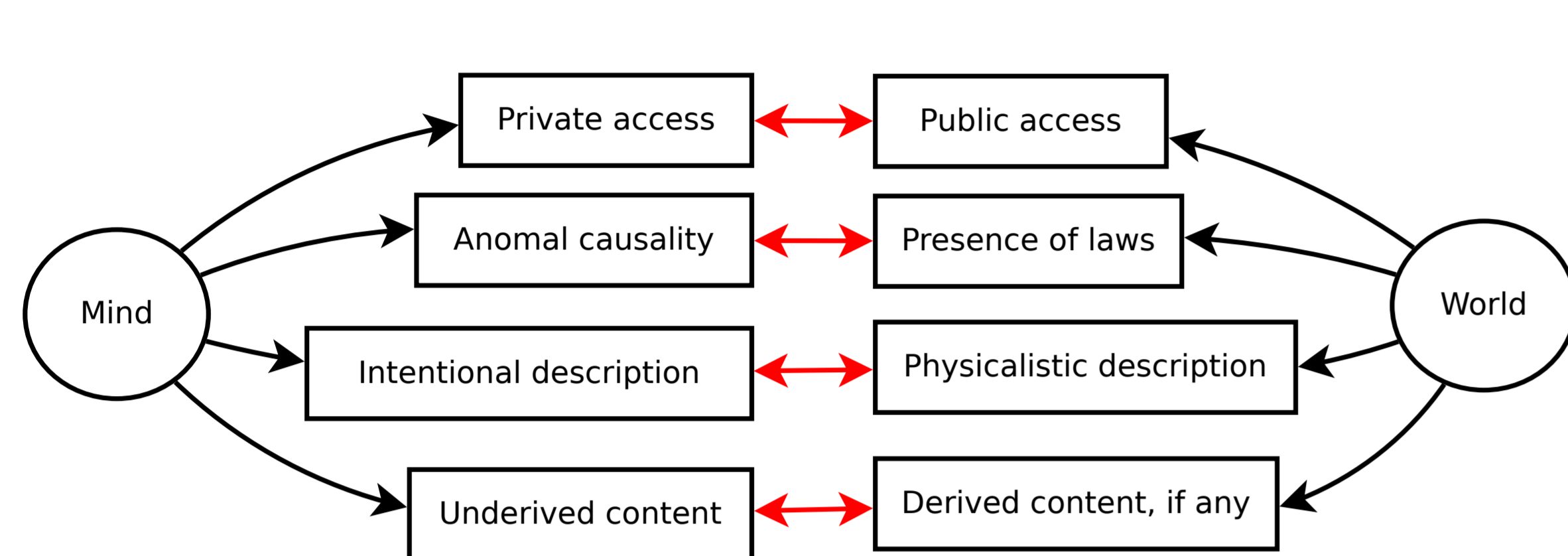


# Only Friends, despite the rumors

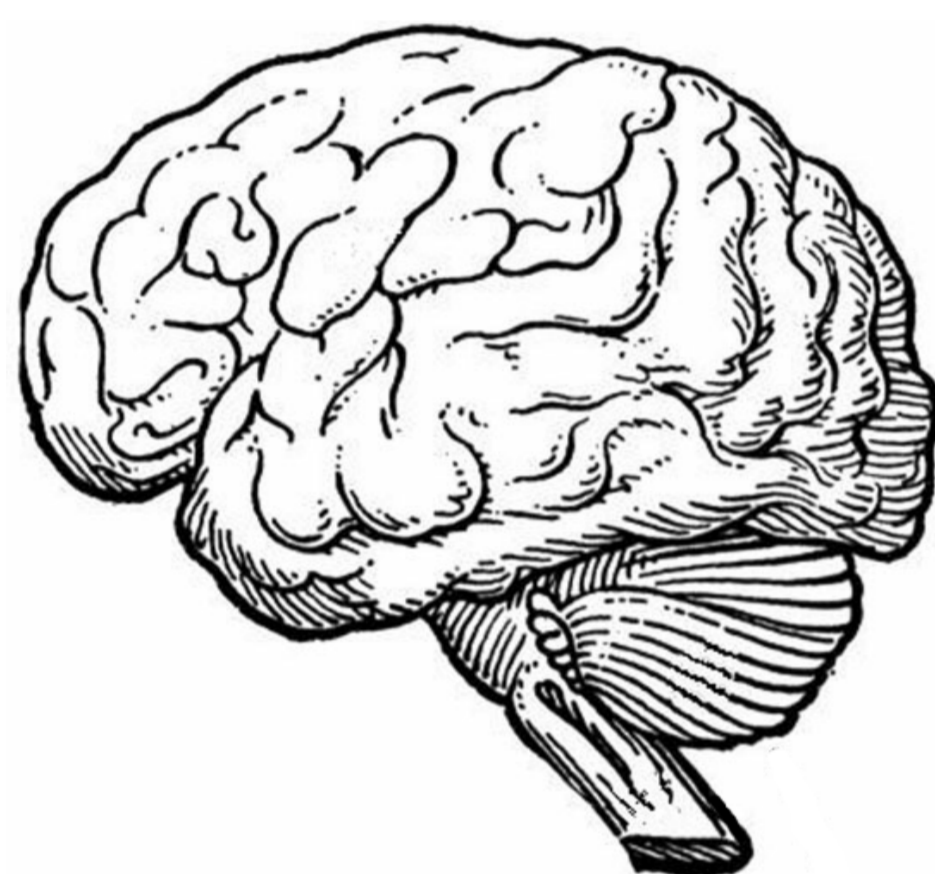
## Philosophy of mind's Consciousness & Intentionality

