

CECILY WHITELEY

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EDUCATION

2018-2022	PHD PHILOSOPHY London School of Economics "The Natural Kind Approach to Consciousness"
2021-2022	Visiting Student, New York University. Faculty Sponsor: David Chalmers.
2016-2018	MASTER OF PHIL. STUDIES King's College London "The Neuroscience of Consciousness and Its Metaphysics"
2018	Distinction 6/6 Papers, Awarded the Philosophy MPhil Prize.
2012-2016	B.A. PHILOSOPHY University of York First Class Honours
2016	1st Class Marks Received in all Final Year Assessments, Graduated 2nd Top in the Year.
2013-14	York Global Programmes Scholar, University of California Berkeley (1/7 students selected university-wide).

RESEARCH INTERESTS

AoS: Phil. Psychiatry, Philosophy of Science (incl. Psychology and Neuroscience), Philosophy of Mind.

AoC: Metaphysics, Epistemology, Meta-Philosophy, Moral Philosophy (Normative Ethics, Meta-Ethics).

PUBLICATIONS

C. M. K. Whiteley (forthcoming), "Depression as a Disorder of Consciousness", *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science*.

C. M. K. Whiteley (2020), "Aphantasia, Imagination and Dreaming" *Philosophical Studies*.

PRIZES AND AWARDS

2021	CONFERENCE GRANT FOR 'NATURAL KINDS IN THE MIND' The Mind Association, The British Society for Philosophy of Science, CPNSS at LSE. Around £2,000 Total
2021	LSE CLASS TEACHER AWARD London School of Economics £250
2016-2020	TRAVEL AWARDS - MULTIPLE KCL Travel Award, LAHP Research Fund, LSE Travel Award Around £5,000 Total
2018	PHD STUDENTSHIP London School of Economics
2018-2022	Four Years, Fees and Stipend
2018	MPHIL PRIZE King's College London
2018	Unnamed Prize, Highest Achieving MPhil Student
2017	AHRC DOCTORAL STUDENTSHIP London Arts and Humanities Partnership
2017-2020	Three Years, Fees and Stipend. (Two years Declined)
2016	NEW DIRECTIONS IN THE STUDY OF MIND AWARD University of Cambridge
2016-2017	Project: Is there a Place for Non-Physicalism in a Darwinian Framework?

PEER-REVIEWED TALKS

- 2022 'A Concept of Consciousness Worth Wanting (in Animal Sentience Research)' - *Kinds of Intelligence Conference III*, University of Cambridge.
- 2021 'Depression as a Disorder of Consciousness' - *The Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness 24*, Online.
- 2021 'The Natural Kind Approach to Animal Sentience Research', Salon Talk on Non-Human Consciousness: Paradigms and Debates - *The Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness 24*, Online.
- 2021 'Knowledge-First as a Naturalistic Epistemology' - *Edinburgh Graduate Epistemology Conference*, University of Edinburgh.
- 2020 'Knowledge-First as a Naturalistic Epistemology' - *London Graduate Conference*, Online.
- 2019 'Aphantasia, Dreaming and Imagination' - *European Society for Philosophy and Psychology*, Athens.
- 2019 'Aphantasia, Dreaming and Imagination' - *The Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness 23*, London Ontario, Canada.
- 2019 'Aphantasia, Dreaming and Imagination' - *Dreams, Hallucinations and Imagination*, University of Glasgow.
- 2018 'A Neuroscience-First Metaphysics of Consciousness' - *Open Minds*, University of Manchester.
- 2018 'A Neuroscience-First Metaphysics of Consciousness' - *The Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness 23* - University of Krakow.
- 2018 'Free Will, Neuroscience and Mechanistic Explanation' - *Neuroethics: Remapping the Field* - Milan, Italy.
- 2017 'The Evolutionary Challenge for Naturalistic Non-Physicalists' - *The Science of Consciousness Conference* - San Diego, USA.

