



skeptiko.com

**SANDBAGGED BY
NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE
SCIENCE**

GARY MARCUS #217

1
00:00:12,820 --> 00:00:09,880
on this episode of skeptic Oh Alex talks

2
00:00:15,160 --> 00:00:12,830
with NYU psychology professor dr. Gary

3
00:00:18,520 --> 00:00:15,170
Marcus about his work in cognitive

4
00:00:20,350 --> 00:00:18,530
neuroscience in consciousness I don't

5
00:00:22,930 --> 00:00:20,360
doubt that there's a phenomenon that

6
00:00:25,150 --> 00:00:22,940
needs to be explained but I doubt that

7
00:00:26,470 --> 00:00:25,160
the explanation is that the brain is not

8
00:00:28,360 --> 00:00:26,480
part of the experience that's being

9
00:00:30,130 --> 00:00:28,370
processed again but isn't that where it

10
00:00:31,750 --> 00:00:30,140
gets interesting I mean these guys are

11
00:00:34,450 --> 00:00:31,760
coming at it strictly from a medical

12
00:00:37,299 --> 00:00:34,460
standpoint and saying look the guy died

13
00:00:39,430 --> 00:00:37,309

on my table and then told me what

14

00:00:41,619 --> 00:00:39,440

happened during resuscitation that's

15

00:00:43,840 --> 00:00:41,629

about a mystery that defies explanation

16

00:00:45,729 --> 00:00:43,850

in our current paradigm isn't that where

17

00:00:47,470 --> 00:00:45,739

we start even more parsimonious

18

00:00:48,880 --> 00:00:47,480

explanation is the guy wasn't really

19

00:00:50,560 --> 00:00:48,890

dead on the table there was more stuff

20

00:00:52,930 --> 00:00:50,570

happening in the brain than you realize

21

00:00:54,430 --> 00:00:52,940

because it's parsimonious because it

22

00:00:55,630 --> 00:00:54,440

fits with everything else we understand

23

00:00:57,309 --> 00:00:55,640

about the brain otherwise you have to

24

00:00:59,559 --> 00:00:57,319

invent a new causal mechanism or not

25

00:01:01,090 --> 00:00:59,569

saying that that's wrong but I think the

26
00:01:13,969 --> 00:01:01,100
standards for doing that need to be high

27
00:01:17,789 --> 00:01:16,200
welcome to skeptic oh where we explore

28
00:01:20,280 --> 00:01:17,799
controversial science with leading

29
00:01:22,710 --> 00:01:20,290
researchers thinkers and their critics

30
00:01:25,200 --> 00:01:22,720
I'm your host Alex Karras and as you

31
00:01:27,330 --> 00:01:25,210
just heard my guest today is dr. Gary

32
00:01:30,420 --> 00:01:27,340
Marcus now this is one of those

33
00:01:34,080 --> 00:01:30,430
interviews that requires a bit of an

34
00:01:37,109 --> 00:01:34,090
explanation not so much for the content

35
00:01:40,289 --> 00:01:37,119
of the interview but for why I would

36
00:01:42,240 --> 00:01:40,299
even choose to interview dr. Marcus in

37
00:01:44,550 --> 00:01:42,250
the first place but that explanation

38
00:01:47,190 --> 00:01:44,560

should really come at the end and that's

39

00:01:51,690 --> 00:01:47,200

where I've put it so for now here's my

40

00:01:54,540 --> 00:01:51,700

interview with dr. Gary Marcus today we

41

00:01:57,570 --> 00:01:54,550

welcome NYU psychology professor and

42

00:02:00,300 --> 00:01:57,580

best-selling author dr. Gary Marcus -

43

00:02:03,149 --> 00:02:00,310

skeptic Oh dr. Marcus is the director of

44

00:02:05,760 --> 00:02:03,159

the NYU Center for language in music

45

00:02:08,729 --> 00:02:05,770

which is a nice fit with his recent New

46

00:02:10,910 --> 00:02:08,739

York Times bestseller guitar zero the

47

00:02:13,830 --> 00:02:10,920

science of becoming Musical at any age

48

00:02:16,530 --> 00:02:13,840

dr. Marcus I should mention also has

49

00:02:18,539 --> 00:02:16,540

many impressive scientific publications

50

00:02:21,060 --> 00:02:18,549

to his credit but he's one of those guys

51
00:02:23,759 --> 00:02:21,070
that also writes about psychology and

52
00:02:26,280 --> 00:02:23,769
consciousness for the rest of us in

53
00:02:28,560 --> 00:02:26,290
places like the New York Times The Wall

54
00:02:30,900 --> 00:02:28,570
Street Journal and The New Yorker where

55
00:02:33,569 --> 00:02:30,910
he blogs about neuroscience psychology

56
00:02:35,520 --> 00:02:33,579
and artificial intelligence

57
00:02:37,440 --> 00:02:35,530
dr. Marcus it's a great pleasure to

58
00:02:39,479 --> 00:02:37,450
welcome you to skeptic oh thanks so much

59
00:02:42,500 --> 00:02:39,489
for joining me thanks very much for

60
00:02:45,000 --> 00:02:42,510
having me you've written several

61
00:02:47,550 --> 00:02:45,010
fascinating books dealing with brain

62
00:02:50,580 --> 00:02:47,560
science and I guess consciousness prior

63
00:02:52,560 --> 00:02:50,590

to guitar zero you published Cluj and

64

00:02:55,170 --> 00:02:52,570

you've published a couple of interesting

65

00:02:58,259 --> 00:02:55,180

posts on the New Yorker that you sent me

66

00:03:00,900 --> 00:02:58,269

one titled the riddle of consciousness

67

00:03:02,789 --> 00:03:00,910

why don't we start there can you tell us

68

00:03:05,220 --> 00:03:02,799

a little bit about the riddle of

69

00:03:06,599 --> 00:03:05,230

consciousness well it's not one of these

70

00:03:08,190 --> 00:03:06,609

riddles where we know the answer I'll

71

00:03:09,900 --> 00:03:08,200

tell you that much

72

00:03:12,240 --> 00:03:09,910

what I tried to do with that piece was

73

00:03:15,509 --> 00:03:12,250

was to simply lay out some of the issues

74

00:03:17,039 --> 00:03:15,519

starting in the context of a question

75

00:03:19,110 --> 00:03:17,049

about whether babies have consciousness

76

00:03:21,229 --> 00:03:19,120

which is very salient to me because I

77

00:03:23,099 --> 00:03:21,239

have a young baby who's five months old

78

00:03:25,770 --> 00:03:23,109

congratulations by the way is it your

79

00:03:28,740 --> 00:03:25,780

first it's our first

80

00:03:31,770 --> 00:03:28,750

and also as it so happens there was an

81

00:03:33,570 --> 00:03:31,780

article in science pretty recently I'm

82

00:03:35,400 --> 00:03:33,580

doing in the experimental study trying

83

00:03:37,380 --> 00:03:35,410

to get at whether babies have

84

00:03:39,210 --> 00:03:37,390

consciousness so I use that as a

85

00:03:41,040 --> 00:03:39,220

stepping off point to look at how you

86

00:03:43,290 --> 00:03:41,050

might measure consciousness what it

87

00:03:45,150 --> 00:03:43,300

might be you know whether you can study

88

00:03:47,580 --> 00:03:45,160

it in the lab whether anybody knows what

89

00:03:49,080 --> 00:03:47,590

it is I didn't take a strong stand I

90

00:03:51,360 --> 00:03:49,090

should say and I don't have a strong

91

00:03:52,320 --> 00:03:51,370

stand myself I think I said somewhere in

92

00:03:55,110 --> 00:03:52,330

that piece that I've written about

93

00:03:58,190 --> 00:03:55,120

thirty pieces for The New Yorker and on

94

00:04:00,810 --> 00:03:58,200

all kinds of things ranging from quantum

95

00:04:02,880 --> 00:04:00,820

computation into God in Super Mario and

96

00:04:04,800 --> 00:04:02,890

I think that consciousness is probably

97

00:04:06,570 --> 00:04:04,810

the one that I'm least certain about so

98

00:04:08,250 --> 00:04:06,580

I'm known for taking strong views on

99

00:04:09,210 --> 00:04:08,260

things and that's one where I'm not

100

00:04:11,250 --> 00:04:09,220

really sure what the answer is

101
00:04:13,470 --> 00:04:11,260
great great well I think that's a fun

102
00:04:15,650 --> 00:04:13,480
area to kind of probe something that you

103
00:04:17,460 --> 00:04:15,660
haven't settled one way or another

104
00:04:20,400 --> 00:04:17,470
consciousness is something we've really

105
00:04:21,840 --> 00:04:20,410
dug into a lot on this show and have had

106
00:04:23,969 --> 00:04:21,850
the opportunity to speak with some

107
00:04:25,980 --> 00:04:23,979
leading consciousness researchers you

108
00:04:29,700 --> 00:04:25,990
mentioned in your article Christophe

109
00:04:32,219 --> 00:04:29,710
Kaku I think is quite well-known in this

110
00:04:34,710 --> 00:04:32,229
field and here's what I wanted to try

111
00:04:36,810 --> 00:04:34,720
and probe a little bit and that is the

112
00:04:39,000 --> 00:04:36,820
general trend that we've found that I've

113
00:04:42,090 --> 00:04:39,010

found in this area of consciousness is

114

00:04:44,570 --> 00:04:42,100

these very mainstream guys pulling back

115

00:04:49,020 --> 00:04:44,580

a little bit from this one-to-one

116

00:04:51,930 --> 00:04:49,030

reductionism between mind and brain [h__h]

