Announcements

- Note-taker needed for DRC

From Last Time...

States of Consciousness

I. Consciousness -- Overview

A. What is consciousness (csns.)

1. Csns is the selective attention (e.g. "Cocktail Party")

Aldous Huxley

The Doors of Perception

I find myself agreeing with the eminent Cambridge philosopher, Dr. C. D. Broad... "The suggestion is that the function of the brain and nervous system and sense organs is in the main eliminative and first productive... The function of the brain and nervous system is to protect us from being overwhelmed and confused by this mass of largely useless and irrelevant knowledge, by shutting out most of what we should otherwise perceive or remember at any moment, and leaving only that very small and special selection which is likely to be practically useful."

According to such a theory, each one of us is potentially Mind at Large. But in so far as we are animals, our business is at all costs to survive. To make biological survival possible, Mind at Large has to be funnelled through the reducing valve of the brain and nervous system. What comes out at the other end is a measly trickle of the kind of consciousness which will help us survive on this planet.

Most people, most of the time, know only what comes through the reducing valve and is consecrated as genuinely real by the local language. Certain persons, however, seem to be born with a kind of bypass that circumvents the reducing valve. In others temporary bypasses may be acquired either spontaneously, or as the result of deliberate "spiritual exercises," or through hypnosis, or by means of drugs. Through these permanent or temporary bypasses there flows, not indeed the perception of everything that is happening everywhere in the universe... but something more than, and above all something different from, the carefully selected utilitarian material which our narrowed, individual minds regard as a complete, or at least sufficient, picture of reality.
I. Consciousness -- Overview

A. What is consciousness (csns.)
   1. Csns is the selective attention
   2. Csns involves voluntary control
   3. Self-awareness

B. Consciousness without awareness?

II. The seat of csns in the brain

A. Descartes' notion of the Pineal

B. Findings from split-brain research
   1. Is consciousness inherently tied to language
   2. Does each hemisphere have its own type of csns

Gazzanaga

II. The seat of csns in the brain

A. Descartes' notion of the Pineal

B. Findings from split-brain research
   1. Is consciousness inherently tied to language
   2. Does each hemisphere have its own type of csns
   3. Do we have two csns's?
Is this really consciousness?
- Follow one-word commands
- Simple games

“Are you trying to make two people out of me?”

Distinct Hemisphere Preferences in Split-Brain Patient
- Colors
- Clothing
- Faces

II. The seat of csns in the brain
A. Descartes' notion of the Pineal
B. Findings from split-brain research
   1. Is consciousness inherently tied to language
   2. Does each hemisphere have its own type of csns
   3. Do we have two csns's?
   4. Lecturer's conclusion

III. Altered States of csns
A. We all experience variations in our states of consciousness
B. The difficulty in deciding what is / is not an altered state of consciousness
III. Altered States of csns

C. What gives us a unified sense of consciousness over time?
1. Identity
2. Memory
3. Relatively uninterrupted stream of consciousness

III. Altered States of csns

D. Dissociative Identity Disorder (formerly Multiple Personality Disorder) = a profound disturbance in the normally integrative functions of identity, memory, or consciousness.

Perspectives on the Genesis of DID

- Post-traumatic Model (e.g. Gleaves, 1996)
- Socio-cognitive Model (Spanos, 1994, 1996)

Increasing Prevalence of DID

Primarily a North American phenomenon

DSM-5 Diagnostic Criteria

- Disruption of identity characterized by two or more distinct personality states
- Recurrent gaps in the recall of everyday events, important personal information, and/or traumatic events that are inconsistent with ordinary forgetting
- Drug/medical rule outs
Sample Studies of Inter-identity Amnesia

- Sometimes find amnesia between identities
- Always find transfer of memory between identities

From Allen & Iacono, *PPPL*, 2001

Interpretations

- Transfer represents implicit memory
- Parsimonious Alternative: Motivated behavior

The DID Study

Procedure

- Identity A
  - Hears List A (24 words)
  - Shallow encoding via syllable judgment
- Switch to Identity B
- Identity B
  - Hears List B (24 words)
  - Exclusion Test in Visual Modality
    - Make judgment - “was it on list B?”
    - Three classes of stimuli
      - “A” Words (24)
      - “B” Words (24)
      - Distractors (24)

Kong, Allen, Glisky, 2008

Was it on List B?

- If amnesic, this is a simple recognition task
- For someone with memory for List A, this is an exclusion task that requires source memory
- DIFFICULT!

Participants

- Seven patients meeting DSM-IV criteria for DID
  - Assessed with SCID-D
- 6 females and one male
- All had some college education, two with graduate degrees
- All had history of other disorders (by self report)
- Number of identities: 4-16
- Four or Five matched controls for each patient
  - Asked to simulate DID performance

Kong, Allen, Glisky, 2008
Results

Individual Patients (with controls)

The Nature of Amnesia in DID

Fabrication?
Not obviously so
Social Construction (Spanos, 1994, 1996)
Constructivist account of memory may also explain amnesia in DID (Allen & Iacono, 2001)

Cognitive mechanisms in Socially-Constructed DID: A Humble Proposal

Memory is constructive and reconstructive
Any mnemonic experience involves
- Encoding
- Storage
- Retrieval
- Evaluation
All of the above are guided by schemas and agendas (Johnson, 1997)

Cognitive mechanisms in Socially-Constructed DID: A Humble Proposal

A mental representation is identified as a memory to the extent that it involves:
- A sufficient number of features
- The proper configuration of features
- All evaluated in terms of our understanding
This account has been used in explaining false memories
May also explain how inter-identity amnesia may develop over time
End of Spiel

IV. State & mood dependent memory

➢ A. Memory better for events/information if tested in same state or mood as during learning
➢ B. Memory better for events/information consistent with current mood or state

Synopsis of Spiel

1. Two perspectives: Post-traumatic versus socio-cognitive
2. DID diagnosis requires amnesia
3. Folks who report amnesia during an interview are not guaranteed to show objective evidence of amnesia in the laboratory, as evidenced by my study and several others
4. Claims of amnesia in DID are best treated with some skeptical thinking.