

The Epiphenominal Argument Jackson's Epiphenominal Qualia

There is something missing from a physicalist description of consciousness. This missing thing is the experience of Qualia. Qualia are the meaningful is-ness of direct subjective experience, and are essential to the nature of consciousness but are not accessible by the investigation of the physical world. Jackson breaks down his argument into four parts:

1. The Knowledge Argument

A. Physical descriptions leave out a certain property or quality of Fred's color experience. If you understand all of the physical facts about a conscious experience there is still something to be learned through direct subjective experience.

2. Modal Argument

A. There could be a world exactly like ours without consciousness.

B. Not grounds for the conclusion that Qualia are left out of physicalism.
(begging the question ?)

3. The "What is it like" Argument (Nagel)

A. A subjective point of view is not plural and therefore not comparable in physical, shared terms. Someone else is not able to say, "I am Fred and I myself experience..."

B. Jackson's argument is different from Nagel's because to understand Fred's experience of color is not to understand what it is like to be Fred.

4. The Bogey of Epiphenominalism

A. Qualia are physically inefficacious.

B. It is possible to hold that certain properties of mental states may only affect mental states and not physical states.

C. 3 arguments for efficacy all of which hold no force.

I. hurtfulness of pain causes avoidance. But, B is not always caused by

A. It can be shown an underlying process causes both. The brain causes both hurtfulness and behavior.

II. Qualia are a beneficial outcome of evolution. Qualia develop as a by-product of certain brain processes that are highly conducive to survival.

III. We can know other minds through behavior but this is not logically imperative.

Conclusion: Physicalism leaves something out of consciousness. The overlooked "Qualia" are existent but inaccessible by science. We may never know the entire picture of consciousness because evolution does not confer an advantage to this knowledge.