

Kirk, Robert, *Mind and Body*, Chesham, UK, Acumen, 2003, pp. vii + 200, US\$75.00 (cloth), US\$22.95 (paper).

This is a concise guidebook to the mind-body problem in Acumen's *Series of Central Problems of Philosophy*. Kirk's writing style is clear and systematic and the book is to be recommended to anyone interested in the mind-body problem.

Chapter 1 is an introduction to the conceptual foundations of the problem. Kirk contends that the problem is divided into three sub-problems: consciousness, intentionality and the relations between physical and psychological explanations. Chapter 2 concerns dualism. Kirk introduces various distinct forms of dualism, such as Cartesian interactionism, occasionalism and epiphenomenalism. Chapter 3 concerns physicalism and covers such essential topics as Smart's identity theory, Kripke's discussion of psycho-physical identities, mental causation, eliminativism, supervenience and so on. One of the most distinctive parts of this book is Chapter 4. Kirk spends the entire chapter on various recent arguments against physicalism; in particular, the knowledge argument and the conceivability argument. His discussion on the conceivability argument is especially thorough and interesting. (Kirk is renowned, by the way, for his 1974 paper, 'Zombies v. Materialists', which contains one of the earliest contemporary formulations of the conceivability argument.) It should be noted that since it is only in the last couple of years that the debate on the conceivability argument has attained maturity, there are few introductory books that cover issues on the argument as thoroughly as this one. Chapter 5 concerns behaviourism. It explains such important notions as disposition, intentionality and the Turing machine. Chapter 6 concerns Functionalism. Kirk spends a large part of this chapter on several challenges to functionalism, such as absent qualia, transposed qualia and the explanatory gap argument. Since similar issues are covered in Chapters 4 and Chapter 8 it might have been better if Kirk had instead discussed in detail various different forms of functionalism, such as analytical functionalism, computational functionalism and so on. Chapter 7 provides a more detailed examination of intentionality. Fodor's language of thought hypothesis and connectionism are the main topics here. Chapter 8 provides a more extensive discussion of consciousness. Kirk considers various attempts to account for consciousness and concludes that there are serious difficulties with them. Other central topics in the philosophy of mind, such as mental content and externalism, are only very briefly introduced in Chapter 9, which represents the conclusion of the book.

Since this is not a comprehensive textbook, it does not cover all the important topics in the philosophy of mind. However, it does provide an excellent overview of the mind-body problem, one of the oldest and the most interesting problems in the field.

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