### 1 Wedge Philosophy

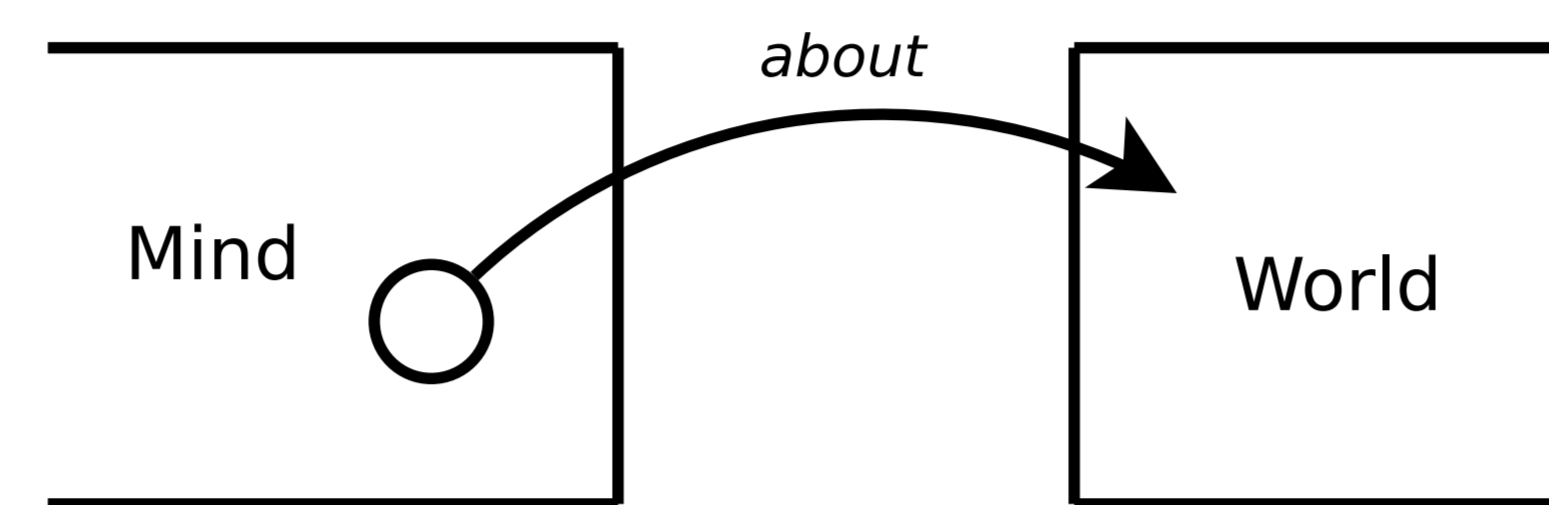
Traditional philosophy of mind has been operating under the assumption of a mild form of ontological dualism.



