental causation? The contributions range from approaches in theoretical metaphysics, over philosophy of the special sciences and physics, to interdisciplinary studies in psychiatry and neurobiology. The authors connect strands in contemporary philosophy that are often treated separately and in combination the chapters allow the reader to see how issues of reduction, explanation and causation mutually constrain each other. The anthology therefore moves the debate further both at the level of contributions to specific debates and at the level of integrating insights from a number of debates.

Provides a philosophical and historical critique of contemporary conceptions of physicalism, especially non-reductive, levels-based approaches to physicalist metaphysics. Challenging assumptions about the mind-body problem, this accessible book will interest scholars working in metaphysics, philosophy of mind, and philosophy of science. Two thousand years ago, Lucretius said that everything is atoms in the void; it's physics all the way down.

Contemporary physicalism agrees. But if that's so how can we—how can our thoughts, emotions, our values—make anything happen in the physical world? This conceptual knot, the mental causation problem, is the core of the mind-body problem, closely connected to the problems of free will, consciousness, and intentionality. Anthony Dardis shows how to unravel the knot. He traces its early appearance in the

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history of philosophical inquiry, specifically in the work of Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, and T. H. Huxley. He then develops a metaphysical framework for a theory of causation, laws of nature, and the causal relevance of properties. Using this framework, Dardis explains how macro, or higher level, properties can be causally relevant in the same way that microphysical properties are causally relevant: by their relationship with the laws of nature. Smelling an orange, choosing the orange rather than the cheesecake, reaching for the one on the left instead of the one on the right-mental properties such as these take their place alongside the physical "motor of the world" in making things happen. Personal Agency consists of two parts. In Part II, a radically libertarian theory of action is defended which combines aspects of agent causalism and volitionism. This theory accords to volitions the status of basic mental actions, maintaining that these are spontaneous exercises of the will--a 'two-way' power which rational agents can freely exercise in the light of reason. Lowe contends that substances, not events, are the causal source of all change in the world--with rational, free agents like ourselves having a special place in the causal order as unmoved movers, or initiators of new causal chains. And he defends a thoroughgoing externalism regarding reasons for action, holding these to be mind-independent worldly entities rather than the beliefs and desires of agents. Part I prepares the ground for this theory by undermining the threat presented to it by physicalism. It does this by challenging the causal closure argument for physicalism in all of its forms and by showing that a dualistic philosophy of mind--one which holds that human mental states and their subjects cannot be identified with bodily states and human bodies respectively--is both metaphysically coherent and entirely consistent with known empirical facts.

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Physicalism—the thesis that everything there is in the world, including our minds, is constituted by basic physical entities—has dominated the philosophy of mind during the last few decades. But although the conceptual foundations of the physicalist agenda—including a proper explication of notions such as ‘causation’, ‘determination’, ‘realization’ or even ‘physicalism’ itself—must be settled before more specific problems (e.g. the problems of mental causation and human agency) can be satisfactorily addressed, a comprehensive philosophical reflection on the relationships between the various key concepts of the debate on physicalism is yet missing. This book presents a range of essays on the conceptual foundations of physicalism, mental causation and human agency, written by established and leading authors in the field.

A collection of essays by physicalists and their critics on the important doctrine of physicalism, first published in 2001. The ontological debate on the nature of properties is alive as ever. Mainly, they are viewed either as universals or tropes (abstract particulars), an alternative with an immediate impact on what events are taken to be. Although much inquiry in philosophy of mind is done without a full awareness of it, some recent works suggest that the choice may have far-reaching consequences on central topics of this discipline, e.g., token physicalism, multiple realizability, mental causation, perception, introspection, self-awareness. This book explores the extent to which this is true with novel contributions by philosophers who have played a major role in bringing to the fore this interplay of foundational metaphysics and philosophical psychology and by other experts in these fields. Contributors (beside the editors): John Heil (Washington University in St. Louis), Anna-Sofia Maurin (Lund University), E. Jonathan Lowe (University of Durham), David Robb (Davidson College), Ausonio Marras (University

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of Western Ontario) & Juhani Yli-Vakkuri (McGill University).

How do mental events such as choices and decisions lead to physical action? The problem of mental causation is one of the most important and intriguing philosophical issues of our time and has been at the centre of debates in the philosophy of mind for the past fifty years. In opposition to the recent wave of reductionist theories, this book argues that it is possible to account for mental causation within a nonreductive framework as it adopts a broadly Davidsonian approach to mental causation: reasons cause actions because they are identical to physical events. This work then defends this approach from the frequently raised criticism that it entails epiphenomenalism - the inefficacy of the mental. Moreover, *Mental Causation* moves beyond Davidson's views by reconsidering the question of whether reasons causally explain actions, arguing in opposition to Davidson, that explanations appealing to reasons represent a distinct category of explanation from causal explanation. Essential reading for anyone interested in debates about mental causation, this is an excellent text for senior undergraduates, graduate students, and professional philosophers.