117

00:04:53,940 --> 00:04:51,940

and that interview actually says here's

118

00:04:56,730 --> 00:04:53,950

his quote I take the point of view that

119

00:05:01,020 --> 00:04:56,740

ultimately consciousness is something

120

00:05:02,880 --> 00:05:01,030

real it's ontological II distinct so I

121

00:05:04,529 --> 00:05:02,890

was wondering I understand you're up in

122

00:05:08,010 --> 00:05:04,539

the air on this but where do you come

123

00:05:10,890 --> 00:05:08,020

down on this issue is everything that we

124

00:05:12,900 --> 00:05:10,900

are our deepest longings the love that

125

00:05:16,200 --> 00:05:12,910

you feel for that little newborn of

126

00:05:19,920 --> 00:05:16,210

yours is everything just brain firing

127

00:05:23,159 --> 00:05:19,930

are we biological robots or is this

128

00:05:24,840 --> 00:05:23,169

consciousness onto logically distinct

129

00:05:29,370 --> 00:05:24,850

perhaps any thoughts on that

130

00:05:30,990 --> 00:05:29,380

I guess two parts the first is I'm with

131

00:05:33,420 --> 00:05:31,000

Christoph other your quote doesn't quite

132

00:05:35,940 --> 00:05:33,430

reveal it in thinking that whatever the

133

00:05:37,890 --> 00:05:35,950

answer is it is biological it is about

134

00:05:39,600 --> 00:05:37,900

how our brains work I would maybe

135

00:05:41,040 --> 00:05:39,610

broaden that to say there could be thing

136

00:05:42,570 --> 00:05:41,050

beyond neurons firing then we don't

137

00:05:44,730 --> 00:05:42,580

understand about the physiology of the

138

00:05:46,080 --> 00:05:44,740

brain but I'm pretty confident and I

139

00:05:47,399 --> 00:05:46,090

think Kristoff would agree we were

140

00:05:50,520 --> 00:05:47,409

actually on a panel on consciousness

141

00:05:52,439 --> 00:05:50,530

last week I think we were in pretty

142

00:05:55,050 --> 00:05:52,449

strong agreement that whatever it is

143

00:05:56,850 --> 00:05:55,060

it's a property to the brain now what

144

00:05:57,689 --> 00:05:56,860

kind of property it is of the brain is a

145

00:06:00,869 --> 00:05:57,699

different question

146

00:06:03,209 --> 00:06:00,879

now what the ontological status of it is

147

00:06:05,730 --> 00:06:03,219

is is a kind of open question how you

148

00:06:07,230 --> 00:06:05,740

get from neurons to understanding

149

00:06:10,290 --> 00:06:07,240

consciousness is very much an open

150

00:06:11,850 --> 00:06:10,300

question but I don't see a lot of room

151

00:06:14,760 --> 00:06:11,860

for some alternative that doesn't have

152

00:06:18,379 --> 00:06:14,770

something to do with the physiology of

153

00:06:21,240 --> 00:06:18,389

the brain right perhaps and perhaps I'm

154

00:06:23,969 --> 00:06:21,250

overreaching with ontologically distinct

155

00:06:26,040 --> 00:06:23,979

although I have to say in that interview

156

00:06:28,709 --> 00:06:26,050

I think he's making a step in that

157

00:06:31,200 --> 00:06:28,719

direction more maybe even than he really

158

00:06:32,760 --> 00:06:31,210

realizes let me push this just a tiny

159

00:06:34,649 --> 00:06:32,770

bit further I don't know if you're

160

00:06:38,189 --> 00:06:34,659

familiar with the work of Jeffery

161

00:06:40,890 --> 00:06:38,199

Schwartz the UCLA research psychiatrist

162

00:06:44,219 --> 00:06:40,900

who authored the book you are not your

163

00:06:46,290 --> 00:06:44,229

brain no no I'm not now as I say he came

164

00:06:48,719 --> 00:06:46,300

up with a very interesting little

165

00:06:50,939 --> 00:06:48,729

experiment that I think probes this in

166

00:06:54,540 --> 00:06:50,949

another way he's a psychiatrist

167

00:06:57,510 --> 00:06:54,550

obviously and he deals with patients a

168

00:07:00,360 --> 00:06:57,520

lot of patients who have OCD obsessive

169

00:07:02,700 --> 00:07:00,370

compulsive disorder so he set up an

170

00:07:07,230 --> 00:07:02,710

experiment where he had these people do

171

00:07:10,619 --> 00:07:07,240

a mental a mind based meditation and he

172

00:07:14,129 --> 00:07:10,629

did an fMRI before and then after they

173

00:07:15,990 --> 00:07:14,139

did a series of meditations he found one

174

00:07:18,689 --> 00:07:16,000

that their symptoms were somewhat

175

00:07:22,740 --> 00:07:18,699

relieved but he also found that their

176

00:07:25,230 --> 00:07:22,750

brain had rewired neuroplasticity in

177

00:07:29,209 --> 00:07:25,240

action and he came to the conclusion as

178

00:07:33,329 --> 00:07:29,219

his title of his book suggests that this

179

00:07:35,100 --> 00:07:33,339

self-directed neuroplasticity leads us

180

00:07:37,230 --> 00:07:35,110

to the conclusion no other conclusion

181

00:07:38,969 --> 00:07:37,240

that somehow in some way we don't

182

00:07:41,999 --> 00:07:38,979

totally understand you are not your

183

00:07:46,260 --> 00:07:42,009

brain your mind is forming your brain

184

00:07:48,930 --> 00:07:46,270

any thoughts on that this sounds a

185

00:07:50,959 --> 00:07:48,940

little bit confused to me actually of

186

00:07:52,860 --> 00:07:50,969

course I haven't read the book but I

187

00:07:53,429 --> 00:07:52,870

don't understand how that kind of

188

00:07:56,159 --> 00:07:53,439

evidence

189

00:07:59,669 --> 00:07:56,169

to that conclusion my understanding is

190

00:08:01,979 --> 00:07:59,679

that the mind is essentially a property

191

00:08:03,479 --> 00:08:01,989

of the brain and in fact maybe a better

192

00:08:04,919 --> 00:08:03,489

way to say it is it's a different level

193

00:08:08,040 --> 00:08:04,929

of description of what the brain is

194

00:08:11,129 --> 00:08:08,050

doing so your mind is coinciding with

195

00:08:12,869 --> 00:08:11,139

your bird brain you could make

196

00:08:15,749 --> 00:08:12,879

allowances for example for things like

197

00:08:17,549 --> 00:08:15,759

you have a set of nerves and your

198

00:08:19,109 --> 00:08:17,559

stomach and that contributes to your

199

00:08:21,149 --> 00:08:19,119

intellectual state so if you really want

200

00:08:22,589 --> 00:08:21,159

to push it you probably want to say your

201
00:08:24,779 --> 00:08:22,599
mind is a property of your central

202
00:08:26,579 --> 00:08:24,789
nervous system but I don't see how

203
00:08:28,919 --> 00:08:26,589
arguments about for example the brain

204
00:08:30,809 --> 00:08:28,929
being plastic in some way or the nervous

205
00:08:32,429 --> 00:08:30,819
system being plastic in some way takes

206
00:08:34,230 --> 00:08:32,439
away from the general conclusion that

207
00:08:36,449 --> 00:08:34,240
the thoughts that you have for example

208
00:08:39,480 --> 00:08:36,459
all emerge as a function of the things

209
00:08:41,939 --> 00:08:39,490
that your brain is doing well I think he

210
00:08:43,619 --> 00:08:41,949
points out and I guess an obvious

211
00:08:47,670 --> 00:08:43,629
chicken and the egg question we have

212
00:08:51,199 --> 00:08:47,680
there is is mind forming and shaping

213
00:08:54,420 --> 00:08:51,209

brain or is brain forming and shaping

214

00:08:56,670 --> 00:08:54,430

mind and if they're interactive which

215

00:08:58,530 --> 00:08:56,680

there clearly are we do have the chicken

216

00:09:02,009 --> 00:08:58,540

