Consciousness

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Assignment 9: 3–5 pages
Due Tuesday, April 7th at 8 P.M. Use Classes to submit this assignment. If you have a problem with Classes, send it by email to your preceptor.

Remember:

• Put your student number but not your name on your assignment. Assignments will be graded anonymously
• No late papers.
• Use your own words—no quotations or paraphrases
• Remember you must do one of the assignments after Assignment 7
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• Answer three of the four questions, in order, the number preceding the answer. You can answer some of the questions very briefly, devoting most of your space to one or two questions.

1. Describe the Schrödinger cat thought experiment. Why might someone take this to show that there’s a tension between our ordinary experience of the world and the predictions of quantum mechanics without the addition of a collapse postulate?

2. Why might someone believe that the claim that consciousness triggers wavefunction collapse improves on the traditional claim that measurement triggers wavefunction collapse?

3. McQueen considers three objections to the idea that consciousness triggers wavefunction collapse. Describe the objection you take to be the strongest and McQueen’s reply. Do you think his reply succeeds?

4. What are Albert’s reasons for dismissing the idea that consciousness triggers wavefunction collapse? How might McQueen respond to Albert? Who do you think is correct?