

Josh Weisberg

## *Introduction*

*Describing Inner Experience? Proponent Meets Skeptic* is a unique contribution to consciousness studies. The book presents a detailed and far-ranging debate between psychologist Russell T. Hurlburt, developer and defender of the Descriptive Experience Sampling (DES) method of introspective reporting, and philosopher Eric Schwitzgebel, whose sceptical work challenges the accuracy of any introspective method. It is the format of the work that is especially distinctive: the authors examine the reliability of DES by actually engaging in the method, interviewing a single introspecting subject, given the pseudonym Melanie, over the course six sampling days. This hands-on approach effectively brings out the real-time challenges facing introspective methods, while providing a fruitful entry-point into a number of key empirical and philosophical questions in consciousness studies. But just as importantly, the energetic interplay between Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel, even when they disagree, helps clarify what is at stake in this complex debate, very much in the style of Socratic dialogue. The work is among the best examples of interdisciplinary research in consciousness studies.

This special issue of the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* extends both the spirit and scope of *Describing Inner Experience*. Ten invited commentaries from leading researchers in philosophy and psychology challenge both Hurlburt's impassioned defence of DES and Schwitzgebel's persistent sceptical worries about introspection. The debate moves in new and interesting directions, and problems initially brought out in the book receive extended treatment. Further, the forum allows both Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel to clarify, refine, and, occasionally, reformulate their positions on the complex issues raised in *Describing Inner Experience*. Their replies here form a seamless

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continuation of both the style and substance of the original work. In this brief introduction, I will present a sketch of the DES method and touch on some of the central themes raised in the book and in Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel's replies. I conclude by presenting a short summary of the commentaries.

## 1. DES and the Challenge of Introspection

Consciousness studies faces a unique and seemingly ineliminable methodological challenge. Our access to the data a theory of consciousness must explain is introspective, but introspection is widely seen as a suspect and unreliable source of data. The history of psychology is famously marked by the failure of introspective methods, and recent psychological research, by Richard Nisbett, Timothy Wilson, Daniel Wegner,<sup>1</sup> and others, has only confirmed introspection's shortcomings as a reliable guide to the workings of the mind. But how can we study consciousness if we can't rely on the introspective reports of conscious subjects? The ordinary behavioural methods of psychology are silent about the phenomenology accompanying many of our mental activities. But it is this phenomenology that constitutes the explanatory target for a theory of consciousness. Without some reliable access to introspective data, there is nothing to study in consciousness studies.

But unreflective reliance on introspective data — or a blissful ignoring of the problems plaguing introspection — is the main source of one of the major frustrations in this field of research. Far too often, theorists arrive at incompatible (and seemingly incommensurable) conclusions because of differences in their initial characterization of the data to be explained. Because they are talking about different phenomena, they pass like ships in the night. One researcher's obvious phenomenological truth, grounding an entire research programme, is another's theory-laden confabulation. And once this is grasped, all the sound and fury of the debate loses its interest: the debaters are talking about different things. Consciousness studies thus cries out for a reasonably accurate introspective method.

A pioneer in the search for such a method is psychologist Russell Hurlburt. Over the course of more than 30 years he's developed and defended Descriptive Experience Sampling (DES).<sup>2</sup> According to Hurlburt, DES avoids the major pitfalls that undermined previous

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[1] Nisbett and Wilson (1977), Wilson (2002), Wegner (2002), e.g.

[2] For more on DES, see Hurlburt (1979; 1990; 1993; 1997; 2009; in preparation), Hurlburt and Akhter (2006), Hurlburt and Heavey (2006).

introspective methods, and though it certainly has its limitations, DES provides a reliable way to accurately describe inner experience and thus provide the neutral data necessary to put consciousness studies on firm scientific footing.