Philosophy of mind has largely been drawing a picture of the mind as a sort of exception to normal laws of physics.



Yet, the mind must be realized by physical stuff.



The capacity of a mental state to have content is analysed in this light

**(Brentanian) Intentionality**  
Faculty of the mind which enables something, like a mental state, to be about something else.

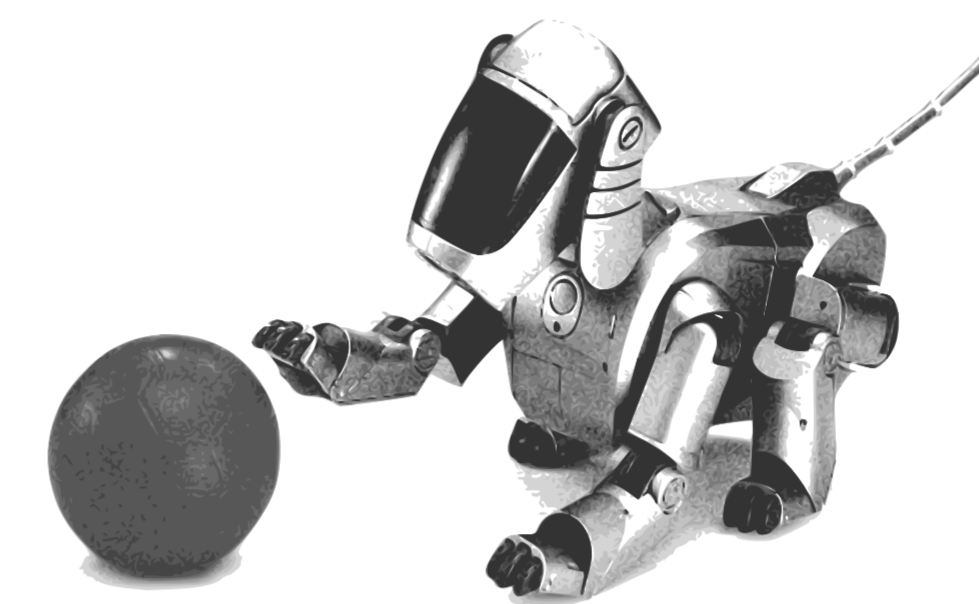
**(Minimal) Consciousness**  
That which feels; the subject of phenomenal experience. In relation to intentional content: that to which it is presented.

There is a sense that they must be studied **together**

Searle (1991): consciousness is implicit in intentionality. It is the relatum to which intentionality relates its object.

### 3 Intentionality Naturalized

Symbol Grounding



For a mental state to be about something else, it must be **grounded** in the world with sensorimotor interactions.

→ A machine could not produce intentionality if it did not have sensorimotor faculties.

Evolutionary Robotics

Furnish models of cognitive systems which seem to lack implementation of a proper symbolic representational system, in the traditional sense of the word, yet present intelligent behaviour