in the egg I mean which comes first the

217

00:09:05,129 --> 00:09:02,019

mind or the brain well not if there are

218

00:09:06,840 --> 00:09:05,139

different levels of description so you

219

00:09:09,749 --> 00:09:06,850

can for example talk about the function

220

00:09:11,460 --> 00:09:09,759

or the action a boulder at a kind of

221

00:09:13,050 --> 00:09:11,470

chemical level or you could even go down

222

00:09:16,050 --> 00:09:13,060

to the particles you could have laws

223

00:09:17,400 --> 00:09:16,060

about geology these things would all be

224

00:09:19,860 --> 00:09:17,410

true and there would be just different

225

00:09:21,240 --> 00:09:19,870

perspectives on looking at something at

226

00:09:23,189 --> 00:09:21,250

the same time in some of these

227

00:09:25,230 --> 00:09:23,199

generalizations are the ones from

228

00:09:26,610 --> 00:09:25,240

geology might be more useful when you're

229

00:09:28,199 --> 00:09:26,620

talking about boulders than the ones

230

00:09:30,030 --> 00:09:28,209

that come from chemistry but that

231

00:09:31,920 --> 00:09:30,040

doesn't mean that chemistry doesn't hold

232

00:09:33,960 --> 00:09:31,930

of boulders it just means it's easier to

233

00:09:35,519 --> 00:09:33,970

talk about things like erosion as you

234

00:09:37,920 --> 00:09:35,529

didn't talk about the boulders but

235

00:09:39,569 --> 00:09:37,930

they're all true at the same time and I

236

00:09:40,980 --> 00:09:39,579

think there's a discussion about that

237

00:09:42,740 --> 00:09:40,990

the mind is basically being like

238

00:09:44,610 --> 00:09:42,750

discussion about psychology and

239

00:09:46,079 --> 00:09:44,620

discussion about the brain is basically

240

00:09:48,150 --> 00:09:46,089

the province of neuroscience but they're

241

00:09:50,460 --> 00:09:48,160

just do different views to different

242

00:09:52,170 --> 00:09:50,470

perspectives on the same thing so it's

243

00:09:53,160 --> 00:09:52,180

not that one happens before the other

244

00:09:54,990 --> 00:09:53,170

although we can come back to

245

00:09:57,360 --> 00:09:55,000

consciousness in a second it's not that

246

00:09:58,920 --> 00:09:57,370

one happens before the other but rather

247

00:10:01,139 --> 00:09:58,930

they happen at the same time they're

248

00:10:03,030 --> 00:10:01,149

always at the same time but we can talk

249

00:10:04,970 --> 00:10:03,040

about them in more comfortable ways

250

00:10:07,640 --> 00:10:04,980

using one vocabulary or the other

251

00:10:10,570 --> 00:10:07,650

so it's not very helpful at the moment

252

00:10:12,500 --> 00:10:10,580

maybe some day to talk a whole lot about

253

00:10:14,450 --> 00:10:12,510

individual neurons when you're talking

254

00:10:16,280 --> 00:10:14,460

about whether you're hungry or whether

255

00:10:17,930 --> 00:10:16,290

you think it would be interesting to

256

00:10:20,120 --> 00:10:17,940

walk across the street to see a concert

257

00:10:21,500 --> 00:10:20,130

that's playing there you know it's

258

00:10:22,910 --> 00:10:21,510

easier to talk about these things in

259

00:10:24,830 --> 00:10:22,920

terms of psychology that rather than

260

00:10:25,970 --> 00:10:24,840

referring to specific sets of neurons

261

00:10:27,710 --> 00:10:25,980

but when you want to go across the

262

00:10:29,420 --> 00:10:27,720

street to see that concert there's some

263

00:10:31,340 --> 00:10:29,430

set of neurons firing or doing something

264

00:10:32,570 --> 00:10:31,350

that corresponds to that and it's not

265

00:10:35,900 --> 00:10:32,580

that you have the thought and then the

266

00:10:37,520 --> 00:10:35,910

neurons fire I guess the point I'm

267

00:10:39,980 --> 00:10:37,530

making and I understand you're on the

268

00:10:41,900 --> 00:10:39,990

other camp but there's a growing number

269

00:10:44,560 --> 00:10:41,910

of people that are putting a big maybe

270

00:10:47,540 --> 00:10:44,570

on what you just said and that there's a

271

00:10:49,130 --> 00:10:47,550

potential that we could look at things

272

00:10:52,700 --> 00:10:49,140

the other way and that there is this

273

00:10:55,850 --> 00:10:52,710

mind and that it is fundamental and the

274

00:10:58,130 --> 00:10:55,860

brain is somehow being formed by that

275

00:10:59,780 --> 00:10:58,140

mind are interacting with that mind in a

276

00:11:02,840 --> 00:10:59,790

way that keeps the consciousness

277

00:11:04,460 --> 00:11:02,850

fundamental so I don't think I think I

278

00:11:06,710 --> 00:11:04,470

think that that's an odd view but I'll

279

00:11:08,390 --> 00:11:06,720

tell you what I think might be plausible

280

00:11:10,940 --> 00:11:08,400

in those parts is if you want to talk

281

00:11:13,970 --> 00:11:10,950

about consciousness in particular well

282

00:11:16,190 --> 00:11:13,980

there our conscious awareness takes time

283

00:11:18,500 --> 00:11:16,200

to happen so you see something and it

284

00:11:20,060 --> 00:11:18,510

takes a matter of a hundred milliseconds

285

00:11:22,880 --> 00:11:20,070

or a couple seconds maybe depending on

286

00:11:24,260 --> 00:11:22,890

the context before that percolates into

287

00:11:26,720 --> 00:11:24,270

your consciousness so there are

288

00:11:30,950 --> 00:11:26,730

processes in the brain that take time

289

00:11:32,720 --> 00:11:30,960

and before those things happen you may

290

00:11:34,760 --> 00:11:32,730

not be consciously aware of them that's

291

00:11:36,710 --> 00:11:34,770

the closest I can come to accepting kind

292

00:11:38,780 --> 00:11:36,720

of you that you talked about which is to

293

00:11:41,000 --> 00:11:38,790

say that a certain aspect of your mind

294

00:11:43,190 --> 00:11:41,010

and perhaps lots of the aspects of your

295

00:11:45,770 --> 00:11:43,200

mind are in some sense the output of

296

00:11:46,610 --> 00:11:45,780

processes that happen in your brain but

297

00:11:48,350 --> 00:11:46,620

I don't think that they're really

298

00:11:51,050 --> 00:11:48,360

separable per se in that way it's just

299

00:11:53,810 --> 00:11:51,060

that you know certain reflexes take

300

00:11:56,300 --> 00:11:53,820

longer than others I get what you're

301

00:11:58,100 --> 00:11:56,310

saying can we talk about and I don't

302

00:12:01,160 --> 00:11:58,110

want to totally probe these areas that

303

00:12:03,260 --> 00:12:01,170

you haven't looked at at all but most of

304

00:12:07,060 --> 00:12:03,270

the people I've talked to in the

305

00:12:10,070 --> 00:12:07,070

consciousness research field including

306

00:12:11,810 --> 00:12:10,080

Christoph Kok but also including Stuart

307

00:12:13,400 --> 00:12:11,820

Hameroff at the University Arizona are

308

00:12:16,190 --> 00:12:13,410

you familiar at all with his work a

309

00:12:18,290 --> 00:12:16,200

little bit okay so when you talk to

310

00:12:18,800 --> 00:12:18,300

those people one thing that comes up a

311

00:12:21,050 --> 00:12:18,810

hot tub

312

00:12:23,330 --> 00:12:21,060

pick is near-death experience science

313

00:12:25,150 --> 00:12:23,340

because clearly there's these folks over

314

00:12:27,590 --> 00:12:25,160

these medical people that saying