DES is designed to provide a reliable characterization of the experiences of an individual subject at a series of randomly-chosen times. A key element of the method is the use of a beeper, which at random moments cues the subject to attend to her experience. The subject then makes a brief written note of her conscious experience. Later, the subject is interviewed by a trained DES investigator, whose role is to aid the subject in arriving at as accurate and unbiased description of her experience as possible. As Hurlburt describes the method,

DES uses a random beeper in the subject's natural environment to signal the subject to pay attention to the experience that was ongoing at the moment of the beep. The subject then jots down notes about that now-immediately-past experience. The subject collects a half-dozen such beeped experiences and then meets with the investigator within 24 hours for an expositional interview, the aim of which is to describe the experiences that were ongoing at each of the six beeped moments. (H&S, p. 20)<sup>3</sup>

The trained DES-practitioner acts as a 'co-investigator' with the subject during the later debriefing. According to Hurlburt,

The aim of the expositional interview is simple: help the subject stay focused on the experience that was ongoing at the moment of the beeps and no other, to describe the features of that particular ongoing experience and not experience in general, and to describe the ongoing phenomena as they actually present themselves, not according to some a priori understanding or expectation. (Hurlburt and Akhter, 2006, p. 280)

It is clear that the investigator is not a passive recorder. Rather, the investigator is actively involved in developing the final record of the introspective report.

One might worry that the active role of the investigator could bias the results (indeed, this is one of Schwitzgebel's central concerns). But Hurlburt is confident that a properly trained investigator can avoid skewing the books. To achieve this neutrality, both subject and investigator must 'bracket their presuppositions' throughout the procedure, in Hurlburt's terms. This means one should as far as possible refrain from categorizing the described experiences into pre-established categories or according to a *priori* presuppositions. Further,

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[3] 'H&S' references are to *Describing Inner Experience*.

one should simply describe the particular experience in question, rather than theorize about experience generally. Though Hurlburt acknowledges that complete bracketing is not possible, he offers it as a goal to guide the process of description. As best we can, we should ‘apprehend the phenomena as close as possible to the way they actually present themselves’ (Hurlburt and Akhter, 2006, p. 283). Hurlburt stresses repeatedly that his own experience with the method reassures him that a practitioner of the method can be neutral. Subjects, he tells us, do not typically feel coerced into making claims. They are encouraged to say ‘I don’t know’ when they are unsure. What’s more, both subject and investigator are often surprised by the final results of the method, indicating that the process is not being forced into one predetermined interpretation or another.

The process of beeping, recording, and interviewing is repeated over several days, a process Hurlburt calls ‘iterative’ (Hurlburt, 2009). This iteration acts to improve the subject’s facility with the method and aids in identifying particular features of conscious experience recurring in this subject. By the end of the series of sessions, a purportedly high-fidelity record of the subject’s inner experience at a series of random times is generated. What’s more, investigations of different subjects can be compared and contrasted to find more general patterns and recurring features. Hurlburt contends that DES avoids the troubles of other introspective methods by targeting brief, naturally-occurring experiences. This serves to minimize the memorial and interpretive demands on the subject, and it helps emphasize the particular features of lived experience, thus avoiding hasty ‘faux’ generalizations. Further, the presence of a skilled investigator aids in reducing the influence of prior theorizing and presuppositions. DES maintains, according to Hurlburt, a healthy scepticism about introspective reports without undermining the very possibility of success. DES provides a careful, controlled way of investigating the inner experiences of conscious subjects. It appears to supply just the source of neutral data needed to study human consciousness.

## 2. Schwitzgebel’s Scepticism

But does DES deliver on its promises? Philosopher Eric Schwitzgebel, in a range of articles,<sup>4</sup> challenges the reliability of introspection, both in its empirical and everyday uses. In *Describing Inner Experience*, he takes sceptical aim at DES, even as he engages in the examination of

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[4] Schwitzgebel (2002; 2003; 2005; 2007; 2008; in press a; in press b).

