

## Supplementary material for:

A brain's self-identification as "Materialist" or "Non-Materialist" (dualist, panpsychist, idealist etc) as an unwitting indication of its deep structure/wiring category and of the absence or presence of an associated non-material awareness - rather than merely as a statement of a philosophical stance, so that both [M & non-M] are correct - about themselves.

A survey associated with this paper will identify relevant candidates of both types for a brain-experiment

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Alternate titles for the paper<sup>1</sup>

**TOC:** Supplementary material for each section (deleted from the article due to word-count and other considerations)

- **A:** the central proposition:
- **B:** The source of the frustration experienced in, and the futility of, discussions between materialists and non-materialists:
- **C:** The Survey
- **D:** Neutrality and Reciprocity
- **E:** Hoped-for effects of an acceptance of the paper's proposition
- **F:** AI: Can AI only produce materialists? Ethical/legal implications.
- **Appendix: Sleep Paralysis** (The illusion of 'consciousness' proposed by non-materialists - or the "level-confusion" underlying it - as arising from a sense of self-presence analogous to what is experienced during sleep paralysis, and

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<sup>1</sup> \*Does brain structure/wiring determine whether one is a materialist or non-materialist?

\* Are Materialist Mindless or are Dualists Delusional? Perhaps brain-structure is responsible, and experiment can help make the determination;

\* Can experiments on brains detect aspects of structure or wiring which determine whether it is Mindless and therefore Materialist, or Delusional and therefore Dualist?

Or: Can brain experiments determine whether (it is) Materialists (who) are Mindless or Dualists (who) are Delusional?;

\* Materialists are from Mindlessia and Dualists are from Delusia (and never the twain should discuss).

proposed experiments to identify its biological source in the brain.): moved to [its own document](#).

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## A: The Central Proposition

What is being proposed here is that there is some "deepest level of perception of 'reality'" and that this differs among people, and that it is correlated to the difference between brains which would be categorized as 'materialist/naturalist/physicalist' or as 'non-materialist'. As a result, the interminable arguments between the two groups are futile and misplaced, and neither side is physically cognitively capable of understanding the viewpoint of the other side. However, in this case, the result is not just an esthetic difference or even differences in values but different conceptions of our reality, different answers to the question "what is the most fundamental aspect of our reality", or even different judgments as to whether that question even has meaning.

And further, it is proposed here that the non-materialists are correct, and that perhaps they possess a type of brain-wiring or special brain-organ which enables them to experience a level of reality inaccessible to materialists..

### **Summary of Research questions, partly to be determined via experiment**

- \* Do materialists experience qualia & phenomenal consciousness as do non-materialists?
- \* Can it be that the difference in their philosophical viewpoints is due to a difference in their type of experience?
- \* Is there a difference of brain wiring or structure responsible for (or at least strongly correlated to) this difference in experience? If so is it genetic or developmental?
- \* Should we refer to materialists and idealist not as philosophically different but biologically different? (Of course perhaps there are more than two types, or hybrids, and degrees of one or the other.)
- \* Is there perhaps a correlation between this biological difference and the (newly-discovered) variety in lines of human ancestry?

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## B:

### **Mind as software, or as a quantum phenomenon**

When sevex contemplates software, or quantum physics, or 'strange loops' or Turing's theorem and Godelian logic etc there can arise the feeling that the level of abstraction and the multiplicity of levels involved are reminiscent of the characteristics of sevex itself. However, *the source of the feeling is in sevex itself*, as opposed to if a material entity were processing information and developing insight into the subject.

The latter might agree that there is a very high level of abstraction in quantum physics, logic, software vs hardware etc, and that it is similar to the way the brain itself operates etc, but they are not at all even aware of the existence of sevox nor what it even means and they are certainly not contemplating these concepts or phenomena via sevox, and so they cannot possibly be referring to the same notion as the non-materialist.

And so the non-materialist in the discussion feels that on the one hand the materialist is correct in saying "mind is the software of the brain" but also intuitively knows there is something profoundly missing in this, and eventually finds that what is missing cannot be communicated to the materialist.

Summary: Mind is not software; rather, a mind contemplating software feels about it a certain way, and may compare the mind to being "the software of the brain as hardware", but that is not to say software is like mind, instead it is legitimately 'like mind' only when it is a contemplation in a mind but without mind it would not at all be like it.

