

Consciousness and its Contents

This course will examine several leading theories of consciousness that draw on ongoing developments in psychology and neuroscience. We will begin with the most powerful dualist challenges to reductive accounts of consciousness. We will then consider the higher-order theory, the global workspace view, the attention-to-intermediate representations theory, and neurobiological theories that account for unattended, un-accessed, and un-broadcast forms of consciousness. We will then turn to accounts of the *contents* of consciousness, beginning with visual consciousness, and concluding with discussions of cognitive and sensorimotor consciousness.

Required Texts

Jesse Prinz, *The Conscious Brain: How Attention Engenders Experience*

Susanna Siegel, *The Contents of Visual Experience*

- All other readings available in Course Reader or class website

Course Schedule and Reading List

Week 1 Introduction

Francis Crick and Christof Koch, "Towards a neurobiological theory of consciousness"

Daniel Dennett, "Are We Explaining Consciousness Yet?"

Weeks 2-3 Challenges to Reduction

David Chalmers, *The Conscious Mind*, Ch.1, "Two Concepts of Mind;" Ch.3, "The Irreducibility of Consciousness"

Katalin Balog, "In Defense of the Phenomenal Concept Strategy"

Week 4 Higher-Order Theories

David Rosenthal, "A theory of consciousness"

Peter Carruthers, "Higher-Order Theories of Consciousness," §3-5

Week 5 Global Workspace

Stanislas Dehaene et al, "Conscious, preconscious, and subliminal processing: A testable taxonomy"

Weeks 6-7 Consciousness as Attention

Jesse Prinz, *The Conscious Brain*, Chs.1-4, 8, 10

Liam Norman et al, "Object-based attention without awareness"

Ned Block, "The Grain of Vision and the Grain of Attention"

Weeks 8-9 Phenomenal Consciousness

Ned Block, "Comparing the Major Theories of Consciousness"

Block, "Consciousness, accessibility, and the mesh between psychology and neuroscience" and Commentary

Block, "Perceptual consciousness overflows cognitive access"

Weeks 10-11 Contents of Consciousness: Visual Experience

Susanna Siegel, *The Contents of Visual Experience*, Chs.1-3

John Campbell, "Susanna Siegel's the Contents of Visual Experience"

Siegel, Chs.6-8

Week 12 Contents of Consciousness: Cognitive Experience

Siegel, Ch.4 “Kinds”

Prinz, Ch.5, “Which States Can Be Conscious? Cognitive Qualia Reduced”

Weeks 13-14 Contents of Consciousness: Sensorimotor Experience

David Milner and Mel Goodale, précis of *The Visual Brain in Action*

Milner and Goodale, “Two Visual Systems Reviewed”

Susan Hurley, *Consciousness in Action*, Intro, Ch.4, “Nonconceptual Self-Consciousness: Perspective, Access, and Agency”; Ch. 5, “Unity, Neuropsychology, and Action”

Prinz, Ch.6, “Why Are We Conscious? Action without Enaction”

Alva Noë, “Vision without Representation”