

## On Whether Being Conscious is Intrinsic

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Hawley's first objection (Hawley 1998) is that my own arguments (Merricks 1998) suggest that being conscious is not intrinsic. How? By suggesting that "...the atoms of maimed P form a conscious being because they are suitably isolated." Hawley does not explain the reading of 'because' that would make being conscious not intrinsic. (Relational differences can cause intrinsic differences; putting a flame near a snowball causes it to change shape.) And my arguments are silent on the relation between suitable isolation and consciousness—except for implying that, if the finger-complement exists, then a difference in whether something is conscious is correlated with a difference in isolation. If this correlation is all Hawley means by the 'because', Hawley's first objection is essentially the same as her third; I will respond to it below.

The microphysical difference between P and her atom-complement is piddling (a matter of a single atom) and seemingly irrelevant to consciousness (the atom is in a finger, not the brain). If being conscious (is not intrinsic and) supervenes on the microphysical, then this paltry, irrelevant difference makes all the difference between having and lacking consciousness. This should dismay those, I argued, who think differences in consciousness supervene on relevant microphysical differences (p. 68). Hawley's second objection is that this is not "dismaying", for, she says, "it does not entail that I would not be conscious if I incorporated extra toes, fingers, atoms, and so on." But I never said it did. Her objection does not address the point I was making.

Hawley's third objection is that "the difference in respect of forming a conscious being may be independent of the [microphysical] relational differences [between P and the finger-complement], but the correlation is certainly mysterious, if being conscious is intrinsic". Indeed it is. But this is not just my problem. For—and this builds on the point just made—even if being

conscious is not intrinsic, it's still mysterious why differences in consciousness are correlated with paltry and seemingly irrelevant microphysical differences. We could dissolve these mysteries by denying the existence of the finger- and atom-complements. But this denial won't save MS; it entails that MS is false (p. 64).

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#### **REFERENCES**

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