

## *Explorations of available philosophical ideas using modern observations*

The work of Cleeremans (1999) and Haynes (2008) stress the importance of the so called NCCs or "Neural Correlates of Consciousness" in studying mental activity. Haynes (2008) provides physical results which some would say raise questions about free will.

In fact Cleeremans (1999) goes so far as to say specifically "philosophy of science may help and provide a metatheoretical framework for the current interdisciplinary project.... Indeed, the only assumption such an approach requires is that of a lawful covariance between cerebral and phenomenal processes"

This assumption in itself seems to presuppose a sound superstructure of theoretical physics, as the phenomenal processes are traditionally described in terms of current physics.

I remark in a current paper (Yates, 2009a) "free will philosophers either ignore Haynes's work, or deny free will already, or are seeking a work round. Fortunately I do not seem to need a work round as Haynes's work seems to provide simply more evidence that the McTaggart B series is insufficient and we need the A series as well." So, I am satisfied with Haynes's (2008) results and (generally speaking and contrary argumentation aside) with free will also.

In my view, philosophy can provide additional questioning which may be able to add further parameters to my mathematical dynamical systems model (which incorporates both the McTaggart A and B series) as well as the current fMRI results and so on whose value must be subsumed to philosophical considerations. This model is discussed in Yates (2008).

I believe my present model may ultimately solve many problems relevant to philosophy, in subjects like time and freewill. And I think it is already doing so. So the right philosophical queries to subjects and many other philosophical matters are of great importance to me.

I have been well aware of the work of Kornhuber, Libet etc., more or less since it was published, as founder and editor of the "International Journal of Theoretical Physics" <sup>(1)</sup>, for which I personally attracted many years ago the usual array of specialists and Nobel prizewinners. People like David Bohm, Roger Penrose, George Gamow and Louis de Broglie were on my editorial board. The journal is referred to occasionally in my websites, in particular <http://ttjohn.blogspot.com/> . I needed to know of the Libet, Kornhuber etc. work for my fundamental studies.

Basically current physics is unfortunately completely quite inadequate. It was accurate enough for purpose in the days of Newton and Einstein but today we live in a different world. For example, it is only last week (Cubrovic, Zaanen, and Schalm) that the current very basic B-series string theory in physics may have been given a firmer foothold. A-series is mainly overlooked in practice.

Haynes's (2008) work obviously moves the work of Kornhuber, Libet, etc. forward another step. And to omit a proper consideration of the A series at this point is rather like trying to do timekeeping at relativistic speeds without special relativity theory. Timekeeping at speeds much slower than relativistic speeds clearly works well enough for its own purposes, but special relativity is obviously needed for the higher speeds. In the case of studies involving mental processes at the level of abstraction of say freewill or (if postulated) qualia, the A series, not just

the B series, is needed.

I am hoping for some help in this regard. I am really trying to get some important new work done and I wonder how best to get this across to the philosophical community, and also to get more feedback for my own work.

*Simple exposition of what we have done so far: The brain is treated not in a totally simplistic way as a wired up and complex computer or a bunch of neurons, but like a mind battling between objectives. For the moment 'conscious' mind is taken as 'Juliet' and 'unconscious' mind as 'Romeo'. Using Gottman's mathematical theory of marriage guidance counselling and attractor theory after considerations like those of Winfree and Strogatz, equations arise, as given in Yates (2008) and on the website. Further references are in Yates (2008, 2009) and on the website.*

*More complex brain models are of course possible and are welcome additions to any discussion. Primarily, just as marriage counselling requires actual discussions as well as measurements, the present approach requires experimental philosophy as well as fMRI readings.*

Already we (Yates, 2008) have discovered the Reverse Stickgold Effect, which seems to mean that we may dream about what we are going to do, as well as what we have done. In a way this sounds obvious, but the details are not so obvious as sometimes people seem to have no advance idea as to what they will do. More and more this may be coming into phase with current physics experiments such as the Haynes work (which tends to verify/extend Libet), and philosophy owes it to all not to allow scientists to throw out the ideas like free will without thinking it through, as they tend to be prone to do.

We had posters at three consciousness conferences recently, in Budapest, Salzburg and Tuscon but putting across useful work at such places is not easy. My website <http://ttjohn.blogspot.com/> contains many of my current thoughts.

### References

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Yates J. (2008), "Category theory applied to a radically new but logically essential description of time and space", <http://cogprints.org/6176/>

Yates J., (2009), "A study of attempts at precognition, particularly in dreams, using some of the methods of experimental philosophy", <http://philpapers.org/archive/YATASO.1.pdf>

Yates J., (2009a), "Do Intuitions about Reference Really Vary across Cultures?", on my website <http://ttjohn.blogspot.com/> at <http://ttjohn.blogspot.com/2009/06/do-intuitions-about-reference->

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<sup>1</sup> The journal (initially distributed by Plenum) which I ran for many years is now probably hived off to Elsevier or somewhere - to get the gist of how such things happen read Baez (2007), and of course Paul Dirac warned me about how such a thing can happen.

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