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Differences between Mind and Body

Our mind and body are the major constants in our lives. Philosophers and scientists have often raised questions on mind and body, the relation between the two. The starting point for any analysis would begin with a question - What is a mind and how does it differ from the body. Sure we all can view our bodies, but our mind remains hidden. Still, we can look at our brains but still not the mind as it is not capable of being inspected, in the same way, as a body is. A great deal of research has been done on the relation between mind and a body, whether they are separate or connected. Philosophers such as René Descartes has made an attempt to tackle this issue related to mind and body.

René Descartes' Meditations on First Philosophy Descartes believed mind and body are separate entities, and his viewpoint is referred to as dualism. In his Meditations on First Philosophy, Descartes starts that finite substances needed an infinite substance to exist. According to him, there is only one infinite substance which is god and mind and body are finite that can exist only in the existence of God. The body is a corporeal substance, and the mind is the thinking substance ¹. The body is directly observable while mind is not. Moreover, mind does not occupy space while body occupies a three-dimensional space. The body is divisible while mind is not.

_____ ¹Descartes, Rene. " Meditations On First Philosophy.

1 Jan. 2014. Web. .

These are the deepest legacies of Descartes' philosophy based on mind-body dualism making them really distinct. Descartes argues that the body is an extended, non-thinking thing while the mind, on the other hand, is thinking,

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non-extended thing. Therefore, it is possible for one to exist in the absence of the other. However, the most important issue that remains is that if the two are not related to each other, how can the mind control the bodily movements and how can the sensations in the body reach the mind, when their natures are completely different and distinct. Descartes' response to this dilemma is that it because of this relation of mind with the body that one exists as a human being. First, Second and Sixth Meditation A sane person holding a piece of paper in his hand or any other object, cannot deny these hands and this body. However, a person in a state of insanity with disordered v brains may feel different. In our dream too, we see our body holding objects and feeling things, and those are as real as the wakeful state of our body. How can thus one be very sure that this state of wakefulness is not one of another dream, a longer one though? After all, one is often disillusioned in dreams that are very real, and one has to persuade themselves that they are dreaming. Whether one is awake or dreaming, the reality is that some truths are apparent and remain so in both dreams and state of wakefulness 2. You become your own deceiver if those opinions are entirely imaginary or real. The sky, the earth, sounds, colors, are external things that are nothing more than illusions of dreams, and one can consider himself without hands, eyes or any of the senses. You can believe that the body is just merely fiction of my mind. _____2Descartes, Rene. " Meditations On First Philosophy. 1 Jan. 2014. Web. .

But who causes these thoughts to arise in the mind and is one highly dependent on the body and the senses that they cannot exist without them? Was the mind there even in the absence of the sun, moons and the stars? Or

is one able to exist even without the mind? One does not perhaps still know very clearly with satisfactory clarity what who they are. The body needs to be nourished and fed. The soul does not need any nourishment and perception is another attribute of the soul. As we perceive objects and feelings in our dreams, it means that thinking is another attribute of the soul. The real thing that is existent is a thinking thing³.

The mind is apt to wander and doesn't know any limits or boundaries like the body. The mind is the sole faculty of judgment, and there is nothing more easily or clearly apprehended than ones' own mind. The only inquiry that remains is whether material things exist. As long as those constitute the object of the pure mathematics, one can conceive them clearly and distinctly. One is accustomed to imagining other objects and needs to examine what sense-perception. Now that one is able to discover the true author of the being more clearly, one can rightly conclude that their essence consists only in being a thinking thing. Many people are known to have a near-death experience and many people have felt their conscious mind leaving their body and have even looked down at their body. The near-death experience can explain mind-body dualism ⁴. When living a normal life, our bodies and minds work harmoniously and are connected as thinking beings. Once the body is not there, the spirit of the mind continues to exist. The bodies lack the features of non-localizability, privateness and intentionality that are characteristic of the brain. _____³ Fodor, Jerry A.

The Mind-Body Problem. 244 Vol. UNITED STATES:, 1981. Print. ⁴ Descartes, Rene. " Meditations On First Philosophy. 1 Jan. 2014. Web. .

