

Name: .....

### TEST III

#### LINGUA INGLESE - ANALISI DEI TESTI FILOSOFICI

14/12/2009

*Animal Consciousness: what matters and why*  
Daniel Dennett

1. What does the expression “phenomenal consciousness” refers to?
2. What is Dennett’s criticism to Nagel’s paper?
3. What is the difference between “first-person” evidence and “third-person” evidence? Make some examples.
4. Dennett, in his paper, speaks about a robot (Cog). Why?
5. What is the “Cartesian Theater”?
6. What is Nagel’s philosophical claim about animal consciousness in his “What it is like to be a bat?”

TRUE/FALSE

Answer “TRUE” or “FALSE” to the following statements:

According to Dennett:

7. The distinction between conscious and unconscious has something to do with judgment.
8. Consciousness is an all-or-nothing sort of phenomenon.
9. If we want to say something about consciousness, then we should analyze human behavior.
10. Human consciousness and animal consciousness are alike.
11. If we want to know what animal consciousness is, then we should start from analyzing human consciousness.
12. Animals are beset by the illusion of Cartesian Theater.
13. People find it hard to attribute consciousness to robots.
14. In order to support or reject hypotheses about animal consciousness, we should rely on third-person behavioral evidence.

## SUMMARIZING

### ***Exercise A***

*Read the following passage, and summarize it in less than three sentences:*

“Cog, a delightfully humanoid robot being built at MIT, has eyes, hands, and arms that move the way yours do: swiftly, relaxedly, compliantly (Dennett, 1994). Even those of us working on the project, knowing full well that we have not even begun to program the high level processes that might arguably endow Cog with consciousness, get an almost overwhelming sense of being in the presence of another conscious observer when Cog's eyes still quite blindly and stupidly follow one's hand gestures. Once again, I plead for symmetry: when you acknowledge the power of such elegant, lifelike motions to charm you into an illusion, note that it ought to be an open question, still, whether you are also being charmed by your beloved dog or cat or the noble elephant. Feelings are too easy to provoke for them to count for much here.”

### ***Exercise B***

*Read the following passage, and summarize it in less than three sentences:*

“In order to be conscious -- in order to be the sort of thing it is like something to be -- it is necessary to have a certain sort of informational organization that endows that thing with a wide set of cognitive powers (such as the powers of reflection and re- representation). This sort of internal organization does not come automatically with so-called "sentience." It is not the birthright of mammals or warm-blooded creatures or vertebrates; it is not even the birthright of human beings. It is an organization that is swiftly achieved in one species, ours, and in no other. Other species no doubt achieve somewhat similar organizations, but the differences are so great that most of the speculative translations of imagination from our case to theirs make no sense.”