

# Review of: "Growing Confidence and Remaining Uncertainty About Animal Consciousness"

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The author presents the (largely) agreed-on features that make up the phenomenology/definition of consciousness. There are obviously many views on these issues, but the author tries to stick to consensus statements. The author presents the papers in favour of the idea that 4 (or maybe 3) degrees of neural hierarchy is a minimum requirement for subjective experience/consciousness, and then describes 3 theories of the neural correlates of consciousness and existing uncertainties.

The paper is a nicely written short review of the field. However, I think that the author has somewhat glossed over some of the difficulties that still remain for the non-dualist.

Re the vexed question of animal consciousness, the arguments are circular. We define sufficient neural complexity that seems to be associated with human consciousness, and then extrapolate this as being a necessary cause of animal consciousness. We should acknowledge that we don't know if the mechanisms-phenomenological gap has actually been bridged in that animal – as per Nagel's famous paper. Until that is solved, all the arguments from evolution, etc., are built on sand. Don't misunderstand me, I am supportive of the author gathering together the papers with the neural complexity evidence in favour of animal consciousness. I just think that it is not sufficient to wave our hands and say that "with better neuroscience this problem will be dissolved". I think the truth is that "until this problem is solved, we will not be able to say much about animal consciousness with any certainty."