Melanie's experiences under Hurlburt's guidance. Schwitzgebel identifies five main reasons to doubt the reliability of introspection in general and DES in particular. First, conscious states are fleeting and changeable. Close attention makes it apparent that there is rarely a stable, easily observed 'content' of consciousness. Second, we're not often in the habit of introspecting and certainly not with the level of detail demanded by psychologists and philosophers. We just don't spend that much time trying to pin down the details of our conscious experience. Third, because our interest is generally focused outward, we lack good descriptive concepts of conscious experience. Our concepts are generally borrowed from those employed in outward perceptual experience. This creates a confusing double use of many terms, like 'red' or 'sweet'. Is it the apple or the apple experience that is red? Or is it both? And is it the candy or the experience of eating candy that is sweet? With care, these subtleties can be kept clear, but this creates a distinct worry of confusion and equivocation. Fourth, introspection requires focused attention on conscious experience. But this arguably alters the very experience attended to. Further, introspection may generally occur after the conscious 'facts' have passed; it might be better to see it as retrospection, a later reflection on past conscious experience. This potentially alters the data we wish to ascertain, making a clear, unadulterated picture of consciousness difficult if not impossible. Further, it creates a problem of memory, one that grows as the demands of detail and complexity grow. Can we be so sure we are accurately recalling just what occurred in our past experience? Finally, the fifth difficulty directly challenges the notion of 'bracketing' introduced by Hurlburt. Schwitzgebel contends that interpretation and (often implicit) theorizing is ever-present in introspection. This is not a minor issue; according to Schwitzgebel, the influence of theory on introspection can be acute. And even if it is more minimally invasive, it is extremely difficult to tell just where theorizing leaves off and 'uncontaminated' introspection begins. Even the most basic introspective claims are thus threatened with bias and distortion. Schwitzgebel and Hurlburt seem most at odds over the extent of this problem.

Despite (or perhaps because of) these worries, Schwitzgebel eagerly engages in the DES method with Hurlburt and Melanie. Throughout, Schwitzgebel allows Hurlburt to take the lead as the trained DES investigator, but he chimes in whenever his sceptical 'detectors' fire. Here is a sample of the process, from *Describing Inner Experience*. The following is a snippet from the expositional

interview wherein Melanie recounts what she was thinking at a particular beep, under the questioning of Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel:

Melanie: During this little time period I was brushing my teeth in the bathroom. I kind of was letting my mind wander, because it's such a banal thing I do every day. I was aware of being slightly bent over the sink and aware of the kind of rhythmic motion of my hand, you know, brushing up and down and side to side. I was aware of the kind of cold and gooiness of the toothpaste.

Russ:<sup>5</sup> And is that it, in your awareness?

Melanie: Yeah.

Russ: And when you say you're aware of being bent over, so you're sort of...

Melanie: Like hunched over a little bit. I mainly could feel it in my spine, because it's not a super comfortable position to be in.

Russ: So this is like a bodily awareness or a kinesthetic awareness, something like that?

Melanie: Yes.

Russ: And does that seem like a sort of separate awareness? You've got the bent-over awareness and you've got...

Melanie: Yeah, they seemed very localized. Like the feeling in my back feels *in my back*, and the up and down motion I can feel in my mouth and with my hand and my arm, because I'm holding the toothbrush and moving it.

Russ: And the cold and gooiness?

Melanie: Another feeling that is very located, just in my mouth and everything.

Russ: And nothing else is going on at this particular moment.

Melanie: Nope.

(H&S, pp. 123–124)

Schwitzgebel then follows with any questions he has about the specific experience in question.

Eric: You started by saying your mind was wandering.

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[5] Editor's note: In *Describing Inner Experience*, as well as in Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel's replies in this issue, and in a number of the commentaries, the authors are at times referred to by first name only. This is in keeping with the friendly, informal tone of the book, and we have left the first names when they were employed. This does not indicate any lack of seriousness about the subject matter; rather, it continues the open, Socratic spirit of the original work.

Melanie: Yeah, well, I mean, that was the best way to say my mind was kind of empty [laughs].

Eric: Oh, okay, so that was... you were just...

Melanie: Pretty much absorbed in what I was doing.

Eric: ...pretty much absorbed in that. Because you could think 'your mind was wandering' could mean...

Melanie: Yeah, jumping to different subjects.

Eric: ...thinking about, you know, what you are going to do today or something like that, but that's not...

Melanie: No.

(H&S, pp. 124–125)

A bit later, Schwitzgebel presses one of his worries, and Hurlburt and Melanie try to respond. It is not uncommon in the transcripts to find Hurlburt leaping in to clarify what he takes Melanie to have said, and to defend the cogency of her answers to Schwitzgebel's questions.

Eric: It seems to me that we should also bear in mind the possibility (I'm not saying it's the case) that when the beep goes off you think 'Okay, what was my experience? Was I having an experience of the bathroom? Oh, the bathroom floor is cold. I guess I was experiencing that at the time' — letting your knowledge of your environment feed back into your impression of what your experience was at the time of the beep.

Melanie: Right. I'm not defending myself by any means. But I tried specifically to really focus on the moment of the beep and not what came afterwards, because of the discussion last time about how the beep would usually catch me towards the end of a thought. And I wanted to work on trying to hone that, and so I was trying to do that as best I could.

