Invoking the Causal Powers of Physical Properties to Support Dualism

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A primary objective of the philosophy of mind is to develop a practical understanding of the concept of consciousness. Such an understanding should include knowledge about the nature and characteristics of consciousness, and what types of relationships it has to physical bodies and properties. However, comprehending consciousness has proven to be an extremely challenging and highly elusive task. Many of the problems associated with consciousness stem from the inability to recognize its origin(s) and the indistinctness of its relational characteristics. This indeterminacy is clearly demonstrated by the inconclusiveness of the explanations that have attempted to give a proper account of the basic features of conscious experiences. These conscious, or *phenomenal*, experiences are characterized by certain feelings and sensations, which give one having such experiences the knowledge and understanding of "what it is like to be" in those particular phenomenal states. David Chalmers, a prominent phenomenalist, explains: "The *phenomenal* concept of mind…is the concept of mind as conscious experience, and of a mental state as a consciously experienced mental state…On the phenomenal concept, mind is characterized by the way it *feels*."[1]

A major difficulty in explaining the phenomenal concept of mind is that it is unclear whether conscious states, also referred to as the subjective characters of experience, are to be described merely as constituents of the physical world, or if they have some additional transcendent qualities that defy purely physical explanations. The view that seeks to establish the former claim, that the conscious states of mind are in fact part of

the physical world, is appropriately termed *physicalism*. Thus, according to physicalism, the subjective characters of experience are to be defined merely as physical states of the brain (another way of putting this is that conscious or mental states *are identical to* brain states). The latter view, that there is more to conscious states than can be explained in purely physical terms, is known as *dualism*. Since things that transcend the physical world are presently indefinable, the primary claim of dualism is that conscious states of the mind are not *merely* physical states of the brain. The concept of consciousness can be a very complicated and technical metaphysical issue, and like most philosophical topics it is highly conceptual and somewhat unsubstantiated; hence, matters pertaining to consciousness have fueled the debate between physicalism and dualism for quite some time.

The focus of this paper will be to examine a certain contention that relates to contemporary deliberations in the philosophy of mind. More specifically, it will analyze and assess a particular argument that has been advanced by John Perry in his recent book, *Knowledge, Possibility, and Consciousness*. Perry is advocating *antecedent physicalism*, which is a form of physicalism that is supposed to account for phenomenal states of mind in a purely physical context. Much of his claim rests on showing that some of the more prominent arguments for dualism actually pose no threat to his version of physicalism. One such argument that Perry seeks to refute is the zombie argument, which David Chalmers introduced in his book *The Conscious Mind*. Perry attempts to show that the zombie argument is actually not an argument for dualism, but rather a test for *epiphenomenalism*, which is a theory concerned with the causal aspects of phenomenal states. Perry concludes that epiphenomenalism is not a theory that supports dualism, and that the zombie argument is really a determinant of epiphenomenalism; therefore, the zombie argument is not an argument for dualism, and poses no threat to antecedent physicalism.

Although Perry's conclusions are based on well-developed and sophisticated ideas, they are not entirely correct, for there is a consideration that Perry seemingly overlooks. It is the fact that properties are sources of causality because properties *just are* causal powers. This is a basic and sensible claim that has been explicated by Sydney Shoemaker in his paper, "Causality and Properties." Recognizing the causal powers of properties is extremely important because it undermines one of the basic premises on which Perry's arguments are founded. The objective of this paper is to demonstrate that epiphenomenalism *is* in fact an argument for dualism, and this claim will be established by showing that properties *are* causal powers. At this point, the relevance of the causal powers of properties is probably not evident, but this issue will be clarified shortly, and by the end of this paper it should be clear why Perry's conclusions are erroneous. However, before the reasons why Perry's conclusions turn out to be incorrect are revealed, it would be helpful to get some background information on the argument that he challenges, as well as a general overview of his own argument; this will make it easier to understand and trace Perry's line of reasoning. Thus, this paper will first provide a brief review of the zombie argument, followed by a synopsis of Perry's premises and conclusions. Then it will explain the causal powers of properties and show how these causal powers undermine Perry's conclusions about epiphenomenalism and the zombie argument.

