THE PROBLEM OF DUALISM
IN ACADEMIC ADVISING – A
DEWEYAN CRITIQUE
Part One
- Set stage, define preliminary terms, locate issue at hand within academic advising

Questions

Part Two
- Define mind-body dualism, present Dewey’s critique of dualism in education, apply Dewey’s critique to academic advising

Questions
• Issue: overlooked commitment to dualism in academic advising theory
• Metaphysics = branch of philosophy dealing with conditions for the possibility of other states of affairs

• Aristotle: “first causes” ”first philosophy” “being as such” “beyond natural things”
Punchline

• “Mind over matter” shorthand for dualism

• Dualism pushes theorists towards other positions that contradict commitments made in the field of academic advising
“Across the broad fields of educational theory and research, constructivism has become something akin to a secular religion.” D.C. Phillips

“Constructivism lays the foundation for the current and historical theories and practices [of academic advising.]” Terry Musser
“Virtually all cognitive-structural theories of student development owe their origins to Jean Piaget.” Pascarella & Terenzini
Glasersfeld

• “[Constructivism] pertains to the ways and means the cognizing subject has conceptually evolved in order to fit into the world...[Constructivism] is intended as a theory of knowing not a theory of being.” Glasersfeld
“[Constructivism] pertains to the ways and means the cognizing subject has conceptually evolved in order to fit into the world...[Constructivism] is intended as a theory of knowing not a theory of being.” Glasersfeld
Rene Magritte.
The Human Condition. 1933.
End Part One

• Questions?
• What accounts for knowledge of both mental and physical phenomena?
• The universe is made of two completely different substances
• Humans derive knowledge of both

---

**Dualism**

(Being)  (Knowing)  (Doing)

Mental  Mind
Physical  Body
Dewey

- “Mind over matter”
- Cartesian split

Dualism

(Being) (Knowing) (Doing)

Mental Mind Elevate
Physical Body Diminish
• “It would be impossible to state adequately the evil results which have flowed from this dualism of mind and body, much less to exaggerate them.” Dewey, *Democracy and Education*
Dewey

• Traditional, liberal, academic education
• Fixed, eternal truths

Dualism

(Being)  (Knowing)  (Doing)

Mind  Truth  Receive
Body  Distract
Dewey

- Vocational education
- Machine-like skill

Dualism

(Being) (Knowing) (Doing)

Body Mind Skill Receive Distract
Dewey

- Traditional, liberal, academic education
- Vocational education

Dualism

(Being)       (Knowing)       (Doing)
Mind   Truth   Receive
Body   Skill   Receive

Disempowered students
NACADA Core Values v. strict rationality

• Academic advisers work to strengthen the importance, dignity, potential, and unique nature of each individual within the academic setting.
  • Universalized cognition

• Adviser’s work is guided by their beliefs that students:
  • Hold their own beliefs and opinions
  • Can be successful based on their individual goals and efforts
  • Received, eternal truths
  • Use a variety of techniques and technologies to navigate their world
  • Subjectivized reality (may actually be in alignment)
Punchline Revisited

• Constructivism is metaphysically dualistic
• Dualism pushes academic advising theorists towards other positions that contradict commitments made in the field of academic advising

Dualism

Constructivism

Mind
Body

Truth

Receive
Diminish

Disempowered students

NACADA Core Values
Further Research

• Is constructivism alone?
• How much of the theoretical and philosophical infrastructure in academic advising is open to the charge of harboring dualistic assumptions?
• How much of it is working at cross-purposes with the larger values and commitments of academic advising?
End Part Two

• Questions?