Eric: Right. I guess the concern I have is not so much directly temporal. You could be trying to reconstruct what's going on at the moment of the beep, or immediately prior to the beep, and not confusing it in any way with what's going on now, but noticing what's going on now and then deliberately thinking 'Okay, was this going on a moment before?' And then because it's going on now and because you know certain things about your environment, you might infer that it was going on the moment before as well.

Russ: Well, I don't think Melanie can confidently say she doesn't do any of that. I think she just *did* confidently say she *tried* not to do that.

Eric: Right. And again, you know, I'm not saying that I have any specific reason to worry about this particular case. How do we partial out how much is due to a kind of reconstruction?

(H&S, p. 128)

This gives a good feel both for how DES works and how *Describing Inner Experience* is structured. Despite Hurlburt's impassioned defence, however, Schwitzgebel concludes that there are distinct limits to what DES can accomplish. He allows that it is accurate, barring counter-evidence, for reports of gross features of experience — that one is having a pain, or is imagining a red apple, say. But as the level of detail in the reports increases, so, too, do Schwitzgebel's sceptical worries. He concludes (and Hurlburt in fact agrees) that the method is not able to deliver reliable data at the level desired by many researchers in consciousness studies.

Schwitzgebel supports this conclusion by bringing up the question of the 'richness' of conscious experience. Some hold that conscious experience, at any one time, contains a variety of multimodal features. We may not directly attend to all these features, but they are nonetheless present in consciousness. This can be termed the 'rich' view of experience. The 'thin' view, by contrast, holds that only features which are directly attended enter consciousness. Hurlburt, based on his experience with DES, advocates a tentative acceptance of the thin view. Schwitzgebel finds the rich view intuitive, though he is sceptical of any introspective means of settling the debate. Throughout *Describing Inner Experience*, Schwitzgebel stresses the ambiguity of Melanie's responses *vis-à-vis* the rich/thin question. Hurlburt concedes the difficulty, but does not think it undermines the importance of DES in general. Schwitzgebel concludes that DES cannot answer questions at this level of detail, and, unfortunately, many of the questions of interest in consciousness studies may demand data pitched at this level.

Among the key points of disagreement between Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel throughout *Describing Inner Experience* are the question of bracketing presuppositions, the purported success of DES over all-comers (as opposed to a 'pluralistic' approach to introspective methods), and the issue of attention and its role in conscious experience. These three topics are treated once again in the first three of Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel's replies in this issue. Each of these replies again takes on the dialogue form of *Describing Inner Experience* (though Melanie is sadly absent!) Thereafter, Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel then each present an essay summarizing their view of the state of the debate and stressing those elements in the commentaries they find most intriguing. Finally, Hurlburt offers a brief sample of material taken from a training session of a prospective DES investigator. Hurlburt presents this material in order to buttress his case that the relevant presuppositions really can be bracketed in DES. It provides yet another window

on the method at work. Taken together, the replies address the key points raised in the commentaries, while continuing the fruitful dialogue of *Describing Inner Experience*. Proponent and sceptic still disagree, which isn't such a surprise, perhaps, but their disagreement helps illuminate the fault-lines in this crucial debate in consciousness studies.

### 3. Summary of the Commentaries

Philosophers Mark Engelbert and Peter Carruthers concur with Schwitzgebel that DES is reliable when it comes to gross features of conscious experience and that the method loses efficacy when it comes to fine-grained features of experience. However, they agree with Hurlburt (*contra* Schwitzgebel) that there may be considerable individual differences in conscious experience and thus we should take seriously Hurlburt's DES-based claim that some subjects may on occasion have very thin conscious experience. Finally, they propose several possible extensions of DES designed to explore our introspective access to occurrent propositional attitudes. *Inter alia*, they defend Carruthers' (2009) model of introspection in light of Hurlburt's claims about 'unsymbolized thinking'.

