Cartesian interactionism: mind and body interact through pineal gland
The interaction problem for dualism
ELISABETH OF BOHEMIA (1618-1680)

Descartes correspondent, princess
ELISABETH’S OBJECTION

➤ pre-Newtonian physics: objects interact by contact

➤ Elisabeth: How is mind-body interaction possible?

➤ Newtonian physics: action at a distance possible, but requires location, mass, etc.

➤ Descartes: mind-body interaction is “primitive”
Epiphenomenalism: mental states have physical causes but no physical effects.

epi ("above / in addition to") + phenomenon + ism
Correlation ≠ causation
When A & B correlated...

➤ ...could be coincidence
➤ ...could be because A causes B
➤ ...could be because B causes A
➤ ...could be because third factor causes both A and B

Epiphenomenalism says:
➤ mental states don’t cause behavior
➤ correlation because brain states cause both
DAVID PAPINEAU’S CAUSAL ARGUMENT FOR MATERIALISM

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.

➤ Re (1): rejection of epiphenomenalism

➤ Re (2): “causal completeness of physics”
  ➤ empirical support:
    ➤ conservation of energy
    ➤ no evidence of nonphysical causes in biology

➤ Re (3): rejection of overdetermination
  ➤ overdetermination = full causation by two causes
Kim's Pairing Problem

➤ Dualist’s should concede:
  ➤ possibility of two indiscernible minds
  ➤ possibility that just one causes my arm to raise

➤ Kim: Dualist cannot accommodate this possibility.
  ➤ Compare: two indiscernible stars, only one causing planet to orbit

➤ Karen Bennett: Dualist could claim causation is primitive.