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**Disambiguating "self-awareness":** Clearly one can construct an AI-equipped moving device ('robot/machine') equipped with the following as separate elements of its system: i. a map of its structure, ii. a diagnostic of its operations, iii. a mechanism to detect prospective or past collisions, including their magnitude and location on its surface, iv. feedback between the three previous elements so that it can learn from experience that collisions may cause damage to some part of its structure which impairs its function etc, v. a 'curiosity' with which is programmed. With all these in place, if it encounters a mirror then even without intending to survey itself it will eventually learn that the visual input matches the collision-awareness map it has of itself and it will learn how to move to see different parts of its surface and will then due to the 'curiosity' circuit be interested in visually investigating parts to which it has no direct visual access.

What this means is that this type of 'self-awareness' is completely physically possible and involves nothing that is not 'material', and ***therefore we can conclude with certainty that it is NOT what non-materialists mean by "self-awareness" since they state unequivocally that there is no known method of constructing what they term consciousness or awareness or self awareness and no known method for detecting its existence other than 'internally', ie by an awareness which knows itself***

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As a result, discussions of 'consciousness' between elmat and sevox are often pointless.

nor admit that they lack consciousness, since they think consciousness is referring to some property or ability which they DO have, for example the ability to self-report.

And the sevox incorrectly imagines the elmat is sevox, and tries to understand what they are saying within that context.

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Imagine if a malfunctioning color-machine as described above has evolved its AI level and can operate at different 'levels', where reporting about itself involves two levels and so on, and if the machine is confused and does not recognize this or does not recognize that its self-descriptions are just as ordinary as its descriptions of other machines, it may create or be suffering from level-confusion. However this is NOT what sevox mean by self-awareness, or by consciousness, sevox are NOT like that

malfunctioning color-machine. However there is no way for elmat to comprehend all this since they lack sevox.

### **TOPICS: 'epiphenomenon' and 'level-confusion'.**

Analogously regarding consciousness. For example there may be an academic elmat who does not experience anything as sevox do, and who may be an expert in cognitive science who feels they understand brains better than others do, see therefore sees this issue more clearly, and can therefore clarify why sevox conceptions are an illusion and why the consciousness they speak of doesn't exist, and prove that it is an 'epiphenomenon' or is 'level-confusion'. They would be right about a malfunctioning color-machine as described above which claims it can perceive colors. Imagine the machine has evolved its AI level and can operate at different 'levels', where reporting about itself involves two levels and so on, and if the machine is confused and does not recognize this or does not recognize that its self-descriptions are just as ordinary as its descriptions of other machines, it may create or be suffering from level-confusion. However this is NOT what sevox mean by self-awareness, or by consciousness, sevox are NOT like that malfunctioning color-machine. However there is no way for elmat to comprehend all this since they lack sevox.

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For example, when elmat speak of consciousness as an 'epiphenomenon', the contention is that since they do not possess sevox-consciousness and so are not capable of understanding what sevox mean by it, they are referring not to what sevox call consciousness but to something else; in fact perhaps if one could clarify what it was that they are referring to, sevox might even agree that it is indeed an epiphenomenon. Similarly regarding claims about 'level-confusion'.

Even when materialists state that "consciousness is an epiphenomenon", they are not agreeing sevox exists but just arguing that it is insignificant, but rather their statement does not actually refer to sevox since they do not understand what it is. Instead, what they call 'consciousness' is not what sevox mean by it, and indeed it may well be that when they say "consciousness exists but is an epiphenomenon" they are referring to what sevox also would perhaps agree is an epiphenomenon. Or perhaps the elmat is referring to processes in their own brains which sevox do not have but would agree are indeed 'epiphenomena', since it is not sevox-conscious, but rather is something which sevox agree is neither mysterious nor sui generis etc.

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**An aspect of what this paper hopes to achieve:** Materialist attitudes have placed non-materialist scientists on the defensive by stating that since qualia and sevox are not only not provable but are 'illusory' they certainly don't belong in physics. In addition they will state that whatever it is, it is certainly not fundamental, and is at best an 'epiphenomena', however the term 'epiphenomenon' is ambiguous, and does not actually signify a partial admission or willingness to compromise on the part of materialists, since almost certainly this term does not connote the same to both sides, since presumably materialists mean by this something material, whereas to non-materialists this means they are totally missing the point of the nature of sevox.

