This book is based on the Nicod lectures given in Lyon and Paris in June 1999. I am very thankful to the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) and the Nicod Lecture Committee for selecting me, and to Jacques Bouveresse, André Holley, Pierre Jacob, François Recanati, Daniel Andler, Joëlle Proust, Jerome Dokic, Jerome Pelletier, and other French philosophers and cognitive scientists for the hospitality they showed me. The Centre de Recherche en Epistémologie Appliquée (CREA) and Maison Suger were fine hosts.

The central ideas of this book were presented earlier at the Chapel Hill Philosophy Colloquium in 1998 and at colloquia at various universities. They have been shaped over many years, with many influences, for better or worse. I remember being interested in the problems discussed in this book while I was an undergraduate at Doane College. I had a job delivering appliances throughout a wide area of southeastern Nebraska, and as I drove the Wanek’s Furniture truck across the countryside I tried to keep my mind on Wittgenstein’s arguments about beetles and boxes. I had the feeling that if I was bright enough, and tried hard enough, the troublesome beetle in my box would be revealed as a bit of conceptual confusion and disappear. Thank goodness it never
did. Laurence Nemiro rekindled my interest in these problems when I had the good luck to work with him on his dissertation at Stanford in the late 1970s. Although in chapter 7 I disagree with part of Nemiro’s analysis, his ideas and particularly the emphasis he put on the role of imagination in our concepts of sensory states greatly influenced me. Many years later, Güven Güzeldere came to Stanford and raised everyone’s consciousness about consciousness. My Nicod lectures, like Fred Dretske’s before them, owed a great deal to Güzeldere. In particular Güzeldere encouraged me to give a talk at an American Philosophical Association symposium on my first rather inchoate ideas about how work on indexicals and reflexivity might be relevant to the knowledge argument. We discussed all aspects of the argument and qualia at great length while he worked on his dissertation at Stanford. He was a superb student and a superb teacher. At about the same time Güven was at Stanford, Lydia Sanchez was working on her dissertation, which emphasized issues related to the subject matter doctrine and problems of unreflected identity. Talking these issues over with Lydia was very helpful.

After the first draft of this book was completed, I received helpful comments from a number of philosophers, including Güzeldere, Ned Block, Eros Corazza, Chuck Marks, John Fischer, Carlo Penco, David Barnett, Matthew Barrett, and Tim Schroeder. Robert C. Jones made a very clear and persuasive presentation of the draft to the Pat Suppes–Dagfinn Follesdal seminar on consciousness at Stanford. I had the wonderful opportunity to attend the Ned Block–Tom Nagel seminar at New York University during a session on the draft of my book. Listening to Nagel and Block disagree about what I should have said or meant was particularly instructive. These comments and interactions led to a new version of the last chapter and a number of changes in ear-
lier chapters. Matthew Barrett’s comments convinced me I ought to have more to say than I do about the problem of other minds, especially the minds Martians might have. But I haven’t yet figured out what to say, except that I can’t see that neo-dualism would help. Parts of the draft were used in my freshman seminars on consciousness; the students’ reactions and comments were quite helpful. Rebecca Talbott kept me from making a serious error in chapter 5.

The Nicod lectures and the final rewrite of the book were both completed in Bonn, Germany, where I spent the spring quarters of 1999 and 2000. This was made possible by a prize from the Humboldt Foundation. These stays were rewarding and productive thanks to the hospitality of Ranier Stuhlmann-Laiesz and the other members of the Insitute für Logic und Grundlagenforschung at the University of Bonn; I especially thank Albert Newen for his support and friendship.

I owe a considerable debt to the philosophers I discuss in this book. Giving a seminar on David Chalmers’ exciting and absorbing book, *The Conscious Mind*, was especially helpful; it is full of ideas and arguments that clarified a number of things for me, even while I continued to disagree with the central thesis. A number of authors whom I do not discuss—David Rosenthal, John Searle, Daniel Dennett, and Patricia Churchland, to mention just four who represent a broad spectrum of approaches—have also influenced my ideas a great deal, even though I don’t fully understand at this point how all of the insights can be fit together.

I am dedicating this book to my late brother Tom. We loved to discuss and argue about all sorts of things, including philosophy. Tom was full of interesting ideas and was imaginative and passionate about all sorts of issues. He wrote and enjoyed science fiction, and I suspect he thought philosophy was basically a way of thinking about the same
issues without having nearly so much fun. Writing science fiction was a hobby on which he hoped to focus when he re-
tired, but sadly cancer cut that dream short. He spent most of his career with IBM, first as a technical writer, then as a computer scientist, working on a variety of platforms from the 1960s into the 1990s. I’m sure that some of his ideas and inventions are at work inside my computer as I write this.

When we were both in our early teenage years Tom came up with the theory that there was only one soul in the uni-
verse, which traveled backward in time each time a person died and was recycled as some other person’s soul. That was the first time I tried hard to think of reasons against a philo-
sophical theory. I didn’t come up with any objections that he couldn’t shoot down. Finally he convinced me this was the most minimal and economical form of dualism, a perfect ex-
ample of Occam’s Razor. We had a lot of fun figuring out how this theory would work. So Tom was the first to bring up the challenge of dualism, not to mention personal iden-
tity. As I’ve mentioned elsewhere, Tom, who was a couple of years older, once told me he would “give me ten dollars tomorrow.” This repeated promise amused him for a couple of days and gave rise to my interest in indexicality.

I don’t suppose Tom stuck with his one-soul theory, but he certainly would have sided with Leibniz, Ewing, Chalmers, Jackson, and Kripke on the issues I discuss in this book. He thought physicalism was pretty dumb. As a computer scientist, he was particularly scornful of theories that held that the human mind was anything like a computer. It’s some-
what odd to dedicate my defense of physicalism to him, but these are the only views I have to offer.