

Consciousness is subjective. Does that mean it can't be rigorously studied?

The science of [consciousness](#) has enjoyed a renaissance in the last couple of decades and the study of our own minds—consciousness/subjectivity—has finally become a respectable pursuit.

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Nobel laureate Gerald Edelman and Giulio Tononi made the epistemological problem clear in their 2001 book [A Universe of Consciousness](#): “Consciousness poses a special problem that is not encountered in other domains of science. ... What we are trying to do is not just to understand how the behavior or cognitive operations of another human being can be explained in terms of the working of his or her brain. ... We are not just trying to connect a description of something out there with a more sophisticated scientific description. Instead, we are trying to connect a description of something out there—the brain—with something in here—an experience, our own individual experience, that is occurring to us as conscious observers.”

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To sum up, by ignoring mind in nature we ignore ourselves—because the “world” is, for each of us, wholly a creation of our own mind, but based on the imperfect sense data we receive from the objective world. What we gain by accepting subjectivity as part of nature is a more complete science.

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