THE CAUSAL THEORY OF THE MIND

David M. Armstrong
1. Conscious mental occurrences have physical effects.

2. All physical effects are fully caused by purely physical occurrences.

3. The physical effects of conscious states aren’t always overdetermined.

4. Therefore, conscious mental occurrences are physical occurrences.

1. Pr. Plum killed the victim.

2. The masked man killed the victim.

3. The victim’s death wasn’t overdetermined.

4. Therefore, Pr. Plum was the masked man.
BEHAVIORISM: MENTAL STATES ARE BEHAVIORAL DISPOSITIONS

*types of materialism*
PHYSICALISM: MENTAL STATES ARE BRAIN STATES

types of materialism
FUNCTIONALISM: MENTAL STATES ARE FUNCTIONAL STATES

types of materialism
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insert Coin</th>
<th>S1</th>
<th>S2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nickel</td>
<td>go to S2</td>
<td>dispense soda, go to S1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dime</td>
<td>dispense soda, stay in S1</td>
<td>dispense soda and nickel, go to S1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Functional states of a vending machine**
## Matters of Fact vs. Relations of Ideas: Traditional View

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matters of Fact</th>
<th>Relations of Ideas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Most bachelors have roommates.”</td>
<td>“All bachelors are unmarried.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>synthetic: true as a matter of fact</td>
<td>analytic: true by definition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contingent: could have been otherwise</td>
<td>necessary: must have been true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a posteriori: known by experience</td>
<td>a priori: knowable prior to experience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ARMSTRONG ON ANALYSIS

➤ conceptual analysis: process of stating and refining conceptual definitions (analytic truths)

➤ Armstrong: conceptual analysis a method of philosophy, not a goal

➤ materialism is scientific discovery

➤ philosophical analysis shows intelligibility of scientific reduction
Poisons cause sickness or death when ingested.

(analytic or synthetic? necessary or contingent? a priori or a posteriori?)
Physicalism: mental states supervene on physical states

Functionalism: mental states supervene on functional states