

Status of our investigation of brain and consciousness so far (18/01/2020) - 19/01/2020

As part of our consciousness's investigation in Philosophy of Mind, we have written 6 little posts in this blog, 4 more related to philosophy and 2 bringing scientific topics. So, let's take an overview of them, starting by science and following by philosophy.

1. **Unconscious Cerebellum (Human Brain Project)**

This post explores the actual stage of HBP researches saying that they have a lot of information, data and good people on the matters of consciousness, neurons, skull, etc., that need to be put together. So, our time is like the time before Darwin joined the things in the theory of evolution meaning that we are a few steps of great discoveries.

<<https://www.investigatingtheworld.com/2018/03/unconscious-cerebellumi.html>>

2. **Technology to study the brain (TED: John Borghi and Elizabeth Waters)**

Here we have the three main ways scientists are investigating a live brain safely today:

1. Electroencephalography (EGG) measures electrical waves that happen when the brain cells communicate with each other.
2. Functional magnetic resonant images (fMRI) measures how quickly oxygen is consumed by brain cells showing which regions are involved during a cognitive or behavior activity.
3. Positron emission tomography (PET) allows the observation of some drugs behavior acting in our brain.

<<https://www.investigatingtheworld.com/2018/04/tech-to-study-braini.html>>

3. **Does the submarine swim? (Chomsky)**

Chomsky quoted here that the mind is just an organized matter, that is, our brain is a physical system. About unconscious actions, he argued that the task

of investigating our preconscious decision is a problem that is harder than the investigation of the consciousness itself. On the other hands, when analyzing AI, for him asking if machines think is the same as asking if submarines can swim. It is a logical question and not very relevant.

<<https://www.investigatingtheworld.com/2018/03/does-submarine-swim.html>>

****4. ****Are you conscious? (David Chalmers)****

For Chalmers, the consciousness is the thing we better known directly. Paraphrasing Descartes he says “I am conscious therefore I am” and the other questions go to a second plan. Some of his famous arguments are:

- Zombies: they are like human but are not conscious;
- Qualias: our quality of experience;
- Easy problem / hard problem: we can know everything about the brain (easy, easy?). However, consciousness is more that physical processes in the brain and this is really hard to know.

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<<https://www.investigatingtheworld.com/2018/08/are-you-conscious.html>>

****5. ****Uniqueness of consciousness (John Searle)****

John Searle has a concept of biological naturalism (it refutes both dualism and materialism) where mind, as a biological phenomenon, is part of the nature. One important point of this concept is that we don't say that consciousness is not physical, instead we say it is physical with a ontological part.

<<https://www.investigatingtheworld.com/2018/09/uniqueness-of-consciousnessi.html>>

****6. ****The brain is only a part of the consciousness (Alva Noë)****

Noë understands that the consciousness does not reside entirely inside of us and there is a complex system behind this. For him, consciousness extends beyond our craniums in a real sense and a science of consciousness should consider the brain in dynamic involvement with the world. (This remembers me

Merleau-Ponty and his concept of a consciousness that is extended along our whole body).

<<https://www.investigatingtheworld.com/2019/01/the-brain-is-only-part-of-consciousness.html>>

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