315

00:12:29,960 --> 00:12:27,600

near-death experience is happening and

316

00:12:31,790 --> 00:12:29,970

there's no brain activity and that

317

00:12:33,830 --> 00:12:31,800

suggests the same thing that we're

318

00:12:37,010 --> 00:12:33,840

talking about that somehow consciousness

319

00:12:39,710 --> 00:12:37,020

is more than mere brain activity as a

320

00:12:43,160 --> 00:12:39,720

matter of fact when I asked Hameroff on

321

00:12:45,470 --> 00:12:43,170

this this is the quote that he gave me

322

00:12:47,480 --> 00:12:45,480

and he said after having reviewed the

323

00:12:49,940 --> 00:12:47,490

near-death experience research and kind

324

00:12:50,930 --> 00:12:49,950

of being I think favorably impressed

325

00:12:53,780 --> 00:12:50,940

with it

326

00:12:56,600 --> 00:12:53,790

he says I've been asked if it's possible

327

00:12:59,360 --> 00:12:56,610

that consciousness can exist outside the

328

00:13:01,550 --> 00:12:59,370

brain in the case when the brain has

329

00:13:04,460 --> 00:13:01,560

stopped being perfused and the heart has

330

00:13:06,829 --> 00:13:04,470

stopped and so forth I think we can't

331

00:13:09,230 --> 00:13:06,839

rule that out and if you read the full

332

00:13:11,030 --> 00:13:09,240

quote he's actually kind of dived into

333

00:13:13,570 --> 00:13:11,040

the near-death experience research and I

334

00:13:16,579 --> 00:13:13,580

think is generally accepting of the

335

00:13:20,120 --> 00:13:16,589

medical mystery that it is is this

336

00:13:22,190 --> 00:13:20,130

something that you feel is relevant at

337

00:13:25,220 --> 00:13:22,200

all to your work or to these questions

338

00:13:26,840 --> 00:13:25,230

of consciousness well I mean I should

339

00:13:29,300 --> 00:13:26,850

say that my core research isn't in

340

00:13:31,130 --> 00:13:29,310

consciousness so I should be careful

341

00:13:33,470 --> 00:13:31,140

about what I say my work is but I think

342

00:13:35,360 --> 00:13:33,480

that any kind of altered experience is

343

00:13:38,810 --> 00:13:35,370

potentially relevant to understanding

344

00:13:41,060 --> 00:13:38,820

consciousness I think that the whole

345

00:13:44,329 --> 00:13:41,070

field suffers for a lack of independent

346

00:13:46,160 --> 00:13:44,339

measures of what consciousness is so you

347

00:13:48,200 --> 00:13:46,170

can for example imagine doing various

348

00:13:49,940 --> 00:13:48,210

kinds of experiments where you run brain

349

00:13:51,829 --> 00:13:49,950

imaging or something like that and then

350

00:13:54,380 --> 00:13:51,839

you say well is this conscious or not

351

00:13:56,660 --> 00:13:54,390

and it depends very much on what your

352

00:13:57,710 --> 00:13:56,670

measurement of consciousness is so for

353

00:14:00,110 --> 00:13:57,720

example you might want to do those

354

00:14:01,760 --> 00:14:00,120

experiments by comparing cats or maybe

355

00:14:04,010 --> 00:14:01,770

monkeys or something like that to human

356

00:14:06,470 --> 00:14:04,020

beings so you look at this brain area

357

00:14:07,970 --> 00:14:06,480

and then you say and the cat is you know

358

00:14:09,140 --> 00:14:07,980

more conscious or less conscious but we

359

00:14:09,770 --> 00:14:09,150

don't really have an independent way to

360

00:14:13,640 --> 00:14:09,780

say that

361

00:14:15,890 --> 00:14:13,650

so Christophe cook is for many reasons

362

00:14:18,440 --> 00:14:15,900

persuaded that animals are conscious but

363

00:14:19,670 --> 00:14:18,450

not everybody is persuaded and I think

364

00:14:21,730 --> 00:14:19,680

it's an open question because we don't

365

00:14:24,380 --> 00:14:21,740

have a machine or a measure that

366

00:14:25,940 --> 00:14:24,390

decisively answers that so when you want

367

00:14:27,710 --> 00:14:25,950

to tell me that someone with a

368

00:14:29,630 --> 00:14:27,720

near-death experience is conscious at a

369

00:14:32,030 --> 00:14:29,640

particular moment when their brain

370

00:14:32,660 --> 00:14:32,040

appears not to be functioning we need to

371

00:14:33,710 --> 00:14:32,670

know a little bit

372

00:14:35,570 --> 00:14:33,720

more about what it means for the brain

373

00:14:37,340 --> 00:14:35,580

not to be functioning but we also need

374

00:14:38,570 --> 00:14:37,350

to know more about why we think the

375

00:14:40,910 --> 00:14:38,580

person's actually conscious in that

376

00:14:42,650 --> 00:14:40,920

moment I mean maybe for example the

377

00:14:43,910 --> 00:14:42,660

person is reconstructing afterwards

378

00:14:45,440 --> 00:14:43,920

believing that they were conscious and

379

00:14:46,850 --> 00:14:45,450

they weren't in that moment you know I

380

00:14:48,410 --> 00:14:46,860

would take the position that you're not

381

00:14:50,300 --> 00:14:48,420

conscious when you're asleep again

382

00:14:52,130 --> 00:14:50,310

there's this reason for people to argue

383

00:14:53,510 --> 00:14:52,140

about that but I would take the position

384

00:14:55,100 --> 00:14:53,520

that you're not and then you do some

385

00:14:55,940 --> 00:14:55,110

reconstruction after the fact about what

386

00:14:57,110 --> 00:14:55,950

you might have been doing when you're

387

00:14:59,870 --> 00:14:57,120

sleeping maybe that's the same thing

388

00:15:02,090 --> 00:14:59,880

going on there I don't want to push that

389

00:15:04,250 --> 00:15:02,100

too far because I'm not sure that that's

390

00:15:07,130 --> 00:15:04,260

an area you've looked into but of course

391

00:15:08,870 --> 00:15:07,140

the published research on that suggests

392

00:15:11,000 --> 00:15:08,880

otherwise suggested it isn't

393

00:15:14,060 --> 00:15:11,010

reconstruction because there are these

394

00:15:16,340 --> 00:15:14,070

memories during a time of resuscitation

395

00:15:20,300 --> 00:15:16,350

when the brain is severely compromised

396

00:15:22,280 --> 00:15:20,310

whatever so what I hear you saying is

397

00:15:24,250 --> 00:15:22,290

what you're advocating or what you're

398

00:15:27,320 --> 00:15:24,260

interested in and I read this in your

399

00:15:30,500 --> 00:15:27,330

New Yorker post is this idea of

400

00:15:32,690 --> 00:15:30,510

measuring consciousness well there I

401
00:15:34,520 --> 00:15:32,700
wrote I wrote a somewhat skeptical piece

402
00:15:39,320 --> 00:15:34,530
so Christof Koch who I have a lot of

403
00:15:40,970 --> 00:15:39,330
respect for and Giulio Tononi have this

404
00:15:43,340 --> 00:15:40,980
interesting measure it's really to Nonis

405
00:15:45,140 --> 00:15:43,350
first called Phi that is supposed to be

406
00:15:46,820 --> 00:15:45,150
a measure of how conscious you are at

407
00:15:49,160 --> 00:15:46,830
least that's what they purported to be

408
00:15:52,400 --> 00:15:49,170
and in my most recent piece in The New

409
00:15:53,720 --> 00:15:52,410
Yorker I went through what I understand

410
00:15:55,940 --> 00:15:53,730
the measure to be the measure is itself

411
00:15:57,200 --> 00:15:55,950
pretty complicated and then some reasons

412
00:15:58,730 --> 00:15:57,210
why I'm not sure that it's actually

413
00:16:00,950 --> 00:15:58,740

picking out consciousness as opposed to

