

“UNCC”

Ask me what that is.

The hard problem and a ^{very probable} possible solution

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Remember - Not NCC

1 Annotated definition of Consciousness:

A **process** that uses **memory** to **interpret** qualitative **distinctions among sensations** for their **meaning**, and store that meaning back into memory to guide ongoing or future system **behavior**.

A This process involves iterative feedback from memory and the creation of new memory. If no memory used, formed or changed, then the system is asleep, entranced, or otherwise zombied out.

Interpretation involves action and/or access to expectations that can be used to modulate ongoing behavior or prepare for future action. Its about what to expect or do next. Brains use associative (synaptic) memory to accomplish this.

A universe that was one color would be invisible. It is sensory contrasts that inform us. So qualia are only identifiable in contrast to other qualia. Sensations are therefore information theoretic in the sense of 'differences that make a difference.'

What something means is all the things that follow from it for this particular system. These include proper actions, expectations (including imagery), thoughts, emotions, etc. Complex systems derive much more meaning from their sensations, so much so, that they can be conflicting and produce stressful indecision. This view is ultra-semiotic.

Memory is required to have ongoing experience that spans time. Without it, the system would be incapable of recognizing, or comparing, or interpreting meaning. It could have no expectations. Memory here *is* system state. Without it, there is no system.

Behavior is whatever the system does. If it does it without any memory trace, it is on autopilot. If new memory is formed (state is changed), that lasts for some duration, then the behavior is done with a certain level of consciousness.

The result is a sort of vivid theory of what our sensations mean by which we perceive and understand the hypothetical world we sense.

1 is a good characterization of what consciousness is for animals with brains. It resonates with Cognitive Science. However, with removal of a couple common sense assumptions, we will see that it leads to a much broader panpsychist conception of conscious experience.

2 Everything we can know 'supervenes' on this process — Qualia are not properties of things or brains. Things in the "real world" are hypothetical interpretations of qualia we sense.

In most cultures it is assumed that simple systems that have no brains have no sensations and could have no experience because they are simply mechanisms.¹ But as modern neuroscience reveals, our brain is also made of simple 'mechanisms.' Yet it experiences. Reconsidering this assumption, what if *everything* that happens is accompanied by a sensation. Complex brain systems have means to recall past sensations and their interpretations. Simple systems also use state (memory) to react, and they change state or 'learn.' In our brains there are many state changes we are never aware of going on in our cells. Perhaps the cells are sensing and interpreting their respective environment at that lower level of organization, and so on right on down to the elements of the standard model.

3 If we allow that all systems can have sensations as they interact, then consciousness is universal.

REFERENCES: Deiss, S., "Universal correlates of consciousness," Chapter 7 in *Mind that Abides: Panpsychism in the new millennium*, David Skrbina, Ed., John Benjamins Publishing Co., Philadelphia, 2009. Deiss, S., "The Universal Correlates of Consciousness (an attempted deconstruction of experience)," online at http://www.appliedneuro.com/UNCC_Submission_Draft.pdf (and other postings there)

¹ As an aside note that our concept of 'mechanism' is based on an outmoded view of laws of nature that govern from some Platonic realm. If the universe self organizes, a different way of looking at systems results allowing for sensation everywhere instead of dead senseless mechanisms.