INVITED TALKS AND OTHER PRESENTATIONS

- 2022 "Conceptualising Depression as an Altered State of Consciousness" (Invited) - *COGS Research Seminar series, Sussex University*
- 2021 'Closing the Space Between Here and Nowhere: A Defense of Naturalistic Philosophy' - *Washington Square Circle, New York University*
- 2021 'Global States: A New Rationale for Psychedelic Psychiatry?' (Invited) - *Centre for Psychedelic and Consciousness Research, Johns Hopkins*.
- 2021 'Is Dreaming a Natural Kind?' - *PopRocks, NYU-Columbia Philosophy of Cognitive Science Seminar*.
- 2021 'Depression as a Disorder of Consciousness'(Invited) - *NYU Philosophy of Mind Discussion Group*.
- 2021 'Depression as a Disorder of Consciousness' - *The London Mind Group, Senate House*.
- 2021 Responding to Andrea Blomqvist 'A Theory of Aphantasia' (Invited) *2nd Annual Online Conference on Imagination*.
- 2020 'Consciousness Re-Engineered' - *Work in Progress Seminar*, London School of Economics.
- 2018 'Aphantasia and Dreaming' - *London-Warwick Mind Forum*, London.
- 2018 Responding to Adam Bradley (UC Berkeley)'The Paradox of Pain' - *London-Berkeley Graduate Conference*, Senate House.
- 2018 'Plenty of Work for Causal Pluralism' - *Advanced Research Seminar*, King's College London.
- 2017 'The Evolutionary Challenge for Naturalistic Non-Physicalists' (Nominated for Departmental Excellence) - *King's College London Away Weekend*, Cumberland Lodge Windsor.
- 2017 'A Neuroscience-First Metaphysics of Consciousness'(Invited) - *Start of Term Graduate Conference*, King's College London.

PUBLIC WRITING AND ENGAGEMENT

- 2021 | Interviewed by Sean Moncrieff about my work on depression (Invited) *Newstalk National Radio, Ireland*.
- 2021 | Is Depression Actually a Unique State of Consciousness? Written by Prof. Mark D. White (CUNY) about my research and paper "Depression as a Disorder of Consciousness" *Psychology Today* - **Listed by Psychology Today as an "Essential Read". As of December 2021, this has been read over 190 thousand times. It is and currently listed as the "Most Popular" article on Psychology Today.**
- 2021 | "Depression is more than a low mood - it's a change in consciousness" (with Jonathan Birch) - *Aeon + Psyche Magazine* - **Published by Psyche as 'most read' of all articles in the week of publication, and 'most popular' of articles in its month of publication.**
- 2021 | Interviewed by the Philosophy Exchange Podcast about my research on Aphantasia (Invited) *Philosophy Exchange Podcast, Spotify*.
- 2019 | "Extreme Imagination and the Nature of Dreaming" (Invited) *Junkyard of the Mind Blog*.

TEACHING

- 2022 | Full Fellowship of Higher Education (PGCert) *UK Higher Education Academy*.
- 2021 | LSE Class Teacher Award *London School of Economics*.
- 2020 | Associate Fellowship of Higher Education *UK Higher Education Academy*.
- 2022 | Philosophy of Race and Gender *London School of Economics*.
GTA.
- 2020-21 | Philosophy, Morals and Politics *London School of Economics*.
GTA: Obligations to Others, The Non-Identity Problem, The Trolley Problem and the Doctrine of Double Effect, The Ethics of Self-Defense, The Ethics of Defending Others, Moral Psychology, Moral Luck, Moral Ignorance, Evidence and Blame, Punishment, Libertarianism and Rights, Nozick Against Redistribution, World Ownership and Property Rights, The Problem of Inter-generational Sovereignty, The Rectification of Injustice, The Nature of Meta-Ethics, Non-Naturalism, Expressivism, Error Theory and Fictionalism, Naturalism.
- 2019-20 | The Big Questions *London School of Economics*.
GTA: Radical Skepticism, Personal Identity, Theories of Truth, Consciousness, Animal Consciousness, Free Will, The Neuroscience of Agency, Arguments for the Existence of God, The Ethics of Belief, Utilitarianism, Kantian Ethics, Animal Ethics, The Ethics of Giving, Justice, Democracy, Death and the Meaning of Life.
- 2018 | Philosophy of Biology *King's College London*.
GTA Half Course: Logic of Natural Selection, Biological Species, Functions and Functional Explanation, Altruism, Sex Race and Gender.
- 2018 | Metaphysics I *King's College London*.
GTA: Personal Identity, Time, Change, Identity, Causation, Determinism, Free Will, Metametaphysics .