Anti-representationalism

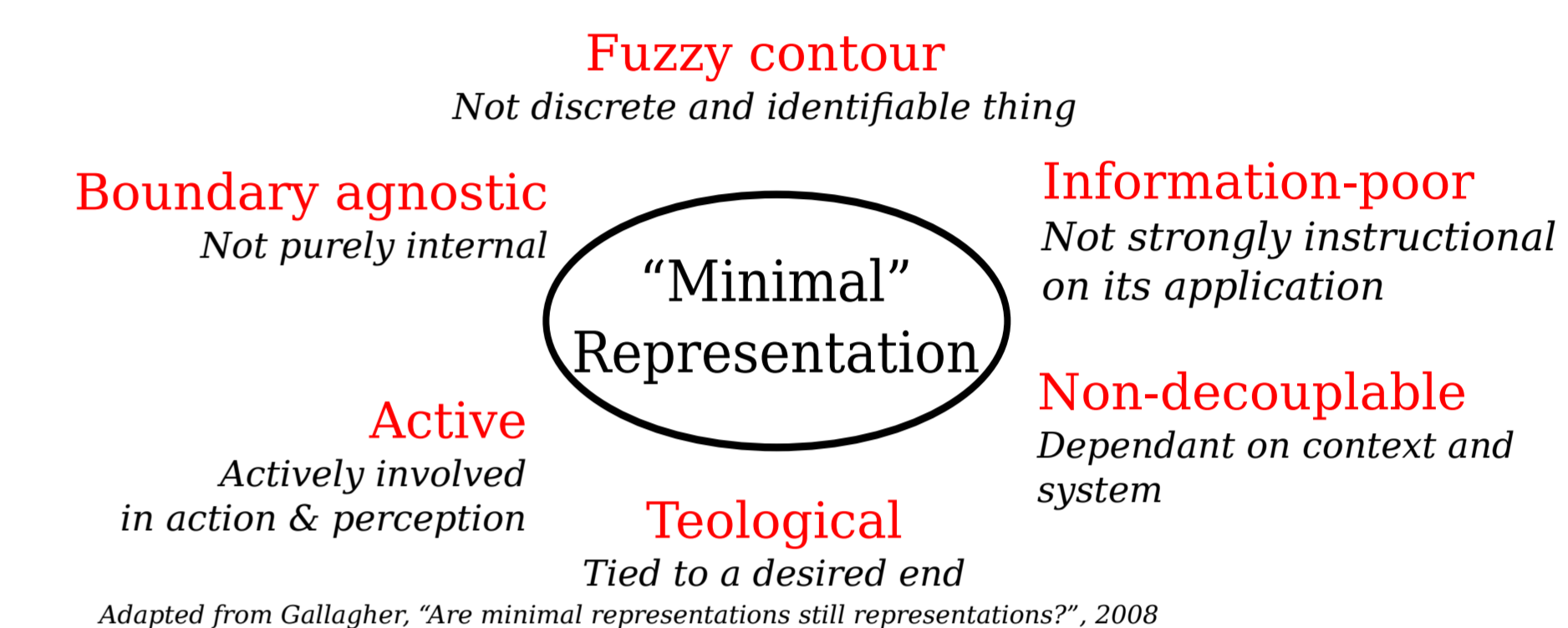
Systems can be described using representational or non-representational descriptions, but the latter involves postulating extra entities (nomological danglers)

Reinterpreting Content

**"Minimal" Representations**

Response to anti-representationalism  
Non-traditional type of representation to account for successes of evolutionary robotics

→ Components of a system which embody information about something, and which are responsible for behaviour towards this object.



**Naturalized Intentionality**

The concept of intentionality implied in minimal representations:

- A disposition, a coupling or a set of processes, but not a relation
- Violates particularism of the mind
- Made to be applied to machines

A priori connection with consciousness is broken

### 2 Mind and World Back Together

Understanding content and representation involves more than just the mind.

