

Public Abstract

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Graduation Term: FS 2008

Department: Philosophy

Degree: PhD

Title: THE PHENOMENAL BRAIN: MAKING ROOM FOR A PHENOMENAL-NEURAL TYPE IDENTITY THEORY OF PHENOMENAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Consider what it's like to have a tickle in the nose. Perhaps the most salient feature of such a sensation is the peculiar "tickliness" that seems to be located somewhere in or around your nasal cavity. Now consider any introspectively discernable aspect of any other sort of paradigmatic sensory experience (e.g. visual, auditory, and gustatory experiences). Like the "tickliness" of a nose tickle these other sensory experiences have their own unique "qualitative feels".

If, as physicalist philosophers of mind maintain, all mental phenomena are in some sense physical phenomena, then what sort of physical phenomena are these introspectively discernable "qualitative feels"? According to one type of physicalist view (representationalism), such feels are the qualities that sensory experiences represent. According to another type of physicalist view (type identity theory), such feels are actually neural properties. In THE PHENOMENAL BRAIN I formulate and defend a version of the latter type of view.