

Thomas nagel

Philosophy



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Thomas Nagel Q1 Functionalism theory is a doctrine that suggests what forms mental of something depends on the function or role it plays in the cognitive system that it forms and not on the constitution of the material. In this theory, it is the function of the mind state that defines an object or state of something (Heil 89). Functionalism theory tries to go beyond behavior and identity theory by picking concepts from each. The theory determines the function of something while relating to behavior, other mental state and stimulation to get the mental state identity. The mental states include beliefs, pain, being, desires and others. The theory tends to look at what something does rather than what constitute them. An example is what makes a mousetrap is not the material but rather the function it plays in catching the mice.

Q2

Functionalism theory separates the brain state from mind state and concentrates on the mind to elaborate the function of material rather than what constitute it from the mind state. Functionalism theory tends to differentiate the mind state and brain state by concentrating on the roles of mental state or what these mental states cause that define mental state as oppose to general brain state. Functionalist shows that the mind state is different from the brain state and physical system from which it arises. Identity theory other hand, argues that the mind states are identical to the brain states which is a physical state. The identity theory argues that mind and brain states are the same thing. Identity theory suggests that any mind processes such as image formation are just the brain processes.

Q3

Consciousness has derivation from the Latin words con that means ' with'
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and scire, which means 'to know'. Hence, consciousness can perceive and know. Nagel argues that the materialism cannot conclusively account for conscious experience by referring to robots having functional state yet they do not experience consciousness. These automated materials also have an identity and fulfill all requirements for the functional state as noted by reductionist yet they do not have conscious experience in their functions. These automated machines always repeat designed commands that a human can change at any given time. From this point, Nagel sees no sense of defending materialism without showing consciousness of mental phenomena. In his bat view, a human being cannot know how it is like to be a bat due to limiting mind resources in imagination. Human imagination can only give an idea in how to behave like a bat. Nagel prefers identity theory that he sees vital in identifying physical state and mental state of the brain. He shows this while arguing against dualism and reductionism.

Q4

Nagel does not eliminate materialism in his work but argues that it cannot explain the non-physical concept of consciousness. He strongly opposes reductionism and dualism in his work. In his argument, he states that materialism is not enough to explain consciousness. In his article, 'What is it like to be a bat?' he explains that there is a particular consciousness in being a bat. To feel like that thing, first you must identify yourself physical conformation to fit the requirement to be the thing. However, materialism can explain the concept of consciousness since what we see and feel creates consciousness in the mind. The way an individual perceives something depends in the way they physically see it or feel its effect. The materialism can therefore, explain the consciousness of being and perception of

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something.

Work Cited

Heil, John. Philosophy of Mind: A Contemporary Introduction. London:

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