

V Aspects of Relational Consciousness	293
15 The Varieties of Consciousness	295
16 Philosophical Questions	327
17 A Scientific Model of the Mind?	341
Notes	353
References	357
Index	375

Preface

This book was written in the excitement of the gathering race to understand consciousness. There is a feeling among scientists that the time is now becoming ripe for the difficult problem of consciousness finally to be solved once and for all. Consciousness has led humans to many weird and wonderful explanations, but the development of new experimental and theoretical tools for probing the brain has produced an atmosphere of unparalleled optimism that the job can now be done properly.

It is as part of this gathering activity that this book was written, and in particular to explain an approach to the problem of mind and brain on which I have been working for the last twenty-five years, originally called the relational mind model. The book describes the complete scene of entries, rider, punters, and racecourses, as well as developing an entry into the race, an upgraded version of my older model, now termed *relational consciousness*.

But consciousness is “hard” in the sense that it is not clear what function it performs, or what explanation it could ever possess. Some claim it must be regarded as an entity independent of the brain. How are we able to prove that a machine (or other animal, for that matter) really does possess consciousness? How can we claim that any model can finally cross the so-called explanatory gap, that of deducing that the activity in the model would necessarily possess consciousness by virtue of its very nature and not by fiat?

These questions have to be considered carefully. Owing to recent developments in tools able to probe the brain in action, it would seem that we are now able to set up experiments that will give us all the possible