The Zombie Argument

A well-known argument that endorses the dualist account of consciousness is David Chalmers' zombie argument. In this example, Chalmers seeks to invalidate the physicalist's claim that conscious states and experiences are only physical states of the brain by maintaining that there exists "the logical possibility of a *zombie*: someone or something physically identical to me (or to any other conscious being), but lacking conscious experiences

altogether" (Chalmers 94). Likewise, zombies live in "a *zombie world*: a world physically identical to ours, but in which there are no conscious experiences at all" (Chalmers 94). Further, a zombie will also be functionally identical to his/her actual-world counterpart because:

> he will be processing internal configurations being modified appropriately and with indistinguishable behavior resulting…(and) he will be awake, able to report the contents of his internal states, able to focus attention in various places, and so on. It is just that none of this functioning will be accompanied by any real conscious experience. There will be no phenomenal feel (Chalmers 95)[2].

Thus, the only thing differentiating a zombie from his/her real-world counterpart is that zombies lack the subjective characters of experience that are an essential part of the human experience. The possibility of the existence of beings that are physically indiscernible from humans, but that are completely without conscious experience is supposed to show that the phenomenal states of mind are not identical with any physical states of the brain. If the phenomenal states of mind *were* equal to certain physical states of the brain, then it would be logically impossible for beings that are physically indiscernible from humans to be without conscious experiences altogether; it would be *necessary* for zombies to have the subjective characters of experience that humans have. However, since it *is* logically possible for beings that are physically identical to humans but that lack conscious experiences to exist, it is evident that the phenomenal states of mind are not to be identified with the physical states of the brain. Therefore, there is a duality between phenomenal states and brain states, and the former cannot be explained in terms of the latter (i.e., phenomenal states cannot be explained by physicalism).

The zombie argument is one of the arguments against

physicalism that Perry considers and challenges. By contemplating some of the possibilities associated with epiphenomenalism, he is able to conclude that the zombie argument does not damage physicalism, because under certain circumstances it is possible for the physicalist to accept the existence of zombies.

Perry's Argument

In chapter 4 of *Knowledge, Possibility, and Consciousness* Perry examines the zombie argument and determines that it is irrelevant to the debate between physicalism and dualism: "What may be somewhat surprising, though, is that the possibility of a Chalmers zombie world really has virtually nothing at all to do with the issue of physicalism versus dualism."[3] Instead, he believes "It is a test for epiphenomenalism versus the efficacy of the conscious" (Perry 77). This is a substantial claim, and to thoroughly assess Perry's reasoning, the concepts of *epiphenomenalism* and the *efficacy of the conscious* must be completely understood.

Epiphenomenalism is a theory that is concerned with the causal aspects of phenomenal states; its primary interest is the cause-and-effect relationship between conscious events and events that occur in the physical world. Perry defines epiphenomenalism "simply as the doctrine that conscious events are effects but not causes" (Perry 78). Thus, phenomenal states of mind are affected and shaped by events taking place in the physical world, but they do not influence or impact the outcomes of physical events. In effect, they are results that do not produce further results. This notion can be compared to the occurrence of a shadow that any regular physical object casts when the sun is in an appropriate position to produce such a result. The existence of an object's shadow is an effect that is created or generated by events in the physical world (the mass of the physical object blocking a portion of the sun's light). However, the shadow itself does not create or generate any other effects or events in

the physical world, it simply exists as it is. According to epiphenomenalism, the relationship that the shadow has to the physical world is the same type of relationship that phenomenal experiences have to the physical world. That is, they are outcomes but not initiators of physical events.

The efficacy of the conscious also describes the cause-and-effect relationship between conscious events and events that take place in the physical world, but the roles that each of the events play is slightly different. According to the efficacy of the conscious, phenomenal states of mind are both causes *and* effects of physical events. Therefore, phenomenal experiences are not only the results of events that occur in the physical world, they also initiate and influence the occurrence of other physical events (i.e., phenomenal states of mind directly affect, and are directly affected by the physical world). For the purposes of this paper, the position that promotes the efficacy of the conscious will be coined *"efficacism,"* and the proponents of efficacism will be referred to as *"efficacists."*

It is important to understand the difference between epiphenomenalism and efficacism because it is precisely on this distinction that Perry builds his case against the zombie argument. He acknowledges that the concept of epiphenomenalism is generally associated with dualism, but determines that it is also compatible with physicalism:

> Epiphenomenalism is usually considered to be a form of dualism. But we defined it simply as the doctrine that conscious events are effects but not causes. So defined, it appears to be consistent with physicalism (Perry 78).

