

## A Critical Appraisal of Daniel Dennett's Arguments on the Nature of Consciousness in His *from Bacteria to Bach*

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### Abstract

In his book, *From Bacteria to Bach*, Daniel Dennett offers a special understanding of consciousness. According to Dennett, consciousness among other phenomena must be examined by physical sciences. To achieve this goal, Dennett tries to show that the formation of consciousness is the result of non-intelligent processes in the design of organisms. The most important non-intelligent design process is evolution by natural selection. In addition to biological evolution in the design of the brain, the design of human culture and language is also done in what Dennett calls "cultural evolution". According to Dennett, consciousness is an illusion created by these design processes. In this article, we will first explain Dennett's views and arguments in his book then, his views on consciousness will be evaluated and criticized. The main point of this critique is to emphasize on the irreducible properties of consciousness to physical properties. It will also be noted that in Dennett's theory, cultural evolution cannot be occurred without the intervention of consciousness. Thus, it follows that in order to have a complete picture of the universe, the phenomena of consciousness cannot be removed as an illusion from the set of the entities of the universe, and that is still needs to be explained.

**Keywords:** Daniel Dennett; Consciousness; Evolution; Natural Selection.

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