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Panpsychism is perhaps actually based on the assumption that all humans are (sevox-)conscious, where the assumption is probably based on the need to have all humans be conscious despite the non-conscious nature of their evolutionary predecessors, and so panpsychism is an elegant solution of the mind-brain problem, or an evasion of it. However if as proposed here not all humans are

conscious, and sevox is NOT an inevitable feature of sophisticated brains, then there may be no need for the assumption of panpsychism.

It would be imprudent to simply assume animals are or are not conscious. A minimalistic assumption is that consciousness is not all-present or automatic, nor arises for all sophisticated interactions, but is dependent on something else, which might become apparent in an examination of the difference between the brains of elmts and sevox

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### **Identifying False Assumptions:**

#### **Would there be significance to agreement by both types of brain that solipsism is non-disprovable?**

The brain-in-a-vat scenario and solipsism are considered as indicating that we cannot know for a fact that there really is an external universe as we sense it to be, or even indeed whether there is actually any external universe at all.

Although the general assumption seems to be implicitly made that all agree on these topics, it may be that there is a divide that has not been identified. For example, can it be that this notion of solipsism/brain-in-a-vat is only felt to be fully true by those with one of the two types of brain? Would a brain with associated sevox and a materialist brain answer questions about this topic in the same way, or is there perhaps some hidden dependence on one's brain/ontological type? To identify a hidden assumption on this matter may require comparing the responses of both types.

If there is a difference in the way the two brain-types respond, what does this say about the universe, and what does it tell us about these brain types?

Is it significant that there is no way to prove that: i. the 'external universe' actually exists; ii. there are really laws of nature; iii. something other than nothing existed an instant ago? In other words does this tell us something profound about the universe, or is this in some sense tautological? Or does it tell us something profound about thought and about logic?

Do the significant implications only follow if both types agree? Can one type of brain claim that these implications do indeed follow if the other type does not agree?

The potential significance of the associated implications make this a topic of prime interest in this paper, and therefore the survey begins with a series of probing questions on this topic.

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#### **The philosophical opinions of mc-zombies**

One would not include color-blind people in a debate about the meaning of color, especially if they would claim that color does not exist or is an "illusion". The very saying that color is an illusion would be a direct giveaway that they are color blind, and don't even know it (if they knew they were color-blind, they would perhaps eventually realize they are giving themselves away by their denial). Of course this is only because color-vision is provable whereas in the case of zombies, no non-zombie has figured out a way to prove that they themselves are sevox-conscious or that another person is not.

If a person says they don't understand the fuss about colors, why people like art and why they talk about the beauty of nature, it's all so bland, and then we measure and judge them to be color-blind we understand that they can't even comprehend what we are referring to when we speak of color, and so cannot themselves on their own diagnose themselves as color-blind. Similarly, since people who aren't conscious can't know what it is, they aren't reliable reporters about whether or not they possess a mind.

If non-zombies could agree that materialists are zombies, and that the self-declaration of being an ontological/eliminative materialist points definitely at zombiness – this could give rise to an awareness by nmc's that the words of zombies on these topics need to be weighed appropriately.

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**Summary/conclusion:** The contention here is that when an elmat says "consciousness exists but it is an epiphenomenon/level confusion" they are NOT 'agreeing that sevox exists but downplaying its importance', they are referring to something other than sevox - in fact, they deny the existence of sevox, they only accept the existence of that which they call 'consciousness 'but which sevox call something else,

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## Section C: The Survey

**Is it science?** This article, survey and proposed experiment are in some sense an investigation of a scientific issue more than a "philosophical" one - with the double-caveat that it's not actually 'scientific' since what is being investigated is not a provable phenomenon even according to those who emphatically state that they know it exists, and is not even consensus given the denial of its existence by materialist physicists. Nevertheless perhaps the investigation - rather than the phenomenon - is somewhat scientific, since what is of interest here is what trained observers - who are professionally tasked with distinguishing between statements about natural phenomena which are factual as opposed to conjectures - will say they *KNOW* about reality/the universe, not just what they think, believe or feel. To achieve clarity, the survey will enable respondents to indicate exactly what they believe, what they 'feel, and what they know as fact.