414

00:16:02,150 --> 00:16:00,960

some other things so you can have a

415

00:16:04,390 --> 00:16:02,160

measure but not know what your measure

416

00:16:06,650 --> 00:16:04,400

is for they have some arguments for why

417

00:16:09,020 --> 00:16:06,660

the measure might reflect something

418

00:16:11,140 --> 00:16:09,030

about consciousness so particularly the

419

00:16:13,370 --> 00:16:11,150

measure is about integrating information

420

00:16:15,880 --> 00:16:13,380

among other things so they they have

421

00:16:18,590 --> 00:16:15,890

this pretty hard to calculate measure of

422

00:16:20,780 --> 00:16:18,600

how integrated information is and they

423

00:16:22,580 --> 00:16:20,790

say the more that information is

424

00:16:24,620 --> 00:16:22,590

integrated in a particular system and

425

00:16:26,810 --> 00:16:24,630

I'm not going into all the details the

426
00:16:28,520 --> 00:16:26,820
more conscious that system is and to

427
00:16:31,700 --> 00:16:28,530
first approximation this seems okay

428
00:16:34,340 --> 00:16:31,710
because for example it predicts that a

429
00:16:36,410 --> 00:16:34,350
digital camera or at least the the CCD

430
00:16:38,420 --> 00:16:36,420
sensor and it is not conscious that a

431
00:16:39,710 --> 00:16:38,430
cat might be somewhat conscious and that

432
00:16:42,410 --> 00:16:39,720
human being will be more conscious

433
00:16:44,630 --> 00:16:42,420
because the the CCG doesn't integrate

434
00:16:46,410 --> 00:16:44,640
any information of the right sort the

435
00:16:49,290 --> 00:16:46,420
cat integrates some the person

436
00:16:50,610 --> 00:16:49,300
presumably integrates even more but I'm

437
00:16:52,620 --> 00:16:50,620
not sure that it actually makes the

438
00:16:53,790 --> 00:16:52,630

right predictions in general and it

439

00:16:55,590 --> 00:16:53,800

might actually be more like a measure of

440

00:16:57,440 --> 00:16:55,600

intelligence than a measure of

441

00:16:59,970 --> 00:16:57,450

consciousness per se

442

00:17:03,269 --> 00:16:59,980

dr. Marcus once you tell us what's going

443

00:17:06,809 --> 00:17:03,279

on with you in your lab and also any

444

00:17:08,640 --> 00:17:06,819

upcoming books you might have well the

445

00:17:10,740 --> 00:17:08,650

next book I have is gonna be called the

446

00:17:12,510 --> 00:17:10,750

future of the brain and it's gonna be an

447

00:17:13,860 --> 00:17:12,520

edited collection I'll be doing the

448

00:17:15,750 --> 00:17:13,870

editing with Jeremy Freeman

449

00:17:17,130 --> 00:17:15,760

we have contributions by a lot of

450

00:17:19,409 --> 00:17:17,140

eminent neuroscientists like Christof

451

00:17:20,750 --> 00:17:19,419

Koch in fact Koch and I in fact are

452

00:17:22,799 --> 00:17:20,760

gonna write the afterword together

453

00:17:24,120 --> 00:17:22,809

that's gonna be a really exciting book

454

00:17:27,449 --> 00:17:24,130

that will be out in April so that's my

455

00:17:29,159 --> 00:17:27,459

next book and lab wise I just published

456

00:17:31,530 --> 00:17:29,169

a paper in Nature with overture knock

457

00:17:34,350 --> 00:17:31,540

off Sookie and Dena Lipkin looking at

458

00:17:36,180 --> 00:17:34,360

how songbirds acquire their vocalization

459

00:17:37,560 --> 00:17:36,190

patterns and suggesting that there's

460

00:17:41,100 --> 00:17:37,570

actually something in common between the

461

00:17:43,020 --> 00:17:41,110

songbirds and human children anything

462

00:17:46,230 --> 00:17:43,030

else we might want to touch on before we

463

00:17:48,810 --> 00:17:46,240

wrap things up I know that's all thanks

464

00:17:50,760 --> 00:17:48,820

very much for having me great I didn't

465

00:17:52,500 --> 00:17:50,770

want to push that NDE stuff too much

466

00:17:55,470 --> 00:17:52,510

because you're not that's not your thing

467

00:17:57,870 --> 00:17:55,480

right near-death expel all so very very

468

00:18:01,140 --> 00:17:57,880

skeptical of it I mean it doesn't make

469

00:18:02,430 --> 00:18:01,150

sense to me to be honest it doesn't fit

470

00:18:04,310 --> 00:18:02,440

with the rest of the stuff that I

471

00:18:07,650 --> 00:18:04,320

understand about how the brain works

472

00:18:09,390 --> 00:18:07,660

which leads me to believe that something

473

00:18:12,000 --> 00:18:09,400

is likely being misinterpreted I can't

474

00:18:15,210 --> 00:18:12,010

promise that and I haven't read every

475

00:18:17,640 --> 00:18:15,220

every word on it but have you read any

476

00:18:20,039 --> 00:18:17,650

word on it I mean have you read any of

477

00:18:21,600 --> 00:18:20,049

the leading guys out there I mean I've

478

00:18:23,280 --> 00:18:21,610

read a few words here there but it

479

00:18:25,289 --> 00:18:23,290

doesn't make sense to me I mean you'd be

480

00:18:26,909 --> 00:18:25,299

like you asking me have I read anything

481

00:18:28,680 --> 00:18:26,919

on astrology I mean I know about

482

00:18:31,590 --> 00:18:28,690

astrology but I don't see the causal

483

00:18:33,510 --> 00:18:31,600

mechanism yeah but it's not really

484

00:18:37,200 --> 00:18:33,520

astrology I mean you got these you got

485

00:18:39,360 --> 00:18:37,210

parney at Cornell you got the University

486

00:18:42,270 --> 00:18:39,370

of Virginia guys I mean you got a lot of

487

00:18:43,799 --> 00:18:42,280

pretty well respected people who've

488

00:18:46,080 --> 00:18:43,809

studied it for a long time and are

489

00:18:48,240 --> 00:18:46,090

publishing you know Bruce Grace and all

490

00:18:50,700 --> 00:18:48,250

those folks I don't doubt that there's a

491

00:18:52,950 --> 00:18:50,710

phenomenon that it needs to be explained

492

00:18:55,320 --> 00:18:52,960

but I doubt the phenomenon I doubt that

493

00:18:56,669 --> 00:18:55,330

the explanation is that the brain is not

494

00:18:59,039 --> 00:18:56,679

part of the experience that's being

495

00:19:00,060 --> 00:18:59,049

processed I cannot conceive of how that

496

00:19:01,170 --> 00:19:00,070

would be true

497

00:19:03,000 --> 00:19:01,180

again but isn't that where it gets

498

00:19:04,740 --> 00:19:03,010

interesting I mean these guys are coming

499

00:19:08,520 --> 00:19:04,750

at it strictly from a medical standpoint

500

00:19:11,280 --> 00:19:08,530

and saying you know look the guy died on

501
00:19:13,590 --> 00:19:11,290
my table and then told me what happened

502
00:19:17,100 --> 00:19:13,600
during resuscitation that's a medical

503
00:19:19,520 --> 00:19:17,110
mystery that defies explanation in our

504
00:19:22,050 --> 00:19:19,530
current paradigm isn't it where we start

505
00:19:23,700 --> 00:19:22,060
even more parsimonious explanation is

506
00:19:25,080 --> 00:19:23,710
the guy wasn't really dead on the table

507
00:19:27,330 --> 00:19:25,090
there was more stuff happening in the

508
00:19:28,890 --> 00:19:27,340
brain than you realize because it's

509
00:19:30,270 --> 00:19:28,900
parsimonious because it fits with

510
00:19:31,740 --> 00:19:30,280
everything else we understand about the

511
00:19:33,390 --> 00:19:31,750
brain otherwise you have to invent a new

512
00:19:35,610 --> 00:19:33,400
causal mechanism or not saying that

513
