

## **A Possible Solution to Rescue Type Identity**

(Handout)

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Type Identity: all mental states are ontologically reducible to physical states

Multiple Realisability Thesis: a mental state can be realized by many creatures

Putnam objects that according to MRT a person and an octopus would have to exhibit the same physical state

Putnam is wrong to view “pain” as designating a specific state – it should be viewed as a general term

“Pain” used to refer to ‘similar’ pains

Is phenomenal content (Qualia) reducible?

Zombies!:    i) Zombies are conceivable  
                  ii) Whatever is conceivable is possible  
                  iii) Zombies are possible

Qualia are not metaphysically reducible to the physical

Objections:    1) Wittgenstein: As qualia are essentially private, they are incommunicable  
                  2) Cart before the horse

Qualia reducible to the physical – Phenomenal content is being the subject of those physical events

How is it we can consider various physical states as pain states (e.g. as opposed to itches)?

Some form of functionalism – Not metaphysical functionalism

Mechanism

Multi-level analysis

- basic level – what the system (e.g. heart) does
- “Contextual” level – larger picture
- “Constitutive” level – how it is the basic level’s components bring about the (e.g. heart’s) functional role

Mechanism gives causal explanation of physical components without appealing to functional analysis – But under what conditions can many varied physical states be referred to as pain?

Wittgenstein (again): one, or even several, descriptions need not provide necessary and sufficient conditions for concept term (e.g. “game”, “art”, “pain”, “good”)