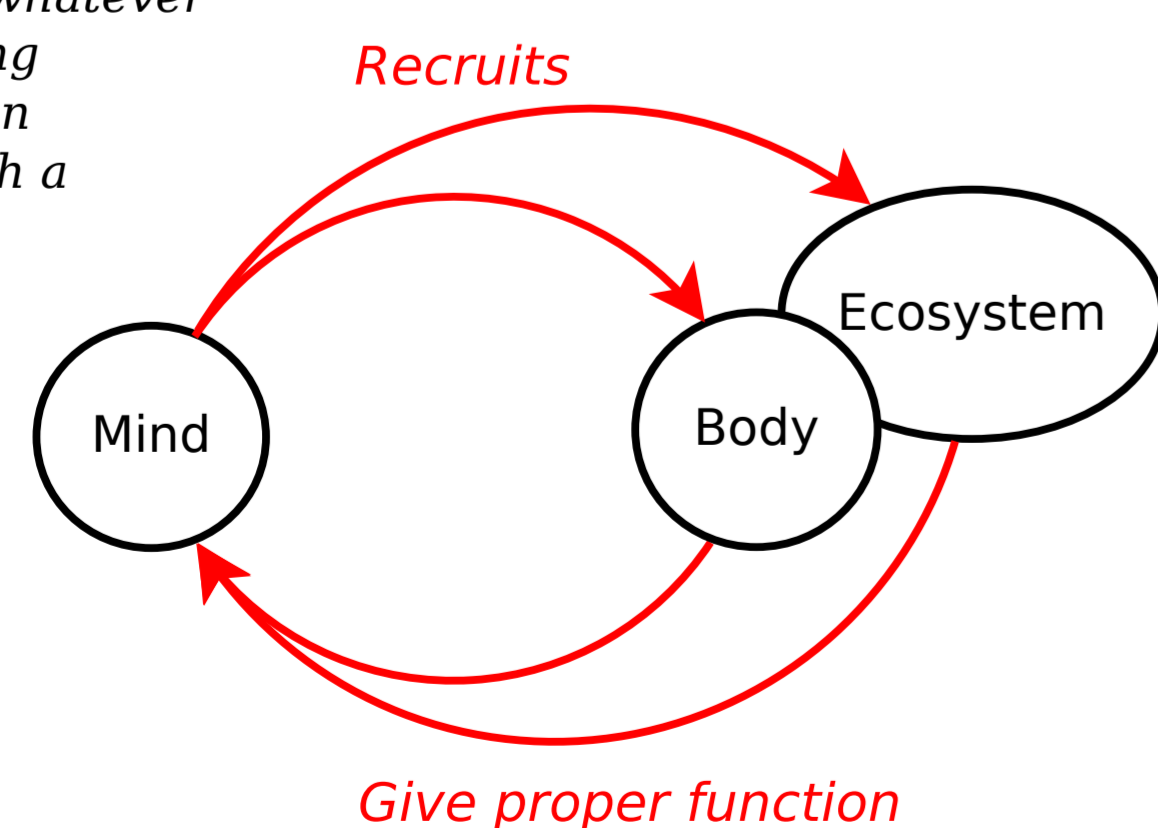
Recruitment

**Principle of Ecological Assembly**

To perform their functions at the lowest energy cost possible, organisms **recruit** resources from the environment

→ Applies to cognition in particular

"The canny cognizer tends to recruit, on the spot, whatever mix of problem-solving resources will yield an acceptable result with a minimum of effort."  
(Clark, 2008, 13)



Ecology and Proper Function

An organism's faculties are to be understood in relation with the organism itself, its ecosystem and its evolutionary history (Millikan 1984)

- Something's proper function is defined by its contribution to them
- Thus an organism's faculties depend on external environment in order to function.

Cognitive processes involves processes that span across brain, body and world.

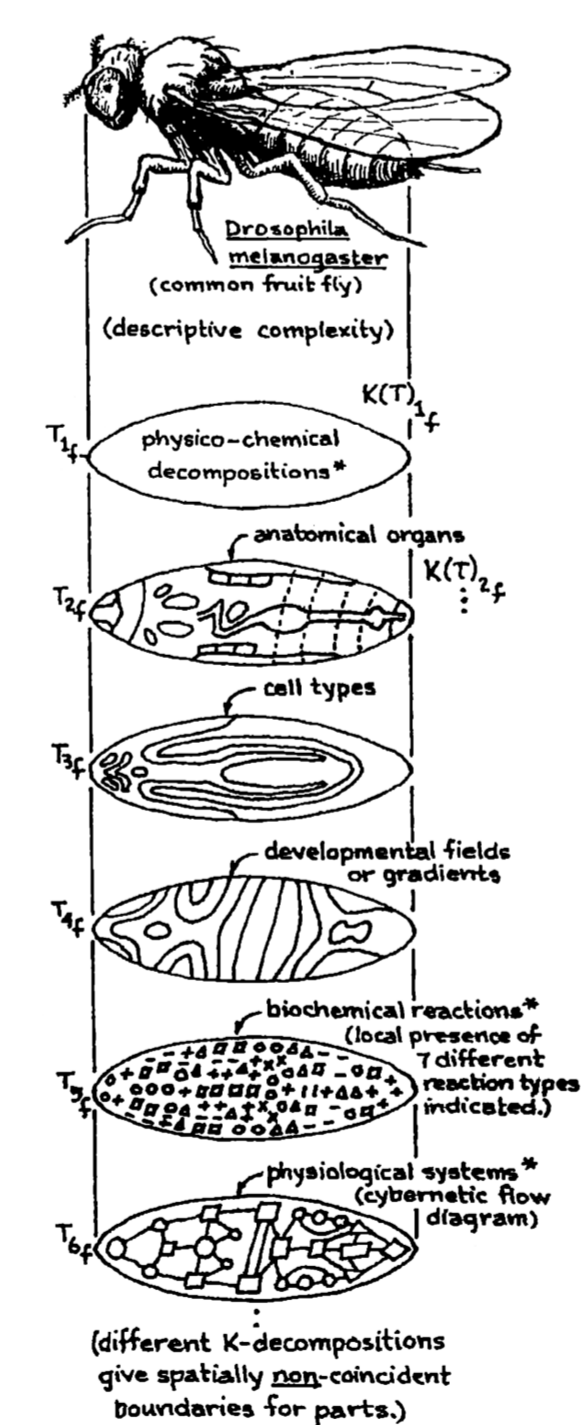
Transcranial Ontology in Cognitive Science

