# Jackson’s Physicalism

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Crane & Mellor’s objections to **P**: (a) ill-*defined*; (b) ill-*motivated*; (c) *false*; (d) *trivial*.

(a) **P** ill-defined in various ways:

(i) ? = all *particulars*, *properties* (including relations)

**P** is *vacuous* if **PS**s include psychology.

So *agree* **P** only true & *not* vacuous if ‘kinds of properties and relations needed to account for the exemplars of the non-sentient are enough to account for everything … contingent’.

Question is what *reason* we have to *believe* this?

Frank: evidence is success *within* **PS**, e.g. microtheories of water and heat.

Doesn’t do this in book, but in paper to which mine is reply: see handout.

**P** needn’t be done by *micro*theory of the mind; but that’s not the point.

Point is *evidence* for **P**; and Frank’s *only* evidence is two microtheories of macrophenomena, plus fact that ‘the mind is a macroscopic phenomenon’.

I say (a) 2 cases *within* **PS** are weak evidence for claim *for* **PS** (b) cases no good anyway.

Will mostly discuss (b), since so often cited it’s important to show they’re both wrong.

But first note there *are* good cases within **PS**: light = e-m radiation; and gravitational mass = inertial mass. Discuss.

But who thinks either of them is *any* evidence for **P**? And these are thhe *only* cases I know of.

History of **P** is *not* of showing that previously recognised ‘kinds of properties & relations’ will account for new phenomena.

On the contrary: it’s of continual postulation of *new* kinds of properties and relations

Newtonian mechanics, postulates *mass*; Newtonian theories postulate new kinds of *forces*, e.g. gravity, pressure, viscosity, etc

Early physicalists – materialists – thought properties and relations of solid impenetrable particles would do Frank’s business. Gravity etc showed that’s *false*.

That later developments care in what’s called *physics* is irrelevant: still just an ever-growing list of new sciences needing to postulate new properties and relations .

Imagine Newtonian ‘gravitalist’: refuted by theories inside and outside what’s called ‘physics’: e.g. *thermodynamics*, *electromagnetism*, and *chemistry*.

So why not *psychology*; and why does it matter? Who cares that mechanico-gravito-electromagnetico-thermodynamicalism is false of chemistry

Equally, why care whether mechanico-gravito-electromagnetico-thermodynamico-chemico-biologicalism is false of psychology?

**P** is a trivial *question*, and the most puzzling fact about it for me is not why people *believe* it when it’s obviously *false*; but why anyone *cares* whether it’s true or false.

I don’t mean there *isn’t* a question: the question as Frank puts it makes perfectly good *sense*.

Psychology *does* use distinctivve predicates to explain mental phenomena: predicates like ‘believes’, ‘wants’, and terms for kinds of qualia: ‘loud’, ‘bitter’, ‘bright’ etc.

So provided you’re not an *eliminativist* there *is* the question

What’s the evidence that *all* these predicates refer to mec hanical, gravitational, electro­magnetic, thermodynamic, chemical, or biological properties.

None – and there’s a lot of evidence that they don’t: i.e. that they refer to distinctively psychological properties and relations.

The evidence for *that* is all the clearly *contingent* psychophysical laws – e.g. those linking the chemistry of foods to their taste, the intensity and frequencyof pressure waves in air to what they sound like, etc. etc.

Every consumer industry, and the whole of medicine, depends on these irreducibly psycho-physical laws.

We all know it; and the fact that so many philosophers deny it is as great a testimony to the power of *mind*-washing to get people to believe obvious falsehoods as is the existence of organised religions.

Enough abuse: let’s look at Frank’s cases.