

Some abstracts to look at

Torin Alter & Yujin Nagasawa (2012). What is Russellian Monism? *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 19 (9-10): 9-10.

Russellian monism offers a distinctive perspective on the relationship between the physical and the phenomenal. For example, on one version of the view, phenomenal properties are the categorical bases of fundamental physical properties, such as mass and charge, which are dispositional. Russellian monism has prominent supporters, such as Bertrand Russell, Grover Maxwell, Michael Lockwood, and David Chalmers. But its strengths and shortcomings are often misunderstood. In this paper we try to eliminate confusions about the view and defend it from criticisms. We present its core and distinguish different versions of it. We then compare these versions with traditional theories, such as physicalism, dualism, and idealism. We also argue that the knowledge argument and the conceivability argument are consistent with Russellian monism and that existing arguments against the view, such as the argument from weirdness, are not decisive. We conclude that Russellian monism is an attractive view that deserves serious consideration.

Jiri Benovsky (2015). Dual–Aspect Monism. *Philosophical Investigations* 38 (4).

In this article, I am interested in dual-aspect monism as a solution to the mind-body problem. This view is not new, but it is somewhat under-represented in the contemporary debate, and I would like to help it make its way. Dual-aspect monism is a parsimonious, elegant and simple view. It avoids problems with “mental causation”. It naturally explains how and why mental states are correlated with physical states while avoiding any mysteries concerning the nature of this relation. It fits well with our ordinary picture of the world, as well as with the scientific picture. It gives its rightful place to the phenomenal, qualitative, subjective character of experience, instead of reducing it or eliminating it. It does not unnecessarily multiply ontological categories. It can come in many versions, and is compatible with other interesting views, such as panpsychism.

Edward Feser (1998). Can Phenomenal Qualities Exist Unperceived? *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 4 (4): 405-14.

Michael Lockwood has in recent years revived and defended a unique approach to the mind/body problem most famously associated with Bertrand Russell. This approach has a number of surprising and counterintuitive features, not the least of which is that it involves the claim that phenomenal qualities can exist independently of any mind, unperceived by any conscious subject. In this paper I first provide a summary of the Russell/Lockwood theory of mind so as to make evident the importance of this claim to it. I then argue that Lockwood has failed to show either that there are such things as unperceived phenomenal qualities, or that it makes sense to suppose that there could be. The importance of the issue lies in the light consideration of it may shed on the concept of a phenomenal quality or quale, in its relevance to the mind/body problem, and in its bearing on the more general metaphysical issue of what are the fundamental constituents of reality.

Amy Kind (2015). Pessimism About Russellian Monism. In Torin Alter & Yujin Nagasawa (eds.), *Consciousness in the Physical World: Perspectives on Russellian Monism*. 401-421.

From the perspective of many philosophers of mind in these early years of the 21st Century, the debate between dualism and physicalism has seemed to have stalled, if not to have come to a complete standstill. There seems to be no way to settle the basic clash of intuitions that underlies it. Recently however, a

growing number of proponents of Russellian monism have suggested that their view promises to show us a new way forward. Insofar as Russellian monism might allow us to break out of the current gridlock, it's no wonder that it's become "hot stuff." To my mind, however, the excitement about Russellian monism is misplaced. Though some version of Russellian monism might well be true, I do not believe that it enables us to break free of the dualism/physicalism divide. As I will argue, once we properly understand what's required to flesh out an adequate monistic story, we will see that we are in an important way right back where we started.

Hedda Hassel Morch (2014). *Panpsychism and Causation: A New Argument and a Solution to the Combination Problem*. Dissertation, Oslo

Panpsychism is the view that every concrete and unified thing has some form of phenomenal consciousness or experience. It is an age-old doctrine, which, to the surprise of many, has recently taken on new life. In philosophy of mind, it has been put forth as a simple and radical solution to the mind-body problem (Chalmers 1996, 2003; Strawson 2006; Nagel 1979, 2012). In metaphysics and philosophy of science, it has been put forth as a solution to the problem of accounting for the intrinsic nature of the physical itself (Strawson 2006, Seager 2006, Adams 2007). In this thesis, I show that panpsychism can also be defended on the basis of an argument from our (arguable) acquaintance with the nature of causation in agency. This argument has made frequent appearances throughout the history of philosophy, with philosophers such as Leibniz, Schopenhauer and James, and I construct and defend an updated version of it. Furthermore, I offer a solution to the combination problem: how can complex (human and animal-type) consciousness result from simple (fundamental particle-type) consciousness? This is generally regarded as the most serious problem facing contemporary panpsychism. I propose that mental combination can be construed as kind causal process culminating in a fusion, and show how this avoids the main difficulties with accounting for mental combination.

Jakob Hohwy (2005). *Explanation and Two Conceptions of the Physical*. *Erkenntnis* 62 (1):71-89.

Any position that promises genuine progress on the mind-body problem deserves attention. Recently, Daniel Stoljar has identified a physicalist version of Russell's notion of neutral monism; he elegantly argues that with this type of physicalism it is possible to disambiguate the notion of physicalism in such a way that the problem is resolved. The further issue then arises of whether we have reason to believe that this type of physicalism is in fact true. Ultimately, one needs to argue for this position by inference to the best explanation, and I show that this new type of physicalism does not hold promise of more explanatory prowess than its relevant rivals, and that, whether it is better than its rivals or not, it is doubtful whether it would furnish us with genuine explanations of the phenomenal at all.

David Papineau (2006). *Comments on Galen Strawson: Realistic Monism: Why Physicalism Entails Panpsychism*. *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 13 (10-11):100-109.

Galen Strawson (2006) thinks it is 'obviously' false that 'the terms of physics can fully capture the nature or essence of experience' (p. 4). He also describes this view as 'crazy' (p. 7). I think that he has been carried away by first impressions. It is certainly true that 'physicSalism', as he dubs this view, is strongly counterintuitive. But at the same time there are compelling arguments in its favour. I think that these arguments are sound and that the contrary intuitions are misbegotten. In the first two sections of my remarks I would like to spend a little time defending physicSalism, or 'straightforward' physicalism, as I shall call it ('S' for 'straightforward', if you like). I realize that the main topic of Strawson's paper is panpsychism rather than his rejection of straightforward physicalism. But the latter is relevant as his arguments for panpsychism depend on his rejection of straightforward physicalism, in ways I shall explain below.