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Consciousness from a Broad Perspective: A Philosophical and Interdisciplinary Introduction (Studies in Neuroscience, Consciousness and Spirituality)

Anders Hedman

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This volume offers an introduction to consciousness research in philosophy, psychology and neuroscience, from a philosophical perspective and with an emphasis on the history of ideas and core concepts. It starts out by examining consciousness as a modern mystery. It then introduces the philosophy of mind and the mind-body problem, and continues with exploring psychological, philosophical and neuroscientific approaches to mind and consciousness. It then presents a discussion of mysterianist views of consciousness in response to what can seem like insurmountable scientific challenges to the problem of consciousness. As a response to mysterianist views, the next chapters examine radical approaches to rethinking the problem of consciousness, including externalist approaches. The final two chapters present the author's own views of the problem of consciousness.

Consciousness remains a mystery for contemporary science. A mystery that raises many questions. Why is it still a mystery? Are we humans not intelligent enough to solve the riddle of consciousness? If we can solve it, then what would it take? What sort of research would we need to be doing? In addition, the mystery of consciousness prompts the larger question of how well the cognitive sciences have actually advanced our understanding of ourselves as human beings. After all, consciousness is not just a minor part of who we are. Without consciousness, we would not be human beings at all. We would be zombies. The aim of this book is to help the reader grasp the major ideas in the field of consciousness research, as well as, or better than their originators. As part of this aim it is hoped that the reader might also come to contribute to the ongoing discussion about consciousness and its place in nature.

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