

# THIRD PERSON ACCOUNT

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(Way of knowing other's state of consciousness)

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## Abstract:

This assignment is about 'Third Person Account or knowing the other's state of consciousness'. I have tried to best of my analysis and findings and give a idea that how we can be able to know the other's state of consciousness. At first I give the idea of consciousness and with prominent philosopher and psychologist's view on consciousness.

Then I turn to the concept of Third person account what Shaffer named .Then give literature review about the topic with J.A. Shaffer, William James, Bertrand Russell, Rudolf Carnap, Gilbert Ryle, Ludwig Wittgenstein, etc. The purpose of this assignment to find out the problems and tries to give the idea that how we can know other's state of consciousness and understand one's .

## Keyword:

Consciousness, Behaviorism, Disposition of behavior, Shaffer, J. A, J.S. , Mill , William James, Bertrand Russell, Rudolf Carnap (logical positivist behavior, Gilbert Ryle, Ludwig Wittgenstein(ordinary language behaviorism).

Philosophical investigations regarding mind is called Philosophy of mind. But there have various view of mind and today Consciousness is better preferable than the use the term of mind. My attempt to give an idea about the state of other's consciousness that how to we can know perfectly the other's state of mental phenomenon and consciousness.

if we see the history that in ancient Greek, Hibru ,Rome, India ,Egypt , There were various concept about soul. But there were no proper solution to findings. then our philosophical investigation turned to mind rather than soul and last better Consciousness rather than mind. so, my best trying to find a way to know other's state of consciousness and how is it possible way it may work.

**Consciousness:**

There are various definition regarding consciousness. J.A. Shaffer say about consciousness; "It is something which distinguishes man from a good deal of the world around him".(01).Consciousness possessed by only the living, not by the dead which once lived, nor by the inorganic which never lived.

Shaffer say; We can not draw up a dividing line between conscious and non- conscious. Something like the line between green ends and blue start and furthermore we can't draw up a line between man and lower animals, who have conscious or who do not. But There is a different between non conscious and conscious. Shaffer say us that, philosophical inquiry of consciousness is started from here ,by arising a question, What is Consciousness?

John R. Searle stated about the consciousness as a biological entity; "Once we see that consciousness is a biological phenomenon like any other, then it can be investigated neurologically. Consciousness is entirely caused by neurobiological processes and is realized in brain structures."(02)

He another say that; There were, of course, famous earlier twentieth century exceptions to the general reluctance to deal with consciousness, and their work has been valuable. I am thinking in particular of the work of Sir Arthur Sherrington, Roger Sperry, and Sir John Eccles. Whatever was the case 20 years ago, today many serious researchers are attempting to tackle the problem. Among neuroscientists who have written recent books about consciousness are Cotterill (1998), Crick(1994),Damasio (1999), Edelman (1989, 1992), Freeman (1995),Gazzaniga (1988), Greenfield (1995),

Hobson (1999), Libet (1993), and Weiskrantz (1997).

According to G. T. Ladd(19th century Psychologist);" What we are when We awake , as contrasted with what we are when we sink into a profound and perfectly dreamless sleep.(03)

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01. (Shaffer, J.A; *Philosophy of Mind*", p-08).

02.(*Consciousness*, John R. Searle).

03."(*Psychology, Descriptive and Explanatory*, 1894, P-30).

## **The Concept of Third Person Account: (The View Of Other's state of consciousness)**

Third person account deals with the how things are when someone else conscious in some way, which is objective.

according to J.A. Shaffer ; “ The Third Person Account , which results from attending to how things are when someone else is conscious in some way.”(04)

Animals or man behave by stimuli. we can know the person by his behavior, what we expect by stimuli. There are many literature work on the state of consciousness of other's person or Shaffer say what 'Third Person account'.

### **Literature Review:**

#### **\*J.A SHAFFER:**

Shaffer introduced us with Consciousness in second chapter of his book ' Philosophy of Mind'. He stated that when we were to survey the many theories regarding Consciousness ,have been in the twenty five years of known work , we would find them in two general categories namely;

- 1.Subjective (First person account)
- 2.Objective (Third person account)

Shaffer used the 1st person account and the third person account as a linguistic form of grammar. First person account deals with the how things are in one's own case(subjective). And third person account deals with the how things are when someone else conscious in some way, which is objective. Then Shaffer turned to third person account which is my topic of assignment to find out what actually deals with the others Consciousness and how we can know it. Is it only possible by behavior or neurobiology or behavioral psychology or another else? Or not. Let's turn to the view what literature say us regarding third person account or how we can know others Consciousness and it's nature. However Shaffer beginning his inquiry by asking a question that when we ask to a man who have been hit on the head whether he is conscious what do we mean? It is mean that if he response to that stimuli then we can know about his state of consciousness and otherwise not in general. Shaffer say; "That is we expect certain kinds of behavior under certain stimuli." ( 05). And this fact might less us to know and say that " Consciousness " is to be defined in terms of the kind of bodily behavior elicited by certain shorts of stimuli. This definition we can fall under "Behaviorism". Let's see what it say about the process of knowing others state of consciousness?