If epiphenomenalism is in fact compatible with physicalism, then it seems that epiphenomenalism cannot be an argument that supports dualism. Hence, according to Perry, it is conceivable for a physicalist to be an epiphenomenalist as well.

At this point it should be noted that in his argument Perry distinguishes between what he believes to be the two different types of possible zombie worlds that may exist. The first, which he refers to as a "Chalmers zombie world," is exactly the example that David Chalmers himself formulates; it was briefly reviewed in the earlier portion of this paper. Perry concludes that a Chalmers zombie world is impossible for a physicalist to accept because it would not be physically identical to the actual world. Physicalism promotes the view that phenomenal states are physical states, and that they produce certain effects in the physical world. Thus, the complete absence of consciousness in the Chalmers zombie world would necessarily constitute a difference in the physical structure of the zombies, which in turn would negate the causal powers that conscious states are supposed to possess.

However, Perry does believe that it is plausible for a physicalist to accept the existence of a second type of zombie world, which he calls an "almost Chalmers zombie world." In this zombie world, the physical difference resulting strictly from the complete absence of consciousness is recognized and accepted. Therefore, the only potential physical discrepancy is the one that results from the effects that phenomenal states of mind have on the outcome of physical events. Perry attempts to resolve this disparity by appealing to epiphenomenalism, which he already assumes is consistent with physicalism. He reasons that if the only physical dissimilarity to be accounted for is the one that results from the causality of conscious states, then it is possible for a physicalist to accept the existence of zombies, provided he/she is also an epiphenomenalist (remember that epiphenomenalism considers conscious states of mind to only be effects, and not causes, of physical events). Consequently, if a physicalist epiphenomenalist can accept the possibility of zombies, two critical facts seem to emerge:

(1) Epiphenomenalism *is* in fact compatible with physicalism; therefore, it *is not* an argument for dualism.

(2) The possible existence of zombies *is also* compatible with physicalism; thus, the zombie argument is an argument that *neither* establishes dualism *nor* invalidates physicalism.

Table 1 represents the various outcomes of Perry's entire argument. It accounts for the two major debates that Perry considers to be the focal points of his claims: A) physicalism vs. dualism; and B) epiphenomenalism vs. efficacism. These views in varying combinations make up the four philosophical positions that are pertinent to the zombie issue:

- *Physicalist epiphenomenalist*
- *Physicalist efficacist*
- *Dualist epiphenomenalist*
- *Dualist efficacist*

The table illustrates which philosophical positions can accept the potential existence of the two types of zombie worlds that Perry has described. It provides a "yes" or "no" answer to the question: "Can this particular philosophical position (physicalist epiphenomenalist, physicalist efficacist, dualist epiphenomenalist, dualist efficacist) accept the possible existence of this type of zombie world?" (Note: "CZW" designates the "Chalmers zombie world," and "ACZW" denotes the "almost Chalmers zombie world.")

Table 1

	Epiphenomenalist		Efficacist	
Physicalist	CZW No	ACZW Yes	CZW No	ACZW No
Dualist	CZW Yes	ACZW Yes	CZW No	ACZW No

After examining the table, one is able to realize a few important facts. First, that the possible existence of *any* type of zombie world lacking total consciousness is *completely* incompatible with *both* forms of efficacism. This should come as no surprise, though, because according to efficacism, phenomenal states have causal powers that affect the outcome of events in the physical world. So if there are certain worlds in which beings lack consciousness altogether, there will necessarily be a difference in the outcome of physical events in those worlds. Second, *all* types of zombies are *completely* compatible with *both* types of dualism; this should be equally obvious because the zombie argument is one that supports a dualist conclusion in the first place. Finally, it should also be apparent why a physicalist epiphenomenalist cannot accept the "Chalmers zombie world" (CZW). This is because the absence of consciousness in each zombie is supposed to account for the physical difference between the CZW and the actual-world (remember that physicalism assumes that phenomenal states *are identical to* physical states of the brain). Basically, this claim is stipulated by Perry because it is dependent on the distinction between the CZW and the ACZW ("almost Chalmers zombie world") that he builds into his argument. Interestingly enough, this distinction is not as significant as it may seem. In fact, it may be quite irrelevant to the primary objective of this paper. As long as Perry concludes that a physicalist epiphenomenalist can accept the existence of *some* type of zombie (which he does), his claims will turn out to be erroneous. It is precisely on this assertion, *that it is possible for a physicalist epiphenomenalist to accept the possibility of zombies*, that Perry bases his two (too?) bold conclusions: A) that the zombie argument is not an argument for dualism, but rather a test for epiphenomenalism; and B) that epiphenomenalism is not an argument for dualism because it is compatible with physicalism.