00:19:37,740 --> 00:19:35,620

that's wrong but I think the standards

514

00:19:39,420 --> 00:19:37,750

for doing that need to be high I hear

515

00:19:42,240 --> 00:19:39,430

you but who would we go to ask that

516

00:19:43,890 --> 00:19:42,250

question we'd go to cardiologist tim van

517

00:19:46,410 --> 00:19:43,900

LOM well the guy I told you published in

518

00:19:48,600 --> 00:19:46,420

The Lancet who works with patients on

519

00:19:51,210 --> 00:19:48,610

that table or would go with Sam Parr Nia

520

00:19:54,570 --> 00:19:51,220

who's clinical work he's the expert

521

00:19:56,370 --> 00:19:54,580

worldwide expert in resuscitation so I

522

00:19:58,470 --> 00:19:56,380

mean those are the people we'd go to so

523

00:20:00,840 --> 00:19:58,480

if they become convinced well how would

524

00:20:03,450 --> 00:20:00,850

sooner goes to a neuroscientist than a

525

00:20:06,780 --> 00:20:03,460

cardiologist actually well in terms of

526

00:20:09,540 --> 00:20:06,790

knowing the state of the brain right I

527

00:20:11,670 --> 00:20:09,550

mean you there may be things about brain

528

00:20:13,410 --> 00:20:11,680

function that we don't understand so

529

00:20:15,930 --> 00:20:13,420

even if the heart is not pumping there

530

00:20:18,060 --> 00:20:15,940

may be things that are allowing some

531

00:20:20,370 --> 00:20:18,070

neural function for some period of time

532

00:20:22,230 --> 00:20:20,380

to continue and it's also the

533

00:20:24,180 --> 00:20:22,240

possibility as I mentioned great tell us

534

00:20:26,430 --> 00:20:24,190

what it is there's a mystery there that

535

00:20:28,080 --> 00:20:26,440

seems like we're not probing I mean okay

536

00:20:30,480 --> 00:20:28,090

so you postulate that that's possible

537

00:20:33,650 --> 00:20:30,490

well I I'm not proving it's not it's not

538

00:20:36,210 --> 00:20:33,660

my field but that isn't nobody's promi

539

00:20:38,640 --> 00:20:36,220

thanks again to dr. Marcus for joining

540

00:20:41,190 --> 00:20:38,650

me today on skeptic oh so as I mentioned

541

00:20:44,730 --> 00:20:41,200

at the beginning you might be wondering

542

00:20:47,040 --> 00:20:44,740

why I would interview dr. Gary Marcus

543

00:20:51,180 --> 00:20:47,050

well the reason I did is because I think

544

00:20:54,090 --> 00:20:51,190

this is the kind of dialogue that is so

545

00:20:56,280 --> 00:20:54,100

often missing among these conversations

546

00:20:59,100 --> 00:20:56,290

and interviews that we have about these

547

00:21:02,670 --> 00:20:59,110

big picture important scientific issues

548

00:21:06,240 --> 00:21:02,680

it is messy it is a little bit

549

00:21:09,810 --> 00:21:06,250

uncomfortable I get that I also get that

550

00:21:12,810 --> 00:21:09,820

my positions ie that scientific

551
00:21:13,769 --> 00:21:12,820
materialism has been falsified that mind

552
00:21:16,680 --> 00:21:13,779
equals brain

553
00:21:19,469 --> 00:21:16,690
is a joke and it's contradicted by so

554
00:21:22,979 --> 00:21:19,479
much data out there I get that that's

555
00:21:24,779 --> 00:21:22,989
not the mainstream view and that Gary

556
00:21:28,200 --> 00:21:24,789
Marcus even though I think he has this

557
00:21:31,560 --> 00:21:28,210
head in the sand is representative of

558
00:21:34,889 --> 00:21:31,570
the mainstream view so I do feel that it

559
00:21:38,279 --> 00:21:34,899
is my obligation to reach out and engage

560
00:21:40,979 --> 00:21:38,289
with people like dr. Marcus and have

561
00:21:43,409 --> 00:21:40,989
this dialogue in at least a somewhat non

562
00:21:45,539 --> 00:21:43,419
confrontational way of meeting in the

563
00:21:47,849 --> 00:21:45,549

middle kind of way and that's what I

564

00:21:50,700 --> 00:21:47,859

sought to do but if you've listened to

565

00:21:53,219 --> 00:21:50,710

this show you know that that often

566

00:21:56,369 --> 00:21:53,229

doesn't work out I mean we are talking

567

00:21:58,969 --> 00:21:56,379

about challenging power and challenging

568

00:22:01,739 --> 00:21:58,979

worldviews and that's often very

569

00:22:03,599 --> 00:22:01,749

unsettling for folks as was the case

570

00:22:05,879 --> 00:22:03,609

with dr. Marcus you could hear it in his

571

00:22:08,519 --> 00:22:05,889

own of his voice as well as the content

572

00:22:11,219 --> 00:22:08,529

of what he was saying now as is often

573

00:22:12,479 --> 00:22:11,229

the case in these kind of interviews

574

00:22:15,299 --> 00:22:12,489

where there's a little bit of heat

575

00:22:18,180 --> 00:22:15,309

during the interview I often find that

576

00:22:19,979 --> 00:22:18,190

the follow-up is just as interesting and

577

00:22:23,279 --> 00:22:19,989

sometimes even more interesting than the

578

00:22:25,889 --> 00:22:23,289

interview itself and that is the case

579

00:22:27,570 --> 00:22:25,899

with this one let me share with you what

580

00:22:28,619 --> 00:22:27,580

happened after the interview I think

581

00:22:31,709 --> 00:22:28,629

it's very telling

582

00:22:33,570 --> 00:22:31,719

so I sent dr. Marcus an email thanking

583

00:22:35,759 --> 00:22:33,580

him for the interview and sending up

584

00:22:38,219 --> 00:22:35,769

some links some references first I sent

585

00:22:40,019 --> 00:22:38,229

a link to Bruce Grayson of course his

586

00:22:42,440 --> 00:22:40,029

professor of psychiatry at the

587

00:22:44,999 --> 00:22:42,450

University of Virginia and has studied

588

00:22:47,310 --> 00:22:45,009

near-death experience probably more than

589

00:22:50,070 --> 00:22:47,320

anyone has published over 20 years many

590

00:22:52,499 --> 00:22:50,080

many peer-reviewed highly respected

591

00:22:54,239 --> 00:22:52,509

articles have been published by him on

592

00:22:56,940 --> 00:22:54,249

near-death experience he's one of the

593

00:22:59,539 --> 00:22:56,950

co-authors editors of the handbook of

594

00:23:02,039 --> 00:22:59,549

near-death experience a very scholarly

595

00:23:04,169 --> 00:23:02,049

compilation of some of the best research

596

00:23:06,719 --> 00:23:04,179

that's been done so I sent him that I

597

00:23:10,200 --> 00:23:06,729

also sent him a link to dr. Sam Parr Nia

598

00:23:13,169 --> 00:23:10,210

again another highly respected medical

599

00:23:15,450 --> 00:23:13,179

academic medical person who's published

600

00:23:17,969 --> 00:23:15,460

in this field as you know has kind of

601
00:23:20,310 --> 00:23:17,979
changed his position was initially more

602
00:23:22,769 --> 00:23:20,320
skeptical of near-death experience but

603
00:23:24,830 --> 00:23:22,779
was overwhelmed by just the body of

604
00:23:27,860 --> 00:23:24,840
evidence to saying that

605
00:23:31,119 --> 00:23:27,870
is suggestive that the mind equals brain

606
00:23:33,470 --> 00:23:31,129
kind of paradigm that dr. Marcus so

607
00:23:35,779 --> 00:23:33,480
supports and is so much at the core of

608
00:23:37,430 --> 00:23:35,789
dr. Marcus's belief system of course

609
00:23:39,769 --> 00:23:37,440
parney has come around and said hey

610
00:23:42,680 --> 00:23:39,779
that's just not the way that it is so

611
00:23:45,950 --> 00:23:42,690
here was the reply that I got from dr.