There can be added a capability for respondents to receive a 'score' of to what degree they are materialist; and possibly they would be able to see predictions as to whether they like 'spirituality', are religious in actual belief not sociologically, without my having asked them any questions about this, and maybe re some other predictions.

Respondents may be allowed to see a constantly-updated statistical analysis of the percentage of respondents who checked off specific answers.

A respondent can choose to read through the background and explanatory material on the right-hand side of the webpage in which the form is embedded, or simply scroll through the form answering questions without reading the accompanying explanations.

**Note:** It cannot simply be assumed that all brains even of one philosophical grouping have the same type or degree of sevox or its absence - or something else - and so it can be useful for a survey question to test the above assumptions via a questions such as: The above grouping of various different philosophical positions around a common denominator, the notion of intersection and consensus and the distinction between what is known and what is conjectured etc

\*is essentially correct

\*is essentially incorrect

\*No opinion

\*It's all nonsense

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Survey respondents will be physicists at first: The questions will challenge them to indicate what they *KNOW* about reality/the universe in this context, not what they think believe or feel. They will be asked to indicate what they feel comfortable stating as fact about this phenomenon; to delineate what – despite its unprovability - is known to them with surety, as surely as they know of any physical phenomenon which they consider part of physics. (See more discussion in the mini-article on the author's site).

**The survey as a feeder to identify potential volunteers for the experiment:** Since it is hoped that some of the respondents to the survey will be willing to participate in the brain experiment, the survey is designed to enable the totality of the chosen responses to clearly identify respondents who are committed materialists or committed non-materialists – ie identifying unabashed proponents of both sides in order to invite them - as representatives of 'their' side - to participate in the experiment (brain scans etc: see link to extensive discussion on the author's site).

Possibly the survey will be worded so as to enable this type of determination to be made without asking respondents to self-classify, and the experiment of course would be appropriately 'blinded'.

The survey results can also aid in locating the actual rather than assumed dividing line between the beliefs of scientists who represent the two sides, thereby identifying which beliefs are (largely) contingent, and enabling a statement such as "X% of non-materialists/materialists also believe ...".

There seems often to be great certitude on this issue by brains on the two sides, indeed perhaps unusually so among philosophers or scientists who usually are more prone to some self-doubt, and we postulate that if this is true, it may be due to the fact that a brain's pronouncements on this issue are not merely statements of deeply-held beliefs and opinions but rather actually reflect the realities of its intrinsic physical structure. However, this assumption of unusual certitude may be unwarranted and should be checked via the survey.

**Using context to defining central – and therefore contentious and effectively ambiguous - terms:**

Rather than using in the survey potentially contentious or ambiguous terms such as "consciousness", "awareness" or "mind", for convenience we will utilize quotes from prominent physicists to provide a context which is sufficient to informally define the meaning of these terms as they will be (colloquially, informally) employed here, even if these quotes do not necessarily include any of these specific terms.

In some sense, the survey is intended as a "non-physical-consciousness-detection mechanism", and thus there is an attempt to keep the wording neutral, to avoid asking respondents to self-categorize according to terms like "materialist" or "non-materialist", and to avoid as much as possible similarly characterizing the physicists who are quoted as prelude to the questions, and instead to rely on the existence of any qualitative difference in their brains to manifest in the differences between what the brain of the respondent feels to be the most appropriate response to a question.

It may be that however difficult it is to identify the existence of sevox-consciousness in a human who is sevox-self-conscious it is a far more difficult task to identify it in an entity which though sevox-conscious is nevertheless non-sevox-self-conscious. That is, perhaps sevox-self-consciousness itself is a tool which can aid us in – or is necessary for - its own detection.

Of course a survey on these issues would be useless if an intelligent sex-conscious entity did not even know of itself that way, and so we will NOT include non-self-conscious beings in the catch-all term "non-materialists" or "sex", and will instead possibly expect their responses to be identical to that of materialists; nevertheless we keep open the possibility that perhaps there will be a distinctive difference

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### **How we'll frame contentious questions for the survey:**

What is the relation of the material (eg 'Nature') to Mind? Is 'mind' included in "the physical world"? Probably not. Is it part of 'physics'? To most physicists it is not. Is it part of 'nature' - or is it perhaps its antithesis?

