

Re: Peterson's Death Sentence

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On Sun, 30 Jan 2005 23:21:19 +0000 (UTC), Willem <willem@stack.nl> wrote:

>*John wrote:*

>) *OK. I agree with you and John Woodgate and Kevin that color is a
>) continuum, but I don't agree that separate consciousnesses spring into
>) being indiscriminately across the spectrum.*

>

>*I've never said that consciousnesses spring into being period, let alone
>indiscriminately across the spectrum.*

OK. I got confused, Sorry.

>'spring into being' implies some
>kind of timescale, which is totally irrelevant when measuring if an entity
>is conscious or not.

If you accept that there is a lapse of time between conception and the onset of consciousness, then time certainly becomes relevant in determining whether an entity has achieved that onset.

>) What I'm trying to do is to point out that I believe that
>) consciousness arises after a discrete period of development, that
>) period of development being akin to walking down an avenue with
>) intersecting streets, each intersection being where a particular
>) consciousness occurs.

>

>Are you talking about consciousness in an individual during his lifespan,
>or consciousness on the evolutionary scale, as a measurement? I think the
>former. Doesn't really matter anyway, because either way the arguments
>are pretty much the same.

If it doesn't matter, then why bother asking?

I'm talking about the interval of time between conception and the onset of consciousness.

>) As far as I recall, you posted that it was
>) "more like" consciousnesses traversing a spectrum and I took exception
>) to that and used the single-electron analogy to show what I consider
>) to be the discrete nature of the event. Then, the discussion abruptly
>) changed from one of the discrete VS continuous nature of burgeoning
>) consciousness to "this is what color really is". Fair enough, but I

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>) still think it's a discrete event, and I don't believe you've proved
>) that it isn't.
>
>Where did this 'event' business come from ? Is it an event in the lifespan
>of an individual ?

The 'event' is the onset of consciousness, and the single-electron
analogy was used to locate/define a particular place in the spectrum
where the event took place. Say, 700nm for lizards and 400nm for us.

>Anyway, what I'm talking about is that viewing a certain entity as either
>conscious or not conscious is strictly less general than viewing it as
>having a certain degree of consciousness.

Certainly true, but if you accept that life precedes the onset of
consciousness, then that gap has to be accounted for, so what's your
point?
>This stems from the fact that
>you can easily go from a spectrum to a discrete yes/no result by imposing a
>certain threshold.

Yes, I know. I've already brought up the threshold argument by
likening consciousness to a voltage and the threshold of consciousness
to the reference voltage, both voltages being the inputs to a voltage
comparator.

>In other words: viewing consciousness as a spectrum is more general,
>and therefore more useful.

No. My analogy of streets intersecting an avenue, JW's expansion of
that to include a hill up which the avenue proceeds, and yours of a
spectrum are all approximately equally useful for visualizing the
concept.

>>) If you're interested in what he thinks, it would probably be a good
>>) idea to read the relevant post or get him to clear it up instead of
>>) guessing about it.
>>)
>>) I don't care.
>)
>) ---
>) You should, since you're claiming to that Kevin hasn't contradicted
>) himself, and your argument is based on that claim.
>
>Nonsense. I don't need to know what someone thinks to be able to decide
>if some of his statements contradict each other or not. All I need is to
>investigate those statements. Which I did adequately.
>
>>) I refuted your assertion that Kevin has contradicted himself.
>>) Would you care to actually address this point, or are you just going
>>) to attack me on meaningless side points ?
>)
>) ---
>) Either one is just fine with me, but if you want to discuss the
>) so-called "refutation", I suggest you acquaint yourself with the
>) earlier material of Kevin's which took a position opposite to the one
>) you're referring to.
>
>What you did was paraphrase some of Kevins statements, and then claim that
>these statements contradict each other. I refuted that claim, based

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>solely on your paraphrasing.
>If there is some other material that you did not mention in your original
>claim that he contradicted himself, it is your fault for not quoting or
>paraphrasing it.
>
>Put more simply:
>
>K: 'statement 2'.
>J: K said 'statement 1' some while back which contradicts 'statement 2'.
>me: Those two statements do not contradict one another.
>
>>Prove it. Refute my argument that shows you can support both viewpoints.
>
>) ---
>) OK, refresh my memory. What are the two viewpoints?
>
>Here's the quote:
>----- Start quote -----
>>This is simply speculation. I disagree completely. There is no evidence
>>whatsoever that consciousness has a threshold. There are good arguments
>>against such a view.
>
>---
>Yet, in an earlier post, you stated:
>
>"Complete nonsense. We only need you be concerned about a "life" after
>it has first become *conscious*. Before something becomes conscious it
>is no more then a carrot. What *makes* a life, that needs
>consideration for its *own* sake, is a brain. Period."
>
>Which seems to indicate that you do consider there to be a period
>before which consciousness occurs and a period after. Such being the
>case, then there must necessarily be a threshold between the two
>states, that threshold being when consciousness occurs.
>
>I don't believe you can support both viewpoints simultaneously, so
>when do you suppose you'll waffle back to your earlier so-firmly-held
>belief?
>----- End quote -----
>
>To paraphrase, the two viewpoints are:
>
>1 -
>There is a period when something is not conscious, and a period when it is.
>
>2 -
>Consciousness does not have a threshold.
>
>
>These are not contradictory because, as I have said earlier, the existence
>of the points 'not conscious' and 'conscious' do *not* imply that there is
>a threshold where 'not conscious' suddenly becomes 'conscious'; there can
>also be a gradient somewhere between those two points.
>
>
>There. Refute that.

OK. Ready?
To start with, you claim that 2, which contains:
"I don't believe you can support both viewpoints simultaneously, so
when do you suppose you'll waffle back to your earlier so-firmly-held
belief?"

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was written before 1, so clearly my reference to his earlier post could not have been written with reference to 1.

That is, you have pretty much stated that the Shroud of Turin was discovered in 500BC.

Would you care to go back and dig around some more?^)

>) That's not a reason. I'll act as I please and comment on the behavior
>) of others whenever and however I please, with or without your
>) approval, thank you very much.

>

>Most people would call that two-faced and quite arrogant, and I would
>have to agree.

Two-faced would be pretending to be what I am not, and I don't see where telling you that I'll do what I want to do is that. Arrogant? Well... sometimes. Sarcastic, definitely.

>Anyway, I'll consider this statement an admission that
>anyone can dismiss your comments on their behaviour, as you do theirs.

Consider what you like,

1. ??? My comments have no "behavior", so your statement is nonsensical.
2. ??? You don't identify which statement you consider an admission, so your statement is nonsensical.
3. Your assertion that your consideration of something makes it what you assert it to be is without merit, so your statement is inaccurate.
4. Anyone can dismiss my comments for whatever reason they choose, with or without your "considered" opinion, so your pomposity is reflected in your statement.
5. Fuck you.

--

John Fields