Philosophers of mind and cognitive science have recently gravitated towards a new mechanistic approach to constitutive explanation, and an interventionist approach to causation and causal explanation. In this dissertation I discuss the implications of these new approaches for four issues in the philosophy of mind and cognitive science: mental causation, the nature of explanation, the extended mind hypothesis, and the dynamicist approach to explanations in cognitive science. I argue that the interventionist account of causation can be used to solve the problem of causal exclusion for non-reductive physicalist approaches to mental causation. However, in order to do so I propose a new improved version of interventionism which

rules out the possibility of a certain kind of overdetermination, thereby showing that at most only one of the two different interventionist solutions to the exclusion problem is indeed a viable solution on behalf of non-reductive physicalism—namely, the interventionist proportionality argument. Next, I argue that the ontic and epistemic construals of mechanistic explanations should be seen as reflecting different (though related) legitimate senses of explanation, and there is no reason to think that the different senses of explanation are in conflict with one another. Next, I provide a novel argument against the extended mind hypothesis, employing only premises that proponents of the extended mind hypothesis (including the New Mechanists) have independent reasons to accept. I conclude that while the mutual manipulability account of constitutive relevance—embraced by the New Mechanists—may be useful for demarcating the boundaries of mechanisms studied in many of the sciences, it cannot be used to support the extended mind hypothesis. Finally, I show that two arguments commonly made in the debate between Dynamicists and the New Mechanists are mistaken, and I conclude that there is— or need be— far less theoretical disagreement between Dynamicists and the New Mechanists than is suggested by the debate.

Recent debates in philosophy of mind seemingly have resulted in an impasse. Reductive physicalism cannot account for the phenomenal mind, and nonreductive physicalism cannot safeguard a causal role for the mental as mental. Dualism was formerly considered to be the only viable alternative, but in addition to exacerbating the problem of mental causation, it is hard to square with a naturalist evolutionary framework. By 1979, Thomas Nagel argued that if reductionism and dualism fail, and a non-reductionist form of strong emergence cannot be made intelligible, then panpsychism—the thesis that mental being is a fundamental

and ubiquitous feature of the universe-might be a viable alternative. But it was not until David Chalmers' *The Conscious Mind* in 1996 that debates on panpsychism entered the philosophical mainstream. Since then the field has been growing rapidly, and some leading philosophers of mind as well as scientist have argued in favor of panpsychism. This book features contemporary arguments for panpsychism as a genuine alternative in analytic philosophy of mind in the 21st century. Different varieties of panpsychism are represented and systematically related to each other in the volume's 16 essays, which feature not only proponents of panpsychism but also prominent critics from both the physicalist and non-physicalist camps.

Contemporary discussions in philosophy of mind have largely been shaped by physicalism, the doctrine that all phenomena are ultimately physical. Here, Jaegwon Kim presents the most comprehensive and systematic presentation yet of his influential ideas on the mind-body problem. He seeks to determine, after half a century of debate: What kind of (or "how much") physicalism can we lay claim to? He begins by laying out mental causation and consciousness as the two principal challenges to contemporary physicalism. How can minds exercise their causal powers in a physical world? Is a physicalist account of consciousness possible? The book's starting point is the "supervenience" argument (sometimes called the "exclusion" argument), which Kim reformulates in an extended defense. This argument shows that the contemporary physicalist faces a stark choice between reductionism (the idea that mental phenomena are physically reducible) and epiphenomenalism (the view that mental phenomena are causally impotent). Along the way, Kim presents a novel argument showing that Cartesian substance dualism offers no help with mental causation. Mind-body reduction, therefore, is required to save mental causation. But

are minds physically reducible? Kim argues that all but one type of mental phenomena are reducible, including intentional mental phenomena, such as beliefs and desires. The apparent exceptions are the intrinsic, felt qualities of conscious experiences ("qualia"). Kim argues, however, that certain relational properties of qualia, in particular their similarities and differences, are behaviorally manifest and hence in principle reducible, and that it is these relational properties of qualia that are central to their cognitive roles. The causal efficacy of qualia, therefore, is not entirely lost. According to Kim, then, while physicalism is not the whole truth, it is the truth near enough.

This book lies at the intersection of philosophy of mind and philosophy of religion and operates on the assumption that dialogue between the two disciplines can be fruitful. In particular it focuses on how debates in the philosophy of mind regarding the nature of mental causation relate to debates in the philosophy of religion regarding divine action, creaturely causation, and existence of God. The book is divided into two parts. The first deals with Jaegwon Kim's so-called Supervenience Argument (SA) against non-reductive physicalism. One important observation is that the structural similarities between non-reductive physicalism and 'orthodox' theism make it convenient to co-opt non-reductive physicalist solutions to the SA in defending the possibility of creaturely causation in the philosophy of religion. The SA is used as a foil to discuss the relative merits of Malebranche's so-called Conservation is Continuous Creation Argument for Occasionalism (CCCA). Moverover, the so-called compatibilist strategy (Karen Bennett 2003, 2009) for developing a non-reductive

physicalist response to the Supervenience Argument is defended and developed. This strategy is then deployed in the philosophy of religion to defend the possibility of creaturely causation against the CCCA.

A collection of new essays that develop themes from the work of the philosopher Jaegwon Kim.

How are truths about physical and mental states related? In *The Conceptual Link from Physical to Mental* Robert Kirk articulates and defends a fresh approach to the physical-to-mental connection in his theory of 'redescriptive physicalism'. The theory provides an invaluable philosophical basis for dealing with the problems that mental causation raises for other non-reductive views.

Robert J. Howell offers a new account of the relationship between conscious experience and the physical world, based on a neo-Cartesian notion of the physical and careful consideration of three anti-materialist arguments. His theory of subjective physicalism reconciles the data of consciousness with the advantages of a monistic, physical ontology.

Presents a comprehensive account of how the mind causes things to happen in the physical world. This book is also available as Open Access.

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