612
00:23:47,869 --> 00:23:45,960
Marcus first he suggested that the quote

613
00:23:51,200 --> 00:23:47,879

from Greyson that I sent him was

614

00:23:54,889 --> 00:23:51,210

actually consistent with what he said

615

00:23:57,919 --> 00:23:54,899

that impaired cerebral perfusion does

616

00:23:59,570 --> 00:23:57,929

not equal a complete cessation of brain

617

00:24:01,159 --> 00:23:59,580

function okay you've heard this a

618

00:24:03,830 --> 00:24:01,169

million times from the near-death

619

00:24:05,389 --> 00:24:03,840

experience skeptics and that is hey we

620

00:24:07,460 --> 00:24:05,399

don't know there still might be

621

00:24:08,989 --> 00:24:07,470

something going on deep in that brain

622

00:24:11,419 --> 00:24:08,999

that it could explain the near-death

623

00:24:14,899 --> 00:24:11,429

experience of course that's complete

624

00:24:16,369 --> 00:24:14,909

nonsense and I pointed that out to him

625

00:24:18,470 --> 00:24:16,379

in the following email which I'll get to

626
00:24:19,669 --> 00:24:18,480
him in a minute but his second point I

627
00:24:21,859 --> 00:24:19,679
thought was interesting because he

628
00:24:24,139 --> 00:24:21,869
obviously after our interview did a more

629
00:24:27,680 --> 00:24:24,149
thorough search of skeptic oh and he

630
00:24:29,989 --> 00:24:27,690
says I felt a little bit sandbagged in

631
00:24:33,379 --> 00:24:29,999
that the interview was too far from my

632
00:24:36,289 --> 00:24:33,389
areas of expertise folks go look on his

633
00:24:38,720 --> 00:24:36,299
blog on The New Yorker and see if you

634
00:24:40,669 --> 00:24:38,730
really think this is far from his area

635
00:24:43,249 --> 00:24:40,679
of expertise it's not

636
00:24:45,379 --> 00:24:43,259
he's just ducking for cover and then he

637
00:24:47,480 --> 00:24:45,389
concludes by saying I think the best

638
00:24:50,600 --> 00:24:47,490

thing to do is to shelve the interview

639

00:24:53,269 --> 00:24:50,610

completely and he says I hope that

640

00:24:57,830 --> 00:24:53,279

you'll respect my wishes well

641

00:25:00,590 --> 00:24:57,840

respectfully dr. Marcus I cannot respect

642

00:25:02,810 --> 00:25:00,600

your wishes and am publishing the

643

00:25:04,820 --> 00:25:02,820

interview along with my response to

644

00:25:07,220 --> 00:25:04,830

those rather silly comments that you

645

00:25:08,930 --> 00:25:07,230

made there so first and this is the

646

00:25:12,109 --> 00:25:08,940

email that I sent him back I said

647

00:25:14,570 --> 00:25:12,119

regarding Grayson his conclusions as the

648

00:25:16,759 --> 00:25:14,580

result of his 20-plus years of research

649

00:25:18,980 --> 00:25:16,769

in the field of near-death experience

650

00:25:21,619 --> 00:25:18,990

are the opposite of yours ie

651

00:25:24,200 --> 00:25:21,629

consciousness survive slash exists in

652

00:25:26,779 --> 00:25:24,210

brains that are dead slash severely

653

00:25:28,909 --> 00:25:26,789

compromised that is Grayson's conclusion

654

00:25:31,220 --> 00:25:28,919

by the way then I added I don't think

655

00:25:34,700 --> 00:25:31,230

you're in concurrence with his findings

656

00:25:38,720 --> 00:25:34,710

are you secondly I added regarding being

657

00:25:40,460 --> 00:25:38,730

sandbagged come on I can hardly imagine

658

00:25:42,669 --> 00:25:40,470

I could have given you more to prepare

659

00:25:43,820 --> 00:25:42,679

for this interview now I set him

660

00:25:46,490 --> 00:25:43,830

everything

661

00:25:48,890 --> 00:25:46,500

I sent him not only links to all the

662

00:25:50,390 --> 00:25:48,900

previous shows but I highlighted direct

663

00:25:51,770 --> 00:25:50,400

links to some of the shows that I

664

00:25:54,740 --> 00:25:51,780

thought would be most relevant I

665

00:25:58,010 --> 00:25:54,750

outlined questions forum topics all that

666

00:26:00,890 --> 00:25:58,020

stuff for him to dig up this idea that

667

00:26:02,780 --> 00:26:00,900

he was somehow sandbag is just

668

00:26:04,820 --> 00:26:02,790

preposterous but then hey I've heard

669

00:26:07,250 --> 00:26:04,830

that so many times by now that it

670

00:26:09,049 --> 00:26:07,260

doesn't really faze me I added that

671

00:26:11,930 --> 00:26:09,059

moreover I don't think you came off

672

00:26:14,630 --> 00:26:11,940

poorly in any way I mean you came off as

673

00:26:16,970 --> 00:26:14,640

kind of dogmatic about this mind equals

674

00:26:19,669 --> 00:26:16,980

brain paradigm but then that's the

675

00:26:21,020 --> 00:26:19,679

status quo view then I added a link to

676

00:26:23,870 --> 00:26:21,030

Steven Schwartz's book on

677