Bodies are localizable while; minds are not, and therefore, minds cannot be

bodies. Minds are private and intentional, and the bodies are none of these. Descartes theory is a twofold one is religious in nature and the other scientific. Several versions have explained the real division of mind and body over the years. The materialist approach is based on identity theory that states that the brain activities are similar to mental states, but with different perspectives. One can study the neural activity of the brain. However, philosophers are not much concerned about the physiological brain activities. What the brain experiences is different from its activity and is private to the person experiencing it.

However, the problem with the mind-body dualism is that how there can be a connection with a three-dimensional one and a non-three-dimensional one. There are many views that support the mind-body dualism while others that argue against it. Arguments from religion and introspection stand in favor of dualism. The parapsychological phenomenon are cited in favor of dualism. Telepathy, telekinesis and clairvoyance are some good supporters of this theory. These mental phenomena are often cited in favor of dualism and are beyond any physical explanation. How do materialists propose to do away with the " mental"? Scientists and philosophers studying the nature of mind do their best to keep the religious discussions out. The first argument that goes against the theory is it being very simplistic in nature. The theory does not give a complete explanation of the difference between body and mind. Thanks to neurology, we know what brain is made of and how it works. The materialistic theory argues against dualism stating that it fails to tell anything about the internal constituent of the mind, and its structural connections with the body. _____5 Storl, H. Churchland, Paul

M.: Matter and Consciousness. 51 Vol. American Library Association CHOICE, 2014. Print.

The dualist admits that the brain is the mediator between the mind and the body. He is not able to explain the capacities of the nonphysical mind. If the mind is non-physical, it has no place in the physical world

The mind-body materialism is seen as an alternative to mind-body dualism and the view holds is that conscious minds are the product of physical brain activity. When one examines human consciousness, there is a need to look no further than the physical realm and uncover the mysteries of the human mind. However, shifting from dualism to materialism too does not solve the mind-body problem. What it does is simply narrow down the search by declining the concept of a spirit-mind. Behaviorism theory connects mind with observable behavior and how one responds differently when exposed to different stimuli. Identity Theory is the next approach to the mind-body problem that states that brain and mental states are identical, only different in perspectives. This theory targets the physical human brain and neural activities.

There is a bit of insincerity in our philosophical approach to the concept of mind and body. There are still difficulties that surround different materialist theories and dualism. We still carry very little theories about how the mind is a product of mere brain activity, and there are still no definitive answers to some tough questions and gaps within our scientific knowledge.

Desire and aversion in Hobbes

Hobbes provides an excellent object-lesson in connectedness about the physical world and offers the most sophisticated accounts of mechanist philosophy. Mechanism and materialism are opposed to philosophies.

_____ 6 Storl, H. Churchland, Paul M.: Matter and Consciousness. 51 Vol. American Library Association CHOICE, 2014. Print7.

Robertson, George Croom, 1842-1892. Hobbes., 1886. Print

Hobbes main grounding was that everything that happens is the result of the physical world, and there is no such thing as the soul. According to him, human desire and aversion are related to the concept of good and evil. What a man loves becomes his desire and what he dislike his aversion.

Identity Theory in Churchland

According to the Identity theory, there are specific mental states of the brain and a well-developed neuroscience will be able to provide the differences between mind and body one day. Identity theory permits the practice of mentalist dialog, while, at the same time, it places mental phenomena on a material basis. However, it doesn't succeed in dealing with the introspection issue. One further objection to the identity theory is that even after the physical phenomena are understood completely, there is still something that remains to be understood.

Conclusion

When confronted with the traditional mind-body problem, many philosophers resort to some form of materialism that accounts successfully for certain functions. The differences seen between the materialistic positions are wider

as compared to those that exist among the differences that divide dualism. A philosophical exploration of the relation between body and mind is tough to explain. There are issues surrounding the dualist position and personal identity, as well as different materialist theories on the difference between mind and body. There was no need to philosophize the problem if science had definitive answers to the other issue. Different theories and speculations will perhaps cease to exist the day brain scientists, and cognitive engineers work hard on getting answers to these questions.

_____ 8 Storl, H. Churchland, Paul M.: Matter and Consciousness. 51 Vol. American Library Association CHOICE, 2014. Print.

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