Examining Perry's entire argument has facilitated a

complete understanding of his line of reasoning and has ensured that none of his concepts have been overlooked or misinterpreted. It also has revealed that the differentiation between the CZW and the ACZW is not as important as it seems. Thus, for argument's sake, matters can be simplified by completely disregarding this distinction and simply focusing on the claim, *the physicalist epiphenomenalist is able to accept the possibility of zombie worlds*. This narrower focus is illustrated by the revised and straightforward Table 2. (Note: all factors pertaining to the information in this table are equivalent to those found in Table 1; the only difference is the removal of the CZW/ACZW distinction.)

Table 2

	Epiphenomenalist	Efficacist
Physicalist	Yes	No
Dualist	Yes	No

This table is a much simpler version of Table 1, and so its conclusions remain constant. As was previously stated, it should be *completely* obvious and unequivocal why *both* forms of efficacism are incompatible with the possibility of zombie worlds, and it should be *equally* obvious why the dualist epiphenomenalist can accept the possible existence of zombie worlds. The only position that is not *completely* evident is that of the physicalist epiphenomenalist.

Although Perry tries to substantiate the ability of this position to accept the possible existence of zombie worlds, he does not succeed. In a moment, it will be clear why this is so; but first, a quick recap of Perry's main points.

By saying that the zombie argument is a test that determines epiphenomenalism versus efficacism, rather than an argument that supports dualism, Perry claims that the logical

possibility of the existence of zombies has nothing to do with the issues pertaining to physicalism and dualism. Since the possible existence of zombies and zombie worlds is supposedly an epiphenomenal matter (i.e., one that is determined by what types of causal roles conscious states of mind play), it is logically possible for both physicalists *and* dualists to believe in the existence of zombies. Since according to epiphenomenalism, conscious experiences have absolutely no causal powers, even a physicalist can accept the possibility of zombies, provided he/she is also an epiphenomenalist. Perry's conclusion is that "The zombie argument does not provide an argument for dualism. As long as one is an epiphenomenalist, one can accept the possibility of zombies" (Perry 78).

These conclusions would be a substantial victory for the physicalist, and would be considerably damaging to the dualist position. However, though Perry has well-developed ideas and coherent arguments, his conclusions are not entirely correct. As was mentioned earlier, the objective of this paper is to demonstrate that epiphenomenalism *is* in fact an argument for dualism, and this will be accomplished by revealing that it is *impossible* for a physicalist *also* to be an epiphenomenalist. This claim will be established by invoking the causal powers of properties.

The Causal Powers of Properties

To realize how the causal powers of properties factor into the philosophical issues at hand, it is necessary to have a thorough explanation of the characteristics of properties, the nature of the causal relationship, and the correlation between the two. This will involve recognizing the attributes that properties have and understanding what types of roles these attributes play in the causal sequence. Once the functional aspects of properties are identified, it should become apparent that causality results from features of the physical world. Properties turn out to be the basic components of change, the factors on which actions and

the occurrence of events depend. Therefore, to fully comprehend change and causality, an insight into the complexion of properties is required.

According to *Webster's Dictionary*, 'property' is defined as "an essential or distinctive attribute or quality of a thing."[4] Although this is not specifically a philosophical definition, it captures the essence of what a property is, and what it consists of. A property is a quality of a "thing," which is an extremely broad term that seemingly encompasses all aspects of reality—namely, mental and physical phenomena. While the mental portion of the account may be debatable, it certainly appears as though the physical part is not. After all, it is quite probable that the subjects most referred to by the descriptive expression "things" are in fact physical objects or entities. This is not a deeply philosophical matter at all; rather, it is more of a real-life common-sense observation. Thus, it can be stated with little controversy that *all* physical "things" have properties of some sort. For clarification, a physical "thing" is any constituent or component of the physical world. More precisely, if it can be identified in physical terms, it is a physical "thing," and *all* physical "things" have properties (at this point, quotation marks will no longer be used to draw attention to the indeterminateness of the word "thing"; by now the desired effect should have been achieved).