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04. [J.A Shaffer; *philosophy of mind*, p-15]

05.[J.A Shaffer; *philosophy of mind*, p-14].

## **Behaviorism:**

We can know the person by his behavior, what he react by stimuli.

It was adopted as a level for 20 the century psychology and most psychologist today are greatly indebted to it.

But unfortunately the modern psychologist often failed to makes a distinction between two forms of it, which may be called;

- 1.Methodological behaviorism
- 2.Metaphysical behaviorism

# Methodological behaviorism:

it is in the field of psychology it consist in confining psychology theories to observable behavior.

# Metaphysical behaviorism:

It deal with the nature of consciousness.

Analyzing the expression referring to consciousness.

The first person account and the third person account, the difficulties lies in seeing how the two are related.

Behavior:

- 1.Overt behavior
- 2.covert behavior

We can know one's over behavior but it is difficult to know covert behavior. So behaviorist say about disposition of behavior.

Disposition to behavior:

Disposition are properties of things such as that under certain circumstances the thing has the dispositional properties will undergo a certain change. for example; brittleness is a dispositional property; a thing is brittle if and only if under suitable circumstances it will shatter.

### **The merit of the third person account:**

- to know one's consciousness we go to what he says and does. we look at first his expression and behavior.

- we consider our own state by the referring others state indirectly. when we say something about our feelings, or mental state then we take help of third person's view.

### **Some difficulties of third person account:**

Shaffer say about the difficulties of third person account as following way;

Particular behavior or disposition to behave is important for third person account. But every time particular behavior or disposition to behave are neither necessary nor sufficient conditions for sensation.

Schaeffer say to this view that' it is Neither necessary Nor sufficient.

**Neither necessary:**

Because one can imagine a pain so paralyzing great or so trivially slight that there is no disposition to behave.

**Nor sufficient:**

Because one can imagine such disposition arising from other cause such as the desire to call attention to one self, to deceive others or imitate a person in pain; and you can imagine even that suddenly and unaccountably you might be overcome by a desire to grimace, cry out and limp about, for no reason at all. Let's see prominent thinker who discussed about this topic.

**Jhon Stuart Mill:**

The traditional philosophical justification for belief in other minds is the argument of analogy, which, as cogently stated by Jhon Stuart Mill, a 19th-century empiricist, argues that, because one's body and outward behavior are observably similar to the bodies and behavior of others, one is justified by analogy in believing that others have feelings like one's own and not simply the bodies and behavior of automatons.

**Mill's in Criticism:**

This argument has been repeatedly attacked since the 1940s, although some philosophers continue to defend certain forms of it. Norman Malcolm, an American disciple of Wittgenstein, asserted that the argument is either superfluous or its conclusion unintelligible to the person who would make it, because, in order to know what the conclusion "that human figure has thoughts and feelings" means, one would have to know what criteria are involved in correctly or incorrectly stating that someone has thoughts or feelings—and knowledge of these criteria would render the argument from analogy unnecessary. Defenders of the argument have maintained, however, that, since both the person making the argument and others describe inner feelings in similar ways and seemingly understand each other, reference to a common language justifies the argument from analogy better than does observation of similarities of bodies and outward behavior.

Another objection to the argument is that it seems to assume that one in fact knows what it is to have feelings simply by introspection. This assumption has been objected to by followers of Wittgenstein, who think that it leads to the possibility of a private language to describe one's own sensations, a possibility that Wittgenstein rejected on various grounds. Such philosophers maintain that one simply does not know what one's own feelings are in a way appropriate to the argument until one has learned from experience with others how to describe such feelings in appropriate language. Some philosophers have thought, however, that this situation leads to the conclusion that one can be wrong when one says, "My tooth aches" in the same way that one can be mistaken when one says, "John's tooth aches." This thesis is unacceptable to many, who hold that sincere first-person present-tense statements about sensations cannot be false—i.e., they are incorrigible.

Let's turn to what says James to this view in his work.

