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A few years ago I was at a conference at which a bright young Harvard neurophysiologist referred to the study of consciousness as a 'CLM'—a career-limiting move. Today however I fear that the way most neuroscientists approach the matter is itself a CLM—a consciousness-limiting move. The term consciousness has multiple rich meanings. Social and political sciences deal with such concepts as class, race, and gender consciousness. Philosophers may ponder the etymological relationship between consciousness and conscience. Psychoanalysts will contrast consciousness and 'the unconscious', by which they definitely do not mean what an anaesthetist or neurologist might imply. All these rich, social, historical, and personal developmental meanings are lost in the discourse of most neuroscientists. For them, being conscious is merely the antithesis of being asleep or unconscious in the anaesthetist's sense. Thus consciousness reduces to mere 'awareness' and the discussion then focuses on how the multitude of sense data impinging on our brains at any moment becomes ordered and refined into that most relevant for our immediate needs. Francis Crick in his book *The Astonishing Hypothesis* puts this most clearly, following with a further reductionist move: on the basis that more is known about the neurobiology of the visual system than that of any other sensory process, he proposes to exploit the neural mechanisms of perception as a model system, tractable to experiment (and ends the book with an aside locating free will in the anterior cingulate!).

The problem with such ploys is that they empty consciousness out of most of what the computational neuroscientists would doubtless dismiss as its 'folk meanings'. Yet these folk meanings are precisely the important ones if we are concerned with the relevance of neuroscience to an understanding of the human condition. We are not helped either by those philosophers of mind who worry over *qualia, and how the objective becomes subjective.

consciousness and causality

I have no problem with a two-aspect theory, an ontological unity but epistemological diversity in which brain language and mind language are no more primary and secondary than are English and Italian in referring to the brown furry creature sitting on my desk as I write as 'cat' and 'gatto's. The suggestion that this is the 'hard problem' in Chalmers's sense is simply a category confusion. This does not make me a New Mysterian in the McGinn sense either. It is simply to insist that we be clearer about the nature of the phenomenon or process that we regard as ontologically unitary.

By which I mean that I would argue that (a) consciousness is not a thing but a process, and that (b) as a process it is essentially social, being constituted in the relationship between a person and his or her social and physical milieu.

This relationship is itself of course shaped by evolution, development, and history. Consciousness then is not simply 'in the brain'. At the very least it is embedded within the brain/body system, being as we know profoundly affected by, for instance, hormonal and immunological status. But far more than that, consciousness is expressible only as a relationship and is thus not physically located within an individual, and certainly not in a specific brain region. The more modest task of neuroscience then becomes not to explain, or worse, explain away, consciousness, nor to translate brain processes into qualia, but rather to look at those aspects of a person's evolved and developed neurobiology which enable them to have conscious experiences in all the multiple rich meanings of the term.
