The Churchlands on the Supposed Irreducibility of Consciousness

**General Points**
- **Beware the Intentional Fallacy**: Just because there are two different—and seemingly incompatible—descriptions, this does not imply the presence of two distinct objects.
- **Beware Inconceivability Arguments and “Show-Stopping Challenges”**: The relevant information may be all around you, but you lack a conceptual framework within which to recognize and exploit it.
- **Beware Arguments from Ignorance**: The relevant information may be all around you, but you lack a conceptual framework within which to recognize and exploit it.
- **Don’t be hornswoggled!**: Churchland offers an independently motivated account of intertheoretic reduction which shows that derivability is too strong a requirement. What is required is derivability, within the reducing theory of some set of claims sufficiently isomorphic to the reduced theory.

**Specific Arguments**
- **Leibniz’s mite-sized observer of the brain, surely will not be able to see thoughts and emotions, will not see Mind**: Leibniz, by assuming that failure to recognize a phenomena implies the absence of the phenomena, is begging the question.
- **Nagel’s Bat—an epistemological asymmetry: subjective first-person, vs. objective third-person**: It’s not a difference in what is known, it’s a difference in how it’s known. It is just a different way of knowing (autoconnected vs. heteroconnected), representing, the same states of the world.
- **Leibniz’s mite-sized observer of the brain, surely will not be able to see thoughts and emotions, will not see Mind**: Leibniz, by assuming that failure to recognize a phenomena implies the absence of the phenomena, is begging the question.
- **Searle on the immediacy and incorrigibility of one’s access to one’s own mental states**: We often misidentify our fears, desires, etc. We can—through, distraction, expectation, and duration effects—misapprehend our own sensations. We could have a superficial conception of the essential character of our mental states to begin with.
- **Searle is simply rediscovering our folk theory of mind, not realizing the very real possibility that that folk theory lacks the conceptual resources needed to develop a deeper, better conception of mind and consciousness**: Searle is simply rediscovering our folk theory of mind, not realizing the very real possibility that that folk theory lacks the conceptual resources needed to develop a deeper, better conception of mind and consciousness.

**E.g., Ptolemy, Comte, vitalism**
- **Don’t Make the Betty Crocker mistake! Persisting in a familiar but misleading explanation or conception, because it is familiar.**

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Paul A. Gregory