To many like Wordsworth, it was not the study of nature itself which was paramount but rather the mind's contemplation of nature, and the emotional and mystical effect of that, as well as expression in poetry (and of course the effect of THAT on other minds). And for poets as with many mystics "being one with nature" is a much sought-after goal, so however differently one thinks of mind and nature, they are in this sense complementary.<sup>2</sup>

**We'll mention the writings of Bridgman and Eddington**, two eminent physicists, contemporaries of Einstein, whose words take additional weight since they were both keenly involved in experiment not only theory. In the books of both one senses that physics is not so much "a description of the universe" as it is "a construction of the human brain" and so is inherently limited by what the brain can comprehend, what it perceives, how it organizes data, and is necessarily shaped by the brain's capabilities and structure etc. As such, it is certainly necessary to understand the human brain in order to understand how the models it constructs of "reality" may or may not conform to "actual reality", or to use a more defined notion, to the reality as constructed by an alien brain of quite different structure and processing etc.

Eddington's book is based on his Gifford lectures, which by definition have a religious or metaphysical slant, but he is presenting ideas that as a physicist he feels are based on what is known, not on his personal religious beliefs.

Both lectured and wrote books about the fundamentals of the physical universe, one titled "**The Nature of the Physical World**" (Eddington, 1928), and the other, a few years later, very similarly titled

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<sup>2</sup>"Nature's first article: Huxley on Goethe": "Stanley speculated that Huxley, shortly after his translation of the aphorisms, changed his conception of 'Nature' from romantic to scientific, after having read and digested John Stuart Mill's essay "Nature" published posthumously in 1874 ... Instead of engaging in rhapsodic effusions about Nature as a woman, Huxley would henceforth, it seems, write about nature as a system, as a sum of phenomena, as order." January 11, 2019, by Brigitte Nerlich

<https://blogs.nottingham.ac.uk/makingsciencepublic/2019/01/11/natures-first-article-huxley-on-goethe/>



"**The Nature of Physical Theory**" (Bridgman, 1935-6), following his earlier **The Logic of Modern Physics, in 1927**.

Given their authors and the titles one understands that these are meant not as philosophical musings or metaphysics but rather to convey a physicist's view of what we can know, though they both contain discussions of what others will consider metaphysics - and in this proposed study we are interested in exactly this divide, between those who feel that the topic of our paper does not belong under the category of "what we can know" but rather of "metaphysical speculations".....

<sup>34</sup> The proposed experiment, in that it attempts to discover some aspect of the brain related to our most basic knowledge of the universe, may have some relevance to this issue.

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## **Section D Excerpted re Neutrality and Reciprocity**

Despite agreeing that they cannot prove their claim, non-materialists will not agree that the materialist claim is of equal weight, since to them it is FACT that this type of consciousness exists. This difference between the two types is sui generis in philosophy, where it is not a difference in judgment or belief or way of thinking or what is deduced logically but rather it is directly known. Non-materialists might accept parity for the two claims for sociological academic reasons, but not because they actually accept the position of the other side as equally valid.

And perhaps this is true also in reverse.

**Neutrality & reciprocity:** Neutrality of the survey & experiment demands "reciprocity", and so we raise the possibility of sevox as a delusion or insanity which causes belief in a "non-physical type of consciousness" which is claimed to be known directly but whose existence is unprovable - an immaterial phenomenon which sevox often claim is more fundamental than the clearly-existent material universe!

One of the questions to be explored via the survey: perhaps a certain category of brain will report that it KNOWS something about reality or about "the universe" that even non-materialists do NOT say they themselves know, or make a claim that idealists will actually contest? For example if they

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<sup>3</sup> One imagines Bridgman was familiar with the works of Eddington, especially as Eddington wrote the first book introducing Einstein's technical presentation of General Relativity to the wider physics community, and Bridgman was very influenced by Einstein's theories, and so the similarity of the titles may not be coincidence, and indeed Bridgman's work may have been a conscious effort to respond to Eddington's, though both titles are probably adapted from a rather prior work whose contents must have been known to both: "**De rerum natura**"

