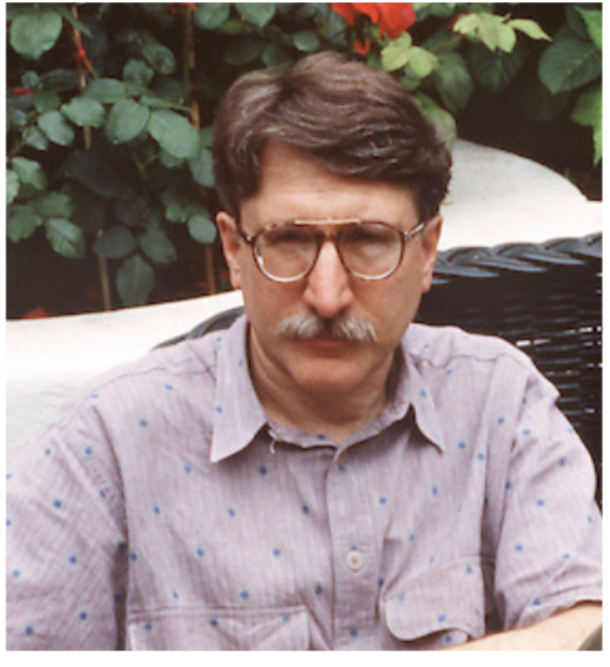


# Reconciling Phenomenal And Access Consciousness Through Evidence Accumulation



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