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

- 2022 | Lead Organiser for a two day conference entitled 'Natural Kinds in the Mind' *London School of Economics*.
- 2020- | Referee *Philosophical Topics, Ergo, Journal of the American Philosophical Association, Philosophical Psychology*.
- 2021 | Co-founder Minorities and Philosophy Chapter *London School of Economics*.
- 2018-2020 | Organiser and Chair *London Mind Group Senate House, London*.
- 2017-2020 | Organiser *London Warwick Mind Forum*.
- 2019 | Organiser *London Metaphysics of Biology Reading Group*.
- 2018 | Student Consultative Member *AHRC London Arts and Humanities Partnership*.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

2019-	European Society for Philosophy and Psychology.
2017-	Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness.
2017-	Royal Institute of Philosophy.
2016-	Aristotelian Society.

CONTACT DETAILS

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REFERENCES

Professor Matthew Soteriou
Professor of Philosophy of Mind
Department of Philosophy
King's College London

Dr. Jonathan Birch
Associate Professor of Philosophy
Department of Philosophy, Logic and Scientific Method
London School of Economics and Political Science

Professor Christian List
Professor of Philosophy and Decision Theory
Co-Director, Munich Center for Mathematical Philosophy
LMU Munich

Professor David Papineau
Professor of Philosophy of Science
Department of Philosophy
King's College London

Dr. Philip Goff (MPhil Examiner)
Associate Professor of Philosophy
Department of Philosophy
University of Durham

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

Understanding the biological basis of consciousness is one of the most important challenges for modern science. Is a mature scientific explanation of consciousness really possible, and if so, how should consciousness science be organised so as to achieve this? My doctoral thesis develops a new answer to this question known as 'the natural kind approach' to consciousness. In opposition to orthodox scientific approaches which treat consciousness as a 'special' phenomenon to be studied using new and non-standard methods and paradigms, I argue that consciousness science ought to be modelled on previous scientific explanations of other natural phenomena. The central idea is that the history and philosophy of science tells us that all natural phenomena or 'kinds' in the biological sciences have certain structural properties in common - they are typically characterised, for example, by the occurrence of a cluster of functional and informational properties which are underwritten by a neural or evolutionary mechanism - and consciousness science ought to be organised around the search for the cluster of properties which characterise consciousness.

The thesis is split into three parts. Part I is foundational. I outline an epistemic theory of natural kinds from recent philosophy of science, and use this to ground a new methodology for consciousness science based on the ideas above (Chapter 1). A salient objection to this approach holds that this methodological framework for the scientific study of consciousness fails on a priori grounds, because at least some of our concepts of consciousness - namely, phenomenal concepts - are not natural kind concepts. In "**Ameliorating the Phenomenal: Phenomenal Concepts for a Science of Consciousness**" (Chapter 2) I argue that the best response to this objection is to situate and ground the natural kind approach to consciousness in the meta-philosophical programme of conceptual engineering. In this vein, I defend the explication and de novo engineering of a new concept of consciousness, that of a *conscious kind*, which is best placed to help the science of consciousness progress.

Part II details the epistemology of consciousness that this new concept of consciousness makes possible. In "**Natural Kinds and Other Minds**" (Chapter 3) I argue that a view of the conscious mind as being comprised of natural kinds helps dissolve the problem of other minds as this is understood in contemporary philosophy. This makes way for a pluralistic, naturalistic epistemology of mind which is modelled on the epistemology of scientific categories. In "**Conscious Kinds in Animal Minds**" (Chapter 4) I apply this epistemological framework to recent foundational disputes in animal sentience research. I defend the claim that the natural kind approach provides a way out of the growing pessimism in this research programme about the prospects for knowing whether consciousness is multiply realisable.

Part III examines the metaphysical implications of the natural kind approach to consciousness when applied to global conscious kinds - global states of consciousness such as dreaming, wakefulness and psychedelic states. In "**Dream Science and the Search for Natural Kinds**" (Chapter 5) I examine a neglected question in dream science: is there a single conscious state individuals surface to while they sleep, or several states of different neurobiological kinds? I argue that this latter view - that dreaming fails to refer to a natural kind - ought to be an open and increasingly plausible possibility for dream science. This has the potential to radically alter the way in which scientific research on dreaming is conducted, and I outline a new methodological framework to replace existing paradigms in dream science. Finally in "**Depression as a Disorder of Consciousness**" (Chapter 6) I extend these ideas on global states of consciousness to psychiatric research, and develop a bold new hypothesis according to which Major Depressive Disorder is a global conscious kind, centrally involving an altered "depressive state" of consciousness. This should constitute a fundamental shift in the way that clinicians and patients think about depression which departs from orthodox conceptions.