

Pinker, stephen. the mystery of consciousness assignment

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This article begins with an example of a woman who suffered brain trauma after a car crash and now lives in a vegetative state (she is unable to respond to visual, physical, or auditory stimuli). Belgian and British scientists conducted an experiment on her through the use of an MR. that showed blood flow to parts of the brain that still remained active. After speaking to her and asking her to imagine various situations, a discovery was made showing that deferent regions of the brain associated with these situations “ lit up. This proved that she still had some ambulance of a conscious remaining; however hidden It may appear to the naked eye. This then transitioned into one of the running themes throughout the article: the “ Easy and “ Hard” problems. The Easy Problem is defined as the difference between conscious and unconscious thoughts. Scientists hope to eventually differentiate between conscious and unconscious mechanisms, identify which regions of the brain are responsible for them, and why these two separate elements evolved In the first place.

The Hard Problem is slightly more complicated and researchers in this field eave many dissimilar ideas about it, like whether or not it is a problem at all. It is defined as being the study of how and why neural “ circuitry and processes cause consciousness. Consciousness can also be altered through physical stimulation, such as electronic shock during surgery that can cause completely realistic hallucinations. This also includes the use of narcotics to change the way we perceive the world around us as well as influence our thoughts and feelings.

Taking a look at the Easy Problem again, the question of why consciousness exists Is approached. One of the reasons given is so that our brains do not <https://assignbuster.com/pinker-stephen-the-mystery-of-consciousness-assignment/>

become overloaded with information. If we were consciously responsible for every little muscle twitch or heartbeat, our conscious mind could not handle it, unlike our unconscious. Neuroscience know that waves between the thalamus and the cortex signal various type of consciousness. For instance, large and slow waves indicate that the person is either sleeping (without dreaming), in a coma, or under anesthesia.

Smaller and faster waves mean that the person is awake and aware of his/her surroundings. This fact falls as a facet under the Easy Problem; the differing neural waves between conscious and unconscious thought. To answer the Hard Problem, one must think, how do these waves cause consciousness? The most widely accepted opinion of the Hard Problem among neuroscience today is that for now it is unable to be answered. However, In the future after further research Is conducted on the Easy Problem, some light may be shed on It.

Still others disagree and say that research done on the Easy dilemma will not lead at all to the solution to the Hard one. The author's belief is that with more research into the neuroscience and biology of human consciousness comes a stronger platform for morality rather than the unproven and unfounded belief In an immortal soul. In September of 2007, Swedish scientists discovered a way to turn near death experiences on and off by stimulating the part of the brain where both sensations in the body and visual components case which ended in 2005 changed the way scientists approached the field of consciousness.

The questions that remain consist of the Hard Problem (if it is even a robber), the Easy Problem, and why consciousness exists at all. His musings are what I have believed all my life and are completely founded in my opinion. I grew up with a mom who has a Ph. D in Psychology so his findings hit right at home. Steven Pinker is an authority on such areas as experimental psychology, visual cognition (perception), and psycholinguistics (factors that enable humans to produce speech). He has written six books, received the American Humanist Association's Humanist of the Year award, and is the Harvard College Johnston Professor of Physiology.