William James famously maintained, “that 'consciousness,' when once it has evaporated to this estate of pure diaphaneity, is on the point of disappearing altogether. It is the name of a nonentity, and has no right to a place among first principles. Those who still cling to it are clinging to a mere echo, the faint rumor left behind by the disappearing 'soul' upon the air of philosophy.” (06).

James hastened to add, that he meant "only to deny that the word [‘consciousness’] stands for an entity, but to insist most emphatically that it does stand for a function" (James 1912). The James-Lange theory of emotions -- which holds that "*the bodily changes follow directly the PERCEPTION of the exciting fact, and that our feeling of the same changes as they occur IS the emotion* (James 1884: 189-190) -inging to a mere echo, the faint rumor left behind by the disappearing 'soul' upon the air of philosophy. (07)

## Bertrand Russell

Bertrand Russell was among the first philosophers to recognize the philosophical significance of the behaviorist revolution Watson proposed. “Though never a card-carrying behaviorist himself -- insisting that the inwardness or "privacy" of "sense-data" "does not by itself make [them] unamenable to scientific treatment" (Russell 1921: 119) -- Russell, nevertheless, asserted that behaviorism "contains much more truth than people suppose" and regarded it "as desirable to develop the behaviorist method to the fullest possible extent" (Russell 1927: 73), proposing a united front between behaviorism and science-friendly *analytic philosophy* of mind. Such fronts soon emerged on both the "formal language" and "ordinary language" sides of ongoing analytic philosophical debate.” (08)

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06.(James, William. "Does 'Consciousness' Exist?" Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods 1 (1912): 477-491.

07. Online: <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/James/consciousness.html>.

08. Russell, Bertrand. Philosophy . New York: W. W. Norton, 1927.

### logical positivist behaviorist : Rudolf Carnap

“What is sometimes called the "formalist" or "ideal language" line of analytic philosophy seeks the logical and empirical regimentation of (would-be) scientific language for the sake of its scientific improvement. "Logical behaviorism" refers, most properly, to Carnap and Hempel's proposed regimentation of psychological discourse on behaviorist lines, calling for analyses of mental terms along lines consonant with the Logical Empiricist doctrine of *verificationism* (resembling the "operations" of P.W. Bridgman 1927) they espoused. According to verificationism, a *theoretic* attribution -- say of *temperature* -- as in "it's 23.4° centigrade" "affirms nothing other than" that certain "physical test sentences obtain": sentences describing the would-be "coincidence between the level of the mercury and the mark of the scale numbered 23.4" on a mercury thermometer, and "other coincidences," for other measuring instruments (Hempel 1949: 16-17). Similarly, it was proposed, that for scientific psychological purposes, "the meaning of a psychological statement consists solely in the function of abbreviating the description of certain modes of physical response characteristic of the bodies of men and animals" (Hempel 1949: 19), the modes of physical response by which we test the truth of our psychological attributions. "Paul has a toothache" for instance would abbreviate "Paul weeps and makes gestures of such and such kinds"; "At the question 'What is the matter?', Paul utters the words 'I have a toothache'"; and so on (Hempel 1949: 17). As Carnap and Hempel came to give up verificationism, they gave up logical behaviorism, and came to hold, instead, that "the introduction and application of psychological terms and hypotheses is logically and methodologically analogous to the introduction and application of the terms and hypotheses of a physical theory." Theoretical terms on this newly emerging (and now prevalent) view need only be *loosely* tied to observational tests *in concert* with other terms of the theory. They needn't be fully characterized, each in terms of its own observations, as on the "narrow translationist" (Hempel 1977: 14) doctrine of logical behaviorism. As verificationism went, so went logical behaviorism: liberalized requirements for the empirical grounding of theoretical posits encouraged the taking of "cognitive scientific" liberties (in practice) and (in theory) the growth of cognitivist sympathies among analytic philosophers of mind. Still, despite having been renounced by its champions as unfounded and having found no new champions; and despite seeming, with hindsight, clearly false; logical behaviorism continues to provoke philosophical discussion, perhaps due to that very clarity. Appreciation of *how* logical behaviorism went wrong ([below](#)) is widely regarded by cognitivists as the best propaedeutic to their case for robust recourse to hypotheses about internal computational mechanisms.” (09)

### Ordinary Language Behaviorists: Gilbert Ryle, Ludwig Wittgenstein

- The "ordinary language" movement in the work of Ryle and Wittgenstein around the middle of the twentieth century. what's the standpoint of them let's see;
- Ryle claims, "presuppose the legitimacy of the disjunction 'Either there exist minds or there exist bodies (but not both)'" which "would be like saying, 'Either she bought a left-hand and a right-hand glove or she bought a pair of gloves (but not both)'" (Ryle 1949: 22-3).” (10)

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09. ([https://www.iep.utm.edu/behavior/logical\\_behaviorist/](https://www.iep.utm.edu/behavior/logical_behaviorist/))

10. ( Ryle, Gilbert. *The Concept of Mind*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949.)