Philosopher Christopher Hill's extensive commentary introduces seven 'theses' about introspection, and uses these ideas to pose a number of probing questions for DES. The theses are inspired by Hill's reading of *Describing Inner Experience* but are rooted in his previous work of consciousness and introspection (Hill, 1991; 2009). The first thesis holds that introspection is a diverse process and we should not assume that the same mechanisms are involved in all the things we group under that term. This suggests that sweeping claims about the reliability of introspection in general are difficult to make. The second thesis notes the presence of a competence/performance distinction in introspection and stresses the complexities this might create for assessing the reliability of particular introspective judgments. The third thesis highlights the strong influence that attention can have on introspective awareness. Among other things, this raises difficulties for DES when it comes to judging the richness of inner experience. The fourth thesis argues against the possibility of a 'presupposition-less' method of studying introspection. This poses a direct challenge to Hurlburt's goal of 'bracketing presuppositions'. Hill in contrast recommends actively employing scientific presuppositions to guide subjects in introspection and argues that Schwitzgebel underestimates the efficacy of such an approach. Thesis five sketches a theory of introspective judgment predicting accurate introspective judgments

for a range of cases. The theory has its origins in considerations of the epistemology of perceptual judgments. Hill contends that such theories need to be taken into account when making judgments about the reliability of introspection. Thesis six points out that folk psychology holds many sorts of very ordinary introspective judgments to be reliable. Hill contends that the authors, especially Schwitzgebel, seem to downplay this sort of introspection. Finally, thesis seven highlights the deep connection between some forms of introspection and non-introspective mental processes. To the extent that introspection relies on these non-introspective processes, and these processes are reliable, we should expect introspection to be reliable as well. In any event, teasing apart these components will influence how we evaluate the reliability of introspection.

Philosophers Terry Horgan and Mark Timmons frame their questions about DES by focusing on a particular (and controversial) type of inner experience: the phenomenology of agency. Introspective claims about the ‘feeling’ of agency play a crucial role in philosophical theories of free will. Horgan and Timmons present some of the details of this debate and then consider how DES might be used or modified to address questions at this level of phenomenological detail. In particular, they note the difficulties posed by probing subjects with specific requests about inner experience, as this violates Hurlburt’s prescription not to influence subjects with presupposition-laden theories of experience. Further, asking about very specific types of experience seems to require targeting probes to specific behaviour, as opposed to randomly beeping subjects. This potentially undermines the naturalness of the probes in DES and may further bias subjects’ responses. Horgan and Timmons worry about the difficulties facing any introspective method attempting to answer such precise philosophically-focused questions about inner experience, but they are optimistic that introspection can provide some indirect, abductive support to philosophical and psychological theories.

Psychologist Michael Kane’s interesting commentary recounts his participation as a DES subject, with Hurlburt’s assistance as the interviewer. Kane has previous experience with introspective methodology in his work investigating individual differences in attention, memory, and mind-wandering. In addition, he suffers from Tourette’s Syndrome and has engaged in research on the syndrome, some of it relying on introspective phenomenological claims. He thus is well-placed to evaluate DES, indeed, uniquely so with respect to issues concerning Tourette’s. Kane is particularly surprised to find that when sampled, his experience is much more sensory and much less

cognitive than he would have expected. This serves to allay the worry that we simply confirm our own prior beliefs about experience in introspection. Kane remains optimistic about the method after his participation, and he sees its potential for generating useful generalizations across subjects to perhaps be better than even Hurlburt is willing to venture at this point in time.

Psychologist Eric Klinger, like Hurlburt, was an early developer of a beeper-driven introspective sampling method (1978). His commentary addresses the debate over mental imagery and the possibility of imageless (or ‘unsymbolized’, in Hurlburt’s terms) thought. He offers a model which explains imageless thought as unconscious, ‘over-learned’ symbolic thought failing to fully reach the threshold of consciousness. He then expresses his worries about the influence of the interviews on the reports of subjects in DES and his concerns about the time-delay between the beeping of subjects and the debriefing interview. He closes by contrasting DES to two potential rival approaches: a beeper-sampling technique developed by Klinger using questionnaires instead of the intensive DES interviews, and a beeper-sampling technique supplemented by fMRI investigation.

