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'When we understand consciousness...consciousness will be different' Daniel Dennett

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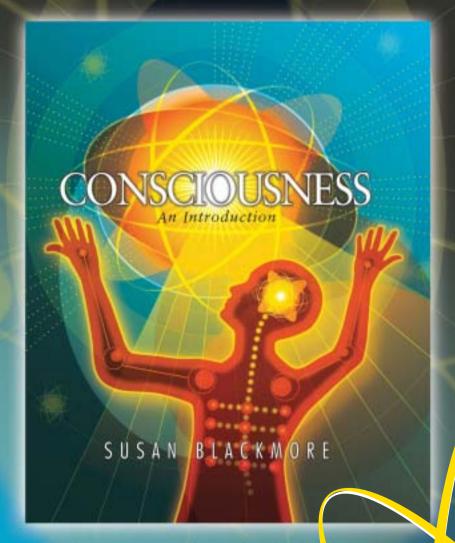
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"Warning - studying consciousness will change your life" SUSAN BLACKMORE

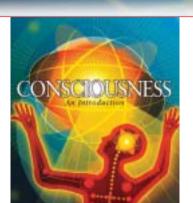


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CONSCIOUSNESS

An Introduction SUSAN BLACKMORE

Is there a theory that explains the essence of consciousness? Or is consciousness itself just an illusion?

The 'last great mystery of science', consciousness is a topic that was banned from serious research for most of the last century, but is now an area of increasing popular interest, as well as a rapidly expanding area of study for students of psychology, philosophy and neuroscience.

This ground-breaking new textbook by bestselling author Susan Blackmore is the first of its kind to bring together all the major theories of All topics are supported not only by self-assessconsciousness studies, from those based on neuroscience to those based on quantum theory or Eastern philosophy, in a format specifically designed to support structured learning.



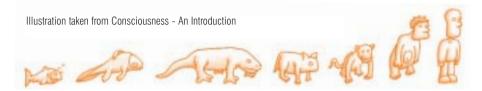
The book examines topics such as how subjective experiences arise from objective brain processes, the basic neuroscience of consciousness, altered states of consciousness, out of body and near death experiences, and drugs, dreams and meditation. It also explores the nature of self, the possibility of artificial consciousness in robots, and the question of whether animals are conscious.

ment questions and selected further reading suggestions at the end of each chapter but by practical exercises that help bring the subject to life, and could radically transform each reader's understanding of their own consciousness.



The great chain of being v tree of life.

In the popular idea of a "great chain of being", evolution proceeds through a line of ever improving creatures to culminate in the most perfect and intelligent of them all - man. The reality is more like a branching tree, or a great bush, in which humans are on one twig of the primate branch. On this view, all the creatures alive today are successfully adapted to their niche, and none is necessarily "more evolved" than the rest.



Approach...

Consciousness covers all the major approaches in consciousness studies, including psychology, philosophy, artificial intelligence, cognitive science, neuroscience, first-person methods and spiritual approaches. Overall the emphasis is on a science of consciousness based on empirical findings and testable theories.

Organisation...

Consciousness is divided into nine relatively independent sections containing three chapters each – each section may be used as the topic of a lecture or several lectures, or may be read independently as an overview of the area. However all of them depend on the ideas outlined in Section One, on the nature of the problem. This adaptable and flexible approach provides an ideal resource for structured learning.

Structured learning...

Each chapter contains a core text, with profiles of selected authors, explanations of key concepts, exercises to do and questions to test your understanding. There are also suggestions for exercises and discussions that can be done in groups. At the end of each chapter is a list of suggested readings ideal for seminars and discussions.

"I am especially impressed with the additional material added to the end of each chapter" Pete Mandik Department of Philosophy, William Paterson University of New Jersey

About Susan Blackmore

After gaining one of the first PhDs in parapsychology in Britain, Sue Blackmore became increasingly sceptical of all paranormal claims and eventually abandoned the subject.

For 10 years she was a lecturer in psychology at the University of the West of England, Bristol, and taught consciousness courses both there and at the University of Bristol. She has written an autobiography, as well as books on out-of-body and near death experiences, and her controversial bestseller The Meme Machine (OUP, 1999) has been translated into ten languages.