

The Unreliability of Naive Introspection

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Abstract

We are prone to gross error, even in favorable circumstances of extended reflection, about our own ongoing conscious experience, our current phenomenology. Even in this apparently privileged domain, our self-knowledge is faulty and untrustworthy. Examples highlighted in this paper include: emotional experience, peripheral vision, and the phenomenology of thought. Philosophical foundationalism supposing that we infer an external world from secure knowledge of our own consciousness is almost exactly backward.

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Additional Information: This paper will be abbreviated and revised with a philosophy of science audience in mind, for the purposes of PSA06