<sup>4</sup> "**De rerum natura**: a book on science written as a poem by the Roman philosopher Lucretius more than 2,000 years ago (but only re-discovered a few hundred years ago)  
The title is usually rendered as "On the Nature of Things" where rerum = 'things' but of course in our context this is an unfortunate choice of word, and even though substituting 'matters' is far better, nevertheless the similarity to 'matter' is unfortunate in our context. But 'natura' is not 'nature' as we used it previously but rather 'the essence' or 'the characteristics' or 'the inner workings of' so since Lucretius did not choose the mixed-language title 'de natura nature' the use of 'natura' here may be misleading to an English language reader for the context of this discussion....

claim that they KNOW there exists an external universe, ie they dispute the non-disprovability of solipsism or idealism. If so, is this traceable to a brain difference? And can it be that some brains will state that they know that non-materialists are in fact fully material, not just believe it to be so.

Also, whether respondents of the two types feel the same about proposition that either the materialist is correct about reality and the non-materialist suffers from a brain disturbance, or alternately, perhaps non-materialists are correct, and materialists simply lack the part of the brain which enables detection of the non-material "self".

### **"Knowing I am conscious" as a brain state, and the relation to Hypnosis**

There is no need for the materialist to deny the possibility that the brain of a non-materialist is in the state of "I know that there is an 'I' who exists", "I know it directly" etc; the existence of such a brain state does not contradict the laws of physics.

It is only the question of **why** this brain state exists which is a matter of contention.

Imagine now a materialist subjected to hypnosis, made to believe that they "know" that they possess sevox. Given this conviction of the brain, it begins to initiate talk like a non-materialist, as would be expected from a brain which is in the state of knowing all that the non-materialist states that they know. However, the non-materialist brain says "I see the color green, it is a primitive, not reducible to anything else, it is something qualitatively 'other' than material objects" – is this attributable to an illusion, to the brain thinking that it perceives something qualitatively sui generis even though it does not!? Is this logically or physically possible, or is the illusion of perceiving something qualitatively other than the material identical by definition to its "actual" perception?

- If we were to perform a Turing test, would the hypnotized materialist be distinguishable from the non-materialist?
- Is there anything that the non-materialist feels or knows which the brain of the hypnotized materialist cannot know or feel?
- Would non-materialists and materialists answer the above questions in the same way?

Can experiment determine the answer to these questions?

**"Reciprocity/neutrality-motivated" formulation of the fundamental Proposition:** it would be interesting to contrive experiments which would enable a determination whether there is a structural/wiring difference between full-fledged materialists and non-materialists, a type of difference which in theory can be the determinant of whether the brain declares itself to be non-materialists or materialist.

If an experiment indeed indicates this brain-distinction, we can choose one of these interpretations:

A) accept the claims of both types of brains:

i. the non-materialist's brain's: "I am conscious in the way materialists reject as impossible" (which is simply a less-contentious way of stating "materialists lack the brain structure which enables the non-materialist to be conscious"), AND:

ii. a materialist brain's: **"I am not conscious in the way that is impossible"** (while ignoring the rest of their statement "and neither are you")

- B) propose that the materialist brain is correct, and that non-materialists have a sub-optimally-functioning region of the brain, a brain malfunction giving rise to their illusory claims.
- C) leave open the question of whether "sevox"-consciousness is a neural disturbance leading to delusions or it is a unique (non-material) phenomenon fundamental to our reality, and simply accept that there is a fundamental difference between the brains, and that it is responsible for their different claims re 'sevox-consciousness'.

### **Incorporating neutrality in the survey, and in the wording of the paper**

- Often a paper is best worded to be neutral even though the author has a particular view, in order not to prejudge any aspects of what is meant to be a scientific investigation. The intent of this proposed experiment is meant to be scientific not philosophical or psychological - though perhaps only one side of the two will see it that way, and so perhaps the very suggestion that it is scientific is to effectively take a side - and so perhaps it would be preferable for a neutral phrasing to be adopted.
- The survey will attempt for the large part to avoid using terms with definitions which are in contention. Rather than asking respondents their opinion about "consciousness" etc, the survey will attempt to cleanly associate a specific quote from prominent physicists – for example which seems to indicate their belief in a certain type of immaterial consciousness - and then ask respondents what they think of the ideas expressed in these quotes, all without the question itself needing to utilize terms like "consciousness".
- Rather than asking "is it plausible" or "do you believe it", etc, the survey will ask about each idea whether it's at all physically/logically possible, and whether it's ruled out by logic or whether by one's brain's actual knowledge, or by physics/science.
- At some points the paper can switch perspectives to sound as if it's written from the viewpoint of a materialist, and then from a non-materialists' viewpoint, and then neutral.