Claire Petitmengin is a psychologist trained in an introspective method differing from DES, the ‘explicitation method’ (e.g. 1999). She also has some experience with DES, participating in a workshop on the method under Hurlburt’s guidance. Her commentary addresses the importance of understanding the *process* by which subjects in introspective interview paradigms actually come to access their experiences. Petitmengin’s research suggests a number of crucial elements that allow a subject to access their experiences. One is ‘evocation’, an involuntary type of recall that can be evoked by replaying the appropriate sensory triggers. The process of evocation can be taught to interviewees, and one role of the interviewer is to guide the subject into the right trigger state. This is just one of the features of the process of accessing one’s inner experience noted by Petitmengin. Her main charge throughout her commentary is that these elements of the process of introspective access are not deliberately evoked in DES; indeed, they are not considered at all. This, according to Petitmengin, both weakens the method and makes its assessment for accuracy more difficult.

Philosopher Gualtiero Piccinini argues for the central importance of *public* methods in science, and then investigates whether DES counts as a public method. A method is public, according to Piccinini, ‘just in case different investigators can apply the method to answer the same questions and, when they do, they obtain the same data’

(Piccinini, this issue). Piccinini defends the importance of publicity for science, particularly for assuring the accuracy of experimental methods, and offers a number of clarifications and counterarguments in response to worries about the publicity thesis. He then argues that even though inner experience itself may be private, that does not entail that DES is a private *method*. He concludes that DES meets the publicity requirement; however, its reliability in particular cases is still very much an open question.

Philosopher Charles Siewert critiques the DES method by jumping into a key debate in *Describing Inner Experience*, over whether inner experience is ordinarily 'rich' or 'thin'. As noted above, Hurlburt contends that it is a novel result of DES to find that experience is ordinarily much thinner than some would expect. Schwitzgebel, on the other hand, finds the rich view intuitive, but more importantly is sceptical that DES (or any other introspective method) could settle this debate. Siewert argues in favour of a rich conception of experience, and in doing so he raises a number of concerns about DES, particularly the difficulty in interpreting just what subjects *mean* in their reports and interviews. In the face of such ambiguity, Siewert contends that DES is not in a position to overcome our ordinary beliefs about the richness of experience. Further, he contends that other methods of introspection, including self-directed introspection, if practised with care, are not undermined by Hurlburt's defence of DES. What's more, he argues that DES assumes some prior degree of introspective competence, and thus entails that other methods of introspection must be accurate at least some of the time. He concludes, however, by claiming he is a proponent, rather than a sceptic, of DES and introspective methods that are sufficiently careful and 'Socratic'. In this way, he is closer to Hurlburt than to Schwitzgebel, despite his criticisms of DES.

Philosopher Maja Spener takes careful aim at the question of what exactly is at issue between Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel in *Describing Inner Experience*. She notes that there is a difficulty in assessing the debate because Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel are often concerned with quite different phenomena. Spener distinguishes between using data from an introspective method to support claims about the underlying cognitive architecture of the mind *versus* using such data to support 'philosophical theories' about the nature of experience. In the latter context, she argues that introspective methods can provide some support for philosophical claims, but only when there is a loose fit between data and theory. However, if the connection between data and theory is tightened, so that a theory must be 'phenomenally adequate',

Spener concludes that Schwitzgebel's scepticism about introspective methods is warranted. So, to the extent that DES is effective as an introspective method, it will not answer the sorts of questions raised by philosophers about the nature of inner experience.

Philosopher John Sutton addresses the 'snap-shot' nature of DES and considers the possibility of extending the temporal resolution of the method. A range of important experiential phenomena spread over more than just a single moment in time. Further, the very identity of a single 'slice' of experience often depends on the flow of experience in which it's embedded. Sutton takes Hurlburt to contend that the isolation of a punctate moment of experience by DES is one of the key elements allowing it to avoid the problems of theory-laden reconstruction that doomed past introspective methods. Sutton argues that missing such temporally-extended experiential phenomena is a serious shortcoming of DES. But he is generally optimistic about the possibility of expanding DES to include temporally-extended experience, and offers a number of suggestions of how to move forward.

#### 4. In Sum

Though they are inspired by the rich interplay of *Describing Inner Experience*, the commentaries are informative stand-alone articles in their own right. And they in turn spark Hurlburt and Schwitzgebel's spirited replies, making this special issue of the *Journal of Consciousness Studies* a fitting companion to the original work, extending the book's conversation in exciting and productive directions. The issues at the heart of *Describing Inner Experience*, and of this symposium, are the issues at the heart of consciousness studies. Anyone interested in the prospects for a scientific approach to consciousness will find this special issue rewarding — proponents and sceptics of introspection alike.

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