Some cognitive functions are best explained using holistic terms and frameworks, such as dynamical systems theory.

In the holistic systems described by such frameworks, the smallest units may extend into the environment (when they can be localized at all)

Boundaries

If a boundary is relevant for a form of description, it by no means guarantees it is relevant for another form of description.



From Wimsatt (2007), Re-Engineering Philosophy for Limited Being, p. 1999

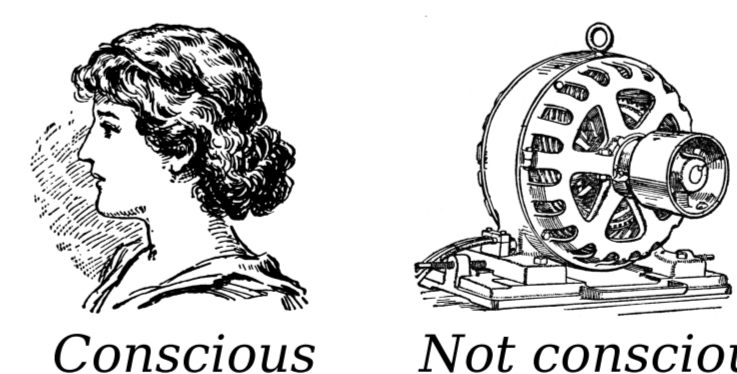
Embodied / Extended Mind

Mental processes, if they do not extend into body and environment, rely heavily on them.

### 4 Consciousness Trivialized

Consciousness in Embodied Science

**Consciousness Discontinuity**



Minimal consciousness is an **either/or concept**: either you are subject of phenomenal experience (even minimally) or you aren't.

→ Fuzzy categories of embodied cognition make it harder to accommodate consciousness

**Stance and Reality**



One might think consciousness should **transcend the descriptive stance** used to account for phenomena

→ However, current cognitive ontological categories are different whether one adopts a dynamical or an information-processing descriptive stance

Emergence

Consciousness as **emerging** from interactions between mind, body and world.

→ It may explain, to a certain degree, content and quality of experience

But consciousness entailed by physical interactions?

→ **Extra hypothesis**: plays no role in explaining content of experience

⇒ Therefore it is **ad hoc**  
(Similar things can be said of many enterprises to explain consciousness)

Disclaimer



Emergence, 2008, sculpture by Sayaka Kajita Ganz

One afternoon a student said "Roshi, I don't really understand what's going on. I mean, we sit in zazen and we gassho to each other and everything, and Felicia got enlightened when the bottom fell out of her water-bucket, and Todd got enlightened when you popped him one with your staff, and people work on koans and get enlightened, but I've been doing this for two years now, and the koans don't make any sense, and I don't feel enlightened at all! Can you just tell me what's going on?"

other a psychological state that involves the unmediated experience of the world, because we believe that that state has certain desirable properties. It's impossible in general to reach that state through any particular form or method, since forms and methods are themselves examples of the mediators that we are trying to avoid. So we employ a variety of ad hoc means, some linguistic like koans and some non-linguistic like zazen, in hopes that for any given student one or more of our methods will, in whatever way, engender the condition of non-mediated experience that is our goal. And since even thinking in terms of mediators and goals tends to reinforce our undesirable dependency on concepts, we actively discourage exactly this kind of analytical discourse.

"Well you see," Roshi replied, "for most people, and especially for most educated people like you and I, what we perceive and experience is heavily mediated, through language and concepts that are deeply ingrained in our ways of thinking and feeling. Our objective here is to induce in ourselves and in each other the student was enlightened."