The other aspect of a property is that it is an "essential or distinctive attribute" of a thing, meaning that a property is a fundamental and necessary feature of a thing that serves as the defining characteristic of that thing. The properties of a thing are what distinguish that specific thing from all of the other things found in the physical world; a property is what makes a particular thing *that* particular thing. Since a thing's properties define its existence and set it apart from the rest of the world, it once again seems that *all* physical things *must* have properties of some sort.

According to physicalism, conscious states of mind are identical to the states of the brain, which means that conscious events are constituents or components of the brain. If conscious events are constituents or components of the brain, then they are obviously part of the physical world and can be explained in purely physical terms. Thus, the physicalist should have no problems acknowledging that conscious events have properties, for physical things that can be explained in physical terms have properties.

Once the characteristics of properties have been properly examined and assessed, and it has been established that phenomenal states of mind have properties, the next step is to explore the nature of the causal relationship. The causal relationship is a type of connection between certain factors that elicits a change in the circumstances surrounding or pertaining to those factors. Events have traditionally been thought of as the factors of the causal relationship, but events themselves are comprised of further parts, namely objects. Objects necessarily have properties, and the changes in their properties is what actually initiates the causal relationship:

> It is events, rather then objects or properties, that are usually taken by philosophers to be the terms of the causal relationship. But an event typically consists of a change in the properties or relationships of one or more objects, the latter being…called the "constituent objects" of the event.[5]

Although events may in fact cause other events, each of the events themselves consists of other parts that determine the type of changes that these events undergo. These other parts are the constituent objects of the events, and it is the properties of the constituent objects of events that actually initiate change. "When one event causes another, this will be in part because of the properties possessed by their constituent objects" (Shoe-

maker 109). Hence, the properties of constituent objects are the real source of the causal relationship.

To understand how the properties of constituent objects actually bring about change, it is necessary to identify the characteristics of the properties involved. The causes and effects of events can be explained "by mentioning certain properties of their constituent objects" (Shoemaker 109). For example, consider an event in which the branch of a tree is blown against a glass window and breaks it (Shoemaker 109). The event itself is the breaking of the glass window, and the constituent objects of this event are the tree branch and the glass window. So it is a certain property (or properties) of each of the constituent objects (the tree branch and the glass window) that initiates the resulting change (the breaking of the glass window). By identifying which property (or properties) of the constituent objects made it possible for the event to occur, one is able to determine the source of the causal relationship. In this case, "the causal relationship holds because of…the massiveness of the one and the fragility of the other" (Shoemaker 109). "Massiveness" and "fragility" are properties of the tree branch and the glass window, respectively, and the fact that these constituent objects possessed these properties is what enabled the aforementioned event to occur. Therefore, the causal relationship can be understood in terms of the characteristics of the properties involved in the instance of change.

However, this causal relationship may become difficult to recognize because objects can conceivably have an infinite amount of properties, some (or most) of which are completely irrelevant to the particular instance of change being examined: "every object will have innumerable properties that are unlikely to be mentioned in any causal explanation involving an event of which the object is a constituent" (Shoemaker 110). Thus, it is necessary to identify which types of properties are to be associated with the causal relationship of a certain event. When

considering change and causality, the only properties that should be appealed to are "real" or "genuine" properties (Shoemaker 109); these are "the sorts of properties with respect to which change is possible" (Shoemaker 112). Real or genuine properties are ones that are capable of being changed or producing change. This can once again be illustrated by using the previous example involving the tree branch and the glass window. The "fragility" property of the glass window gave it the capability to be changed; this was evidenced by the event of it breaking. In addition, this property of the glass window, along with the "massiveness" property of the tree branch, enabled a physical change to be produced. Thus, the "fragility" of the glass and the "massiveness" of the tree branch are real or genuine properties, and it is these types of properties that instantiate causal powers.

