

Review of: "A Calculus of Qualia"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The title suggests a contradiction in terms and the author does not make it explicit.

What does 1st person phenomena mean? It is introduced and not justified by the author.

Not only in philosophy of mind, but also in cognitive neuroscience, we find a vast literature on qualia that is not considered by the author.

Problem: the very idea of a "calculus of qualia" seems to ignore the significance of qualia as a phenomenal property. For example, in the paragraph "I cannot tell if you are a zombie. But, given (61), I can tell that I am not a zombie. The upshot is that 'is he a zombie?' is an ill-posed question. It's irrelevant whether Mary sees new colors when she exits the black-and-white room and steps into the colorful world. The relevant question is whether I see new colors. In the case of qualations, these are not the same questions", inadvertently, the author quotes the classic zombie metaphor and the thought experiment "what does Mary know?" and concludes these are not the same questions".

The author creates a formal "qualic language". Question: would the qualic language translate the famous elaboration "pain is activation of C-fibers ? I don't think so !

In my opinion, in Names and Referents, the author seems to confuse qualia and secondary properties: qualia are lacking a referent insofar as it is a phenomenal content of experience, for example, as being referred by the term "redness", qualia are not confused with the secondary property "being red" of an object.

By proposing a "qualic language", in my opinion, the author does not really face up the problem of qualia.