

# Philosophical Review What Is It Like to Be a Bat

The [original paper](#) contains 2 sections, with 5 passages identified by our machine learning algorithms as central to this paper.

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## Paper Summary

### SUMMARY PASSAGE 1

#### Consciousness

We may call this the subjective character of experience. It is not captured by any of the familiar, recently devised reductive analyses of the mental, for all of them are logically compatible with its absence. It is not analyzable in terms of any explanatory system of functional states, or intentional states, since these could be ascribed to robots or automata that behaved like people though they experienced nothing.<sup>2</sup> It is not analyzable in terms of the causal role of experiences in relation to typical human behavior-for similar reasons. I do not deny that conscious mental states and events cause behavior, nor that they may be given functional.

### SUMMARY PASSAGE 2

#### Consciousness

Facts about what it is like to be an X are very peculiar, so peculiar that some may be inclined to doubt their reality, or the significance of claims about them. To illustrate the connection between subjectivity and a point of view, and to make evident the importance of subjective features, it will help to explore the matter in relation to an example that brings out clearly the divergence between the two types of conception, subjective and objective.

#### SUMMARY PASSAGE 3

### Consciousness

After all, what would be left of what it was like to be a bat if one removed the viewpoint of the bat? But if experience does not have, in addition to its subjective character, an objective nature that can be apprehended from I The problem I am going to raise can therefore be posed even if the distinction between more subjective and more objective descriptions or viewpoints can itself be made only within a larger human point of view. I do not accept this kind of conceptual relativism, but it need not be refuted to make the point that psychophysical reduction cannot be accommodated by the subjective-to-objective model familiar from other cases.

#### SUMMARY PASSAGE 4

### Consciousness

I should like to close with a speculative proposal. It may be possible to approach the gap between subjective and objective from another direction. Setting aside temporarily the relation between the mind and the brain, we can pursue a more objective understanding of the mental in its own right.

#### SUMMARY PASSAGE 5

### Consciousness

Some may think there is nothing to prevent mental phenomena from eventually being recognized as physical in their own right. But whatever else may be said of the physical, it has to be objective. So of experience to assume a more intelligible form.