Now that the nature of the causal relationship has been analyzed, the final step is to see how the connection between the characteristics of the properties of constituent events and the framework of the causal relationship produce causal powers. First, it is important to recognize exactly what a *causal power* is. A power is something that is contained in a substance or subject (or, as will be shown, in a property) that has the ability "to produce effects in material objects…(for example, the power in the sun to melt wax)" (Shoemaker 112); powers that can produce these types of effects are referred to as "tertiary qualities" (Shoemaker 112). Tertiary qualities are the factors that generate changes in the physical world, and if some particular thing is to have power, it *must* posses some type of tertiary quality. Furthermore, if a tertiary quality is indeed a source of power, it *must* be able to generate some type of change in the physical world. This correlation basically describes the cause-and-effect relationship, and can be stated as follows: *If* something is to have the type of power that produces a change in the physical world, *then* it must posses a specific quality, *such that* the presence of this quality will in fact produce certain outcomes in the physical world.

"For something to have power, in this sense, is for it to be such that its presence in circumstances of a particular sort will have certain effects. One can think of such a power as a function from circumstances to effects" (Shoemaker 113).

This function of circumstances to events can be demonstrated by imagining something that is poisonous (perhaps a pill). This poisonous thing has a particular power (for it is something that possesses the quality or characteristic of "poisonousness") that will produce certain effects in certain circumstances. "Thus if something is poisonous its presence in someone's body will produce death or illness; in virtue of this, being poisonous is a power" (Shoemaker 113). At this point, an extremely important correlation becomes evident: *that the quality of being poisonous is also a property*! So the quality or characteristic of "poisonousness" actually has two aspects to it: A) it is a property; and B) it has some type of causal power. Thus, it has been clearly established that properties *can be* causal powers, at least in certain situations. The immediate conclusion is that properties have at least some causal potentiality, but that whether or not this potentiality can take effect is dependent on certain factors that decide whether or not the property can exercise its causal power(s). The ability to conclude this is a significant accomplishment, and now the only thing remaining is to show that properties *just are* causal power, at *all* times.

It has already been determined that whether or not a property has causality is dependent on certain factors pertaining to the situation that the property is in. So *if* a property is to produce an effect, *then* it must be in a particular situation *such that* the circumstances of that situation enable the property to employ its causal powers. This correlation is parallel to the connection between causal powers and the effects that they are able to produce, which was described earlier as a function from circumstances to events (from causes to effects). Thus, the connection between properties and powers is also a function:

> Just as powers can be thought of as functions from circumstances to causal effects, so the properties on which powers depend can be thought of as functions from properties to powers (or, better, as functions from sets of properties to sets of powers). One might even say that properties are second order powers; they are powers to produce first order powers (powers to produce certain sorts of events) if combined with certain other properties (Shoemaker 114).

Since properties are a determinant or function of causal powers, they are always potential powers, because they have the ability to affect the outcome of physical events, provided that the surrounding circumstances are appropriate for their potentiality to be realized. Therefore, properties can be referred to as *conditional powers* because their causality is determined by the conditions that they are in. Furthermore, "properties are clusters of conditional powers" (Shoemaker 115), meaning that they have a number of potential or conditional powers that may or may not be exercised, depending on the circumstances of the situation. These conditional aspects of properties are like dormant powers; however, if the right conditions are available, these powers can become explicitly active. The right conditions would constitute a property interacting with another property (or properties) in such a way as to "awaken" its dormant powers. In the poisonous pill example, the pill always had the power of being poisonous, yet it could not exercise this power until it was put in the correct situation (inside of a human body) where it could interact with other properties (whatever properties the physical body had that enabled the poisonous power of the pill to take effect). Since all properties are clusters of conditional powers, there are numerous (even infinite) possible combinations of instances where a particular property could realize or exercise its potential causal powers: "for a property to have a causal potentiality is for it to be such that whatever has it has a certain conditional power"

(Shoemaker 115).

Thus, it becomes apparent that properties have potential or conditional powers at *all* times. It is not necessary for these powers to be explicitly active, nor is it necessary for them *ever* to be active; the fact is that they are there. Therefore, it has been established that properties are *always* causal powers. Whether or not they are active or potential is not the issue, because these powers could become active at any given time, given the right type of property interaction. Furthermore, saying that properties are *always* causal powers is the same as saying properties *just are* causal powers.