00:26:26,320 --> 00:26:23,880

neuroplasticity the questions that since

678

00:26:29,409 --> 00:26:26,330

he's shown that self-directed

679

00:26:32,090 --> 00:26:29,419

neuroplasticity can change your brain

680

00:26:34,789 --> 00:26:32,100

then were left with this chicken or the

681

00:26:38,150 --> 00:26:34,799

egg question of which came first the

682

00:26:40,159 --> 00:26:38,160

brain or the thought a question that he

683

00:26:42,350 --> 00:26:40,169

never really answered in our discussion

684

00:26:46,039 --> 00:26:42,360

so I thought I'd bring that up but of

685

00:26:49,730 --> 00:26:46,049

course that was the last I was to hear

686

00:26:52,490 --> 00:26:49,740

from dr. Marcus despite my questions he

687

00:26:54,950 --> 00:26:52,500

chose to kind of end it there with hopes

688

00:26:58,190 --> 00:26:54,960

that this whole thing might just go away

689

00:27:00,350 --> 00:26:58,200

but I don't want it to go away in fact I

690

00:27:02,690 --> 00:27:00,360

want to dig deeper and the best way for

691

00:27:05,480 --> 00:27:02,700

us to dig deeper are to continue asking

692

00:27:08,360 --> 00:27:05,490

questions so let's ask a couple of

693

00:27:10,549 --> 00:27:08,370

questions about this interview and I'm

694

00:27:12,950 --> 00:27:10,559

just going to focus on one and that has

695

00:27:15,680 --> 00:27:12,960

to do with the clip that I pulled out to

696

00:27:17,600 --> 00:27:15,690

introduce this interview dr. Marcus has

697

00:27:20,659 --> 00:27:17,610

claimed that the most parsimonious

698

00:27:23,900 --> 00:27:20,669

explanation for near-death experience is

699

00:27:26,870 --> 00:27:23,910

that that there was more going on in the

700

00:27:29,480 --> 00:27:26,880

brain during resuscitation then the

701
00:27:31,970 --> 00:27:29,490
doctor realized what do you think about

702
00:27:34,159 --> 00:27:31,980
that as an explanation for the

703
00:27:36,080 --> 00:27:34,169
near-death experience research and for

704
00:27:38,299 --> 00:27:36,090
all the science that we have on that I

705
00:27:41,419 --> 00:27:38,309
think I know your answer but since a

706
00:27:44,210 --> 00:27:41,429
highly respected guy like New York

707
00:27:47,030 --> 00:27:44,220
University's best-selling author dr.

708
00:27:49,700 --> 00:27:47,040
Gary Marcus has pushed that forward as

709
00:27:50,890 --> 00:27:49,710
his explanation I think it deserves to

710
00:27:53,830 --> 00:27:50,900
be hash

711
00:27:55,180 --> 00:27:53,840
doubt here on skeptic oh so the place to

712
00:28:00,280 --> 00:27:55,190
do that of course is on The Skeptical

713
00:28:01,930 --> 00:28:00,290

website at SK EPT Iko calm or you can

714

00:28:05,020 --> 00:28:01,940

leave a message right on the comment

715

00:28:07,180 --> 00:28:05,030

section or click over to the forum where

716

00:28:09,490 --> 00:28:07,190

there's usually more activity and you

717

00:28:11,650 --> 00:28:09,500

can join with others in this discussion

718

00:28:14,080 --> 00:28:11,660

while you're there on skeptic Oh be sure

719

00:28:16,720 --> 00:28:14,090

to check out all our over 200 previous

720

00:28:18,550 --> 00:28:16,730

shows you can subscribe on iTunes you

721

00:28:21,040 --> 00:28:18,560

can of course tell as many of your

722

00:28:23,500 --> 00:28:21,050

friends on Facebook and everywhere else

723

00:28:25,660 --> 00:28:23,510

through your blogs about this episode

724

00:28:27,790 --> 00:28:25,670

and other episodes of skeptic oh and I

725

00:28:29,580 --> 00:28:27,800

hope that you do that I want to let you

726

00:28:32,350 --> 00:28:29,590

know that I'm working on a number of

727

00:28:34,630 --> 00:28:32,360

interesting shows coming up kind of a

728

00:28:36,640 --> 00:28:34,640

whole batch of them here so they might

729

00:28:39,520 --> 00:28:36,650

come out a little bit faster than they

730

00:28:42,100 --> 00:28:39,530

have while I get caught up and I'm kind

731

00:28:43,870 --> 00:28:42,110

of looking at different areas and

732

00:28:46,990 --> 00:28:43,880

exploring different things and hopefully

733

00:28:50,830 --> 00:28:47,000

that will lead to some interesting shows

734

00:28:52,420 --> 00:28:50,840

both for me and for you I hope you do

735

00:28:54,520 --> 00:28:52,430

stick around for all of that I

736

00:28:57,070 --> 00:28:54,530

appreciate you listening I appreciate

737

00:28:59,980 --> 00:28:57,080

you joining me on this journey and

738

00:29:02,410 --> 00:28:59,990

helping me in my journey which you the

739

00:29:05,380 --> 00:29:02,420

audience really has more than I can ever

740

00:29:08,680 --> 00:29:05,390

Express and I'm very grateful for that