• ( Place, Ullin T. "Ryle's Behaviorism." *Handbook of Behaviorism*. Ed. William O'Donohue and Richard Kitchener. San Diego: Academic Press, 1999.)

Wittgenstein and Ryle offer broadly dispositional stories about how mentalistic talk *does* work, in place of "the model of 'object and designation'" they reject.

According to Wittgenstein on the object-designation model -- where the object is supposed to be *private* or introspected -- it "drops out of consideration as irrelevant" (Wittgenstein 1953: §293): the "essential thing about private experience" here is "not that each person possesses his own exemplar" but "that nobody knows whether other people also have this or something else". So, if "someone tells me that he knows what pain is only from his own case" this would be as if "everyone had a box with something in it: we call it a `beetle'. No one can look in anyone else's box, and everyone says he knows what a beetle is only by looking at his beetle. -- Here it would be quite possible for everyone to have something different in his box. One might even imagine such a thing constantly changing. -- But suppose the word `beetle' had a use in these people's language? -- If so, it would not be used as the name of a thing. The thing in the box has no place in the language-game at all; not even as a something: for the box might even be empty. -- No, one can `divide through' by the thing in the box; it cancels out, whatever it is."(11)

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( 11) Wittgenstein." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 2(1965): 281-295)

I assumed from above mentioned theories regarding third person account or another's nature of consciousness.

If we consider an experiment about to know other's state of consciousness that; if we put an experimental work with two new born child, we put them in control environment that in which will have some conditions that ,by growing their physical growth we teach them only the term of physical phenomenon and strictly not the mental terms like we use in our feelings, happy, pain, etc. Then after some years when they will able to communication with each another ( the two child only). What will be happen when they communicate with each another? What's linguistic term they will apply to express their state of feelings, pain, pleasure? How they use the language, what didn't taught them about mental terms, by born? It is possible to share same feelings in same terms? Must be not, because if this two person who aren't taught the mental terms by born, feels same feelings in same stimuli then they can't use the same term to express in language.

So The assertion of linguistic philosopher that, problems of meaning and verification are not dependable basement to know other's state of consciousness.

Even If we take their defense that problems of meaning and verification then we have to take challenge to change and re-arrange of linguistic term in mental phenomenon or consciousness. But it is too hard to take the challenge.

So , my view that The problems is not in verification and meaning .I guesses that the problems are in another fact.

I also found the main problem in behaviorism that as we are rational being so in every stimuli we can't behave instantly and even not in later, because we have controlling tool like rationality and control our feelings or emotional situation. So, this placement of our feelings create the difficulties to understand others state of consciousness and feelings. But other animals can behave instantly with the response of stimuli.

## **Findings:**

In findings I tries to show my personal opinion about the study of Third person account or another's nature of consciousness. How we can know this?

I also prefer the idea of Jhon Stuart mill' organic analogy of human being. But I Don't agree totally with his view that , by organic analogical side and action we measure or know other's state of consciousness. Because DNA coding and by charecters one is even subtle differ from another , so totally we can't know but many we can know rather than totally.

To give my view, I take help of another's way that modern biological science and neuroscience give us a discoveries that every person has particular different DNA coding, which one is different from another.

If each DNA is quite different then their (DNA) characters will not same at all. Even twine

brother's characters will not in same, their will be a subtle different.

Here a question arise that how we express (,Probably) same word or near same term to express our feelings or mental state of consciousness? It is not proved the using same term in mental

phenomenon or consciousness, like pain, pleasure etc. but it may be said the probably same term to use express our feelings.

The theories and science couldn't give me proper solution. Like,  
 Neurophysiology and psychology couldn't give me proper solution.  
 Epiphenomenalism didn't give me satisfaction of solution.  
 Observation theory didn't so.  
 Behaviorism couldn't give fully proof.  
 So, how we reach the proper solution to know other's state of consciousness.

Neuropsychology and neuroscience deals with ----- neuron transmission  
 Behaviorism deals with ----- behavior  
 Linguistic philosophy ----- linguistic verification and meaning

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so, from above discussion I think that this debate of third person account is may be in the station of solution that if we take help of neuroscience to explain the neuron – chemical transmission and then we turn to reaction of organism and fall eye to behavior of person and critically see the environmental fact and situational fact , then it may be reach in a way by the hand of science and philosophical inquiry.

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