As was stated earlier, this is exactly the claim—*that properties just are causal powers*—that was needed to show that Perry's refutation of the zombie argument via an appeal to epiphenomenalism is erroneous. However, before Perry's argument is invalidated, it would be helpful to quickly review the main points of the "causality of properties argument":

- It was determined that all physical things have properties; thus, if one believes that conscious states of mind are equal to the physical states of the brain (as does the physicalist), then it becomes apparent that conscious states of mind have properties.
- Events are comprised of constituent objects, and constituent objects have properties. The characteristics of these properties cause changes and events; hence, properties are the primary factors of the causal relationship.
- Properties *always* have potential power because they are clusters of conditional powers; these powers can become active when the clusters of powers of different properties combine in a way that "activates" the causal powers of one or more of those properties. Thus, properties *just are* causal powers.

Conclusion

Perry's two main conclusions are: A) that the zombie argument is irrelevant to the issue of physicalism versus dualism because it is actually a test for epiphenomenalism; and B) that epiphenomenalism is not an argument for dualism. Both of these claims are based on Perry's assumption that the physicalist epiphenomenalist can accept the logical possibility of a zombie world.

By saying that the zombie argument is a test that determines epiphenomenalism versus efficacism, rather than an argument that supports dualism, Perry claims that the logical possibility of the existence of zombies has nothing to do with the issues pertaining to physicalism and dualism. Since the possible existence of zombie worlds is supposedly an epiphenomenal matter (i.e., one that is determined by what types of causal roles conscious states of mind play), it is logically possible for both physicalists *and* dualists to believe in the existence of zombies. Since according to epiphenomenalism, conscious experiences have absolutely no causal powers, even a physicalist can accept the possibility of zombies, provided he/she is also an epiphenomenalist.

However, this paper has demonstrated that: A) *all* components of the physical world have properties; and B) *all* properties *are* causal powers. Thus, if the physicalist believes that conscious states of mind are the same as the physical states of the brain (which he/she does), then he/she must also acknowledge that these conscious states have causal powers, because it is evident that *all* properties of physical things have causal powers. But, if the physicalist admits this fact, then it becomes *impossible* for him/her *also* to be an epiphenomenalist, because epiphenomenalism states that conscious events are effects but not causes. Furthermore, if it is *impossible* for one to be a physicalist *and* an epiphenomenalist, then it is apparent that epiphenome-

nalism *is not* in fact compatible with physicalism; therefore, the zombie argument *is* an argument that supports dualism.

It seems as if the only way Perry can avoid this conclusion is to boldly deny the claim that properties are causal powers, but the causality of properties is completely consistent with physicalism. In some cases, it may even be construed in such a way as to support physicalism (but this is an entirely different matter). Anyhow, the findings of this paper make it difficult for Perry to reject the causality of properties. If he cannot, then it shows that conscious states of mind have causal powers, and since physicalism takes phenomenal states of mind simply to be physical states of the brain, it seems as if Perry has to accept that one cannot be a physicalist *and* an epiphenomenalist. This non-possibility establishes that epiphenomenalism *is not* consistent with physicalism, as Perry claims; hence, epiphenomenalism *is* a theory that supports dualism.

Thus, this paper has accomplished its initial objective, which was to show that epiphenomenalism *is* in fact an argument that supports dualism by revealing that it is *impossible* for a physicalist *also* to be an epiphenomenalist; this was accomplished by demonstrating that properties *just are* causal powers. It should be noted that this paper is not an argument attempting to establish or support the merits of either dualism or epiphenomenalism; its sole purpose was to show that if the physicalist wants to strengthen his/her position by discrediting the zombie argument, he/she should not appeal to epiphenomenalism to support these claims

Notes

1. David J. Chalmers, *The Conscious Mind*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 11. All further references to this work will be noted in the text solely by the author's name.
2. Note: in this example the particular zombie counterpart being referred to is Chalmers' own, hence the strict use of the descriptive pronoun "he."
3. John Perry. *Knowledge, Possibility, and Consciousness*. (Cambridge, MA:

The MIT Press, 2001). p. 77. All further references to this work will be noted in the text solely by the author's name.

4. *Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*. New York, NY: Portland House, 1989. pp. 1153.
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