### **The strength and weakness of science as a consensual endeavor**

There really ought to be a name for "the study of what is known to exist", which would include that which is studied by physics and also anything else for example according to many one would include what the non-materialist terms "consciousness". And if the reason we don't have a name for it other than science or physics is because there is a dispute about whether anything other than the material exists, this fact itself should be taught along with science, ie all who embark on studying science should at least understand that we do not all agree about what can be said to exist for sure.

On the one hand I would have liked to propose that rather than pursuing endless futile debates about theories of 'mind', that one accept that some people possess non-materialist-type consciousness and those who completely deny its existence simply do not themselves possess it, however of course this is not a fact it is a claim or matter of contention.

Of course anyone can claim they know anything, and that no-one else knows it, and having thus lost its central strength of consensuality, as an interpersonal endeavor all science would be rendered futile. So one would need boundaries agreed upon. Of course the materialist/naturalist who denies the existence of mind would place those boundaries where they are now - designed to exclude direct knowledge of one's awareness.

What is the resolution of this conundrum? Perhaps we need to accept that our reality is not amenable to complete consensual description and that debate is futile on those issues on which the difference is not due to a difference of logic or opinion, but that we can catalogue a sort of hierarchy of that which is claimed to exist by physicists and philosophers: eg:

- that which is consensually agreed to be existent, eg standard physics;
- that which is claimed to be known to exist by some eg 'awareness';
- that which is sensed but not fully 'known' to exist, eg freedom of the will or moral responsibility;
- that which is logically deduced rather than known eg the Platonic Truths such as in mathematics.
- 'the soul'

etc,

Although philosophical debate can clarify issues, it will not settle the issue of whether there is or is not awareness since it is a fact to those who possess it, and this fact is inaccessible to those who not possess it, but the notion that this is fact is not provable , and is denied by some who are accepted as peers in the philosophy or science category.

In this way the acceptance that there is a sui generis situation involved does not necessarily mean the end of science and philosophy as an interpersonal endeavor.

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## **Section E: Hoped-for effects of an acceptance of the paper's proposition**

**Accepting the proposition of this paper can perhaps lead to a more honest version of the philosophical debate, and a recognition of the need for an experimental approach**

The discussions between two camps of naturalists/materialists and non-materialists etc are more likely to be fruitful when both sides bravely considers these two possibilities:

- a) that mind or non-physical consciousness is real, but is not universally associated to all human brains, leading those without it puzzled about the claims of those with it.
- b) that perhaps the opposite is (also) true, that naturalists are speaking as they do as a result of possessing some attribute not possessed by those who say they know there is consciousness of the non-materialist type.

For example imagine the two sides presenting the following positions

- *Forthright non-materialist*: By definition (self-) consciousness is that which knows itself directly. Therefore when encountering an intelligent being who understands philosophy – as is the case for a declared materialist - and who does not self-know of their existence in the way that non-materialists do, it might be clear that that they do not possess that self-knowing entity or mechanism which non-materialist mean when they speak of "(self-)consciousness". If they did possess it they would by definition know it. So one can propose that a more honest approach than the collegial parity of opinions, is the understanding that consciousness of the non-materialist type exists, but not in all human brains, and those who know they do not have this type of brains are called eliminative materialists.
- *Forthright eliminative materialist*: It is evident that non-materialists suffer from a form of brain damage, mental illness, or simply intellectual feebleness.

**Uniqueness of the philosophical debate:** Note that the difference between the two 'camps', particularly among those who state their position vehemently is sui generis among philosophical differences in that:

- it is about a factual situation, ie whether or not there exists a certain type of "consciousness", rather than about the correctness of some physical model etc;
- on one side or the other it is usually made as a statement of purported fact known personally to the person making the statement, rather than being an opinion, belief, or logical deduction.

