

PSYC CHAPTER 3

CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE TWO-TRACK MIND (P 84-92)

Brain States & Consciousness

- Defining consciousness
 - Consciousness – our awareness of ourselves and our environment
 - Some states occur spontaneously – daydreaming, drowsiness, dreaming
 - Physiologically – hallucinations, orgasm, food or oxygen starvation
 - Psychologically- sensory deprivation, hypnosis, meditation
- The Biology of Consciousness
 - Cognitive neuroscience – study of connection between brain activity and cognitive processes (e.g. perception, thinking, language, and memory)
 - Evidence of consciousness even when lack ability to communicate
 - Dual Processing: The Two-Track Mind
 - Dual processing – we evaluate our environment both consciously and unconsciously
 - Unconsciously: color, motion, form, depth
 - Conscious: pretty bird
 - Blind sight- respond to visual stimulus without consciously experiencing it
 - Functioning *visual action track*: they know how to interact with an object
 - Can see and recognize objects but difficulty pointing toward or grasping
 - Functioning *visual perception track*
 - Unconscious – works in parallel (you can do them simultaneously)
 - Conscious- sequential and deliberate (have to choose what to focus your consciousness/attention on)
 - Selective Attention: focus conscious awareness on a particular stimulus
 - Cocktail party effect – can ignore all other incoming information, but become aware of own name
 - Implies that some of that other stuff in the environment is getting through at an unconscious level
 - ...And Accidents
 - When engaged in task, blink less
 - Cost involved in shifting attention
 - No significant difference in accident risk between handheld and hands-free devices
 - Selective Inattention

- Inattention blindness- failing to see visible objects when our attention is directed elsewhere
- Change blindness - failing to notice changes in the environment