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My parents won't be reading these words, unless they are translated into Chinese. Unfortunately, I turned out to be far more irreverent than they would have liked me to be. But my skepticism toward 'authoritative' opinions came from their strong characters. This book was very much written based on that foundation.

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Introduction: Reality as One Sees It
I explain why we will focus on cognitive neuroscience rather than physics-centric theories.

Chapter 1: Game Plan and Definitions
Subjective experience is our focus here, though it may relate to other notions of consciousness such as wakefulness or voluntary control too. We will arbitrate between global and local theories.

Chapter 2: The Unfinished NCC Project
If we control for the key experimental confounds, the evidence is in favor of the prefrontal cortex's role in consciousness - although it may not be for the purpose of global broadcast.

Chapter 3: Hitting the Right Note
Lesions and stimulation studies are often conceptually misinterpreted or factually misrepresented. There is good evidence for the causal involvement of the prefrontal cortex in consciousness.

Chapter 4: Untouched Raw Feels?
When we don't pay attention we don't perceive much details. But our experience may be subjectively 'inflated' beyond what we actually represent in the sensory cortices; troubles for local theorists.

Chapter 5: What Good Is Consciousness?
To answer the question we need new experimental methods, beyond subliminal priming. Current evidence suggests that consciousness may not be as useful as global theories suggest.

Chapter 6: A Centrist Manifesto
Let's take stock of the findings reviewed so far. Neither global nor local theories seem right.
What are the constraints for a plausible theory? What can we learn from current AI research?

Chapter 7: Are We Alone?
We introduce the perceptual reality monitoring theory (PRM), according to which some animals may not be conscious. And yet, perhaps even a robot or computer program could be (to be revisited in Chapter 9).

Chapter 8: Making Ourselves Useful
In the social and clinical sciences, 'consciousness' often refers to our rational grasp of reality.
How is this related to the kind of consciousness we have discussed so far?

Chapter 9: What of the Hard Problem?
Subjective experiences are characterized by 'what it is like' to have them. Cognitive neuroscience can address this quality too. Metaphysical theories don't fare better, and may just hinder scientific progress.