

Daniel Immerman
Phil Mind

Reading Questions for March 23

These questions cover a chapter called “Consciousness” from a book titled *Engaging Buddhism: Why it Matters to Philosophy* written by Jay L. Garfield. The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

Background:

Now we’re focusing on the question: “What are some of the key debates in philosophy of mind in Asian traditions?” We’re going to go somewhat narrow, focusing on Buddhism and consciousness, so that way we can get a good discussion going, and so that our debate will link up with things we’ve discussed earlier in this semester. But at the beginning of class I’ll very briefly mention some of the other debates. In reading, you should pay special attention to the discussion of Yogacara Buddhism because that will be the focus of next class.

Questions:

1. On pages 122-4, Garfield distinguishes four senses of the term “consciousness”. What are the four senses? On pages 127-8, Garfield introduces some Sanskrit terms that are related to consciousness. What are the key terms and what do they mean?
2. (*) In section 3 (pages 128-31) Garfield discusses the connections that Buddhists think do and do not exist between consciousness and the self. What do they think regarding these connections and why do they think it? Are they right? Why?
3. (*) In the first part of section 7 (156-157) Garfield raises some skepticism about the existence of qualia. Why is he skeptical? Are his reasons good ones? Why?
4. (*) In the second part of section 7 (157-62), Garfield runs through four Buddhist views on perceptual experience. Which of these views (if any) do you find most plausible? Why?