

Inattentional Blindness and Blindsight

1. Blindsight is the condition of being physically blind but being able to distinguish between colors, shapes, and expressions.
 - When a chair is placed in the middle of the floor, Blindsight patients can navigate around it, but when asked if they can SEE the chair, they invariably respond “no”
2. How does Blindsight relate to the existence of Qualia.
 - Dennett and the Physicalists deny the existence of Qualia. But if people who can not actually physically see something can still detect it, doesn't this mean that Qualia are inherent? Surely if people who can't SEE redness still have a sensation (or quale) of redness, then Qualia are real.
3. How does Blindsight relate to the non-existence of Qualia?
 - Even for the physicalists, the phenomenon of blindsight can disprove qualia. There is no such thing as Qualia, because a person can sense the red, yet have no physical perception of the red, and therefore no quale for redness.
4. Neuroscience, Qualia, and Blindsight
 - While Blindsight is a phenomenon explored mainly by neuroscientists, it clearly has a place in philosophy. How is it that our minds can perceive things that we have no physical capacity to see?
 - *The Transparency Theory* – Offers an explanation for this issue...Qualia DO exist, but are not inherent to the object we perceive. Therefore, they could be different from person to person or could exist even for a physically blind person.

Inattentional Blindness

1. The phenomenon that occurs when one fails to see something in their immediate field of vision due to the fact that they are concentrating on something else in that field.
2. When concentrating on a cross in the middle of a screen, 25% of test subjects failed to see a stimulus which flashed in a random quadrant of a larger cross for about a quarter of a second.
3. This blindness can be attributed to the fact that individuals can subconsciously select that which they perceive or do not perceive due to levels of concentration.
4. When they were prompted to respond if they saw a cross they were more likely to not see the stimulus, but if they were told to look for a stimulus they would almost certainly perceive it.
5. The fact that we can clearly perceive or not perceive something based on our attention suggests that there is a filter of our perceptions which is subconscious. This “selective process” can help neuroscientists determine how we filter sensations. (Why didn't we see the moonwalking bear?)

6. The same can be said for motion induced blindness, where the subject loses the perception of stationary objects when intermixed with moving objects. Is this focus on motion instinctual, or habit based? How we perceive that which we perceive can answer many questions for neuroscience, and solving the problem of mind states/perceptions.