Explaining consciousness is one of the last great unanswered scientific and philosophical problems. Immediately known, familiar and obvious, consciousness is also baffling, opaque and strange. This introduction to the problems posed by consciousness discusses the most important work of cognitive science, neurophysiology and philosophy of mind of the past thirty years and presents an up to date assessment of the issues and debates. The reader is first introduced to the way that consciousness has been thought about in the history of philosophy and psychology. The author then presents an informal and largely non-technical account of the properties of consciousness that are thought to be the most paradigmatic and problematic. Recent scientific work on consciousness, from neurophysiological studies of the brain and evolutionary studies of the development of consciousness to computational theories of the mind are then examined and the philosophical problems that these accounts raise are systematically introduced. The final chapters of the book consider more practical matters by addressing self-deception, neuroses, the unconscious and notions of the self, before concluding with an assessment of the future for psychology and the philosophy of mind.

My Personal Review:
I considered writing a review of Rex Welshons recent book Philosophy, Neuroscience, and Philosophy, but I have found no words which more concisely describe the books content and value than the words that are already printed on the back cover.

Welshon investigates consciousness and its relation to the brain, covering both philosophical and neuroscientific literature in great depth. This combination of philosophy with a detailed review and analysis of relevant neuroscience is very welcome. Several leading philosophers draw heavily on developments in neuroscience without providing ordinary readers with the background they need to understand those developments for themselves. This book provides both means and motivation for philosophers to incorporate significant knowledge of neuroscience into their reflections. A valuable contribution to the literature.

This, from Stephen Butterfill (University of Warwick), says it all...well, it might not say enough about Welshons commendable impartiality and
fairness to both philosophers and neuroscientists. I highly recommend the book to anyone wanting to learn about philosophy of mind and/or neuroscience. It is highly educational (the appendix alone could be republished as An Introduction to Neuroscience). It would also be a great assigned text in a philosophy of mind course or even a philosophy of science course.

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