**Arriving at consensual terminology:** If sevox is a brain-disturbance, and those who claim they possess "mind", not "just brain" are deluded, then it would be a point of pride for materialists to consider themselves "nonMinded"- as it would be for those in the other camp to call themselves "the Minded". Each side then can use the relevant term non-pejoratively for themselves and perhaps snicker when applying the other term for those in the other camp. So if a paper refers to 'the minded' and the 'non-minded', hopefully readers on either side - or of either type - will not mind. Similarly for any other terms chosen as an agreed-upon convention, including simply using "materialist brain" and "non-materialist-brain" where despite the agreement upon terminology each term has a different connotation to those in the two categories.

### **Even if no brain-correlate is discovered: utilizing the survey results to help achieve certain objectives**

The intent of the paper is NOT to try to convince that one or other of non-materialism or materialism/naturalism is correct, but rather to make specific points relating to the issue of the possible brain-difference as mentioned above,

- define some new term (ie not necessarily 'sevox' as I proposed) to denote "a property associated to some brains, which gives rise to that which can be either knowledge of existence directly or an anti-rational glitch of incoherent nonsense"
- Recognition of the need for a very specific type of focused brain-research;
- After recognizing the fundamental divide between materialists and idealists, acknowledge that the ongoing endless debate is futile because one side simply does not have what the other side has - either materialists do not possess awareness and cannot therefore understand what the idealists are talking about, or the non-materialists have a glitch in their brain (we'll call it "consciousness") that is not possessed by the materialists...but both sides are mistakenly assuming that there is mutual understanding just different viewpoints - the difference is not in viewpoint it is in the possession vs non possession of this faculty/ property/ phenomenon/glitch "awareness", and there is in fact no mutual understanding possible as a result.

### **Bridging differences regarding religious beliefs**

Recognition of the fundamental divide can perhaps have ramification on issues related to defining what physics encompasses and does not<sup>5</sup>, as well as attitudes to those who have religious or spiritual beliefs:

Non-materialists may tend to view reality differently, and come to other conclusions than do materialists in other areas not just in the question of whether there is or is not a non-material consciousness. For example, in discussions about religion or 'spirituality'. Presumably there is a correlation between having a materialist brain and distaste for spirituality or expressing a complete lack of understanding of what it might even mean, so that necessarily statistically being non-materialist will correlate more than the average to more positive views.

**Recognition of fundamental brain differences:** As discussed in an accompanying article, <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gXobNA1cjke0B2O7mS9ymu6Fi8Yjj2zGuwGFwtwa3U> this can perhaps assist in an effort to:

- Arrive at terms to describe: i) "that which is known" ii) "the study of that which is known" iii) "topics which some physicists assert definitely exist but others say it does not"
  - Categorize scientifically the minimalistic description of reality, eg solipsism (or even solipsism of the moment).
  - Recognize the list of that which is real but not encompassed in physics [The topic of what is and is not physics], eg the passage of time, and a unique quantum result rather than superposition, and then to invent a term to encompass the totality of [physics + the rest of what we know].
  - To do all the above either in a unified manner agreed upon by all, or via two separate statements, or a statement incorporating acknowledgment of the divide.
- \* arriving at a resolution of some sociological and educational aspects of the science-religion divide eg regarding the teaching of evolutionary theory in schools (see an explanation of this point and more discussion in the relevant accompanying paper), as well as regarding the acceptance of what science is and is not, and regarding the authority of science in religious matters.
- \* developing a mutual understanding between family members and members of society who differ in their choice of atheism, religion, or non-practicing member of a religious community, based on differences in their biology.
- \* possibly there are correlation in other areas of life, from tastes in art and cinema to the attraction of certain professions and to choosing a spouse, etc, and besides the academic and philosophical interest, being able to easily categorize 'clients' or 'consumers' using these correlations can have broad commercial applications, which may open avenues of funding for the research.

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**Disambiguation of journal names and article titles:** With an agreed-upon terminology, journal names and article titles can clearly indicate what they deal with as opposed to employing ambiguous terms such as consciousness and mind as is the case now, where journal names and article titles can mislead readers searching for topics of interest to them, and setting the wrong tone for readers when delving into the article, based on their misunderstanding of the keyword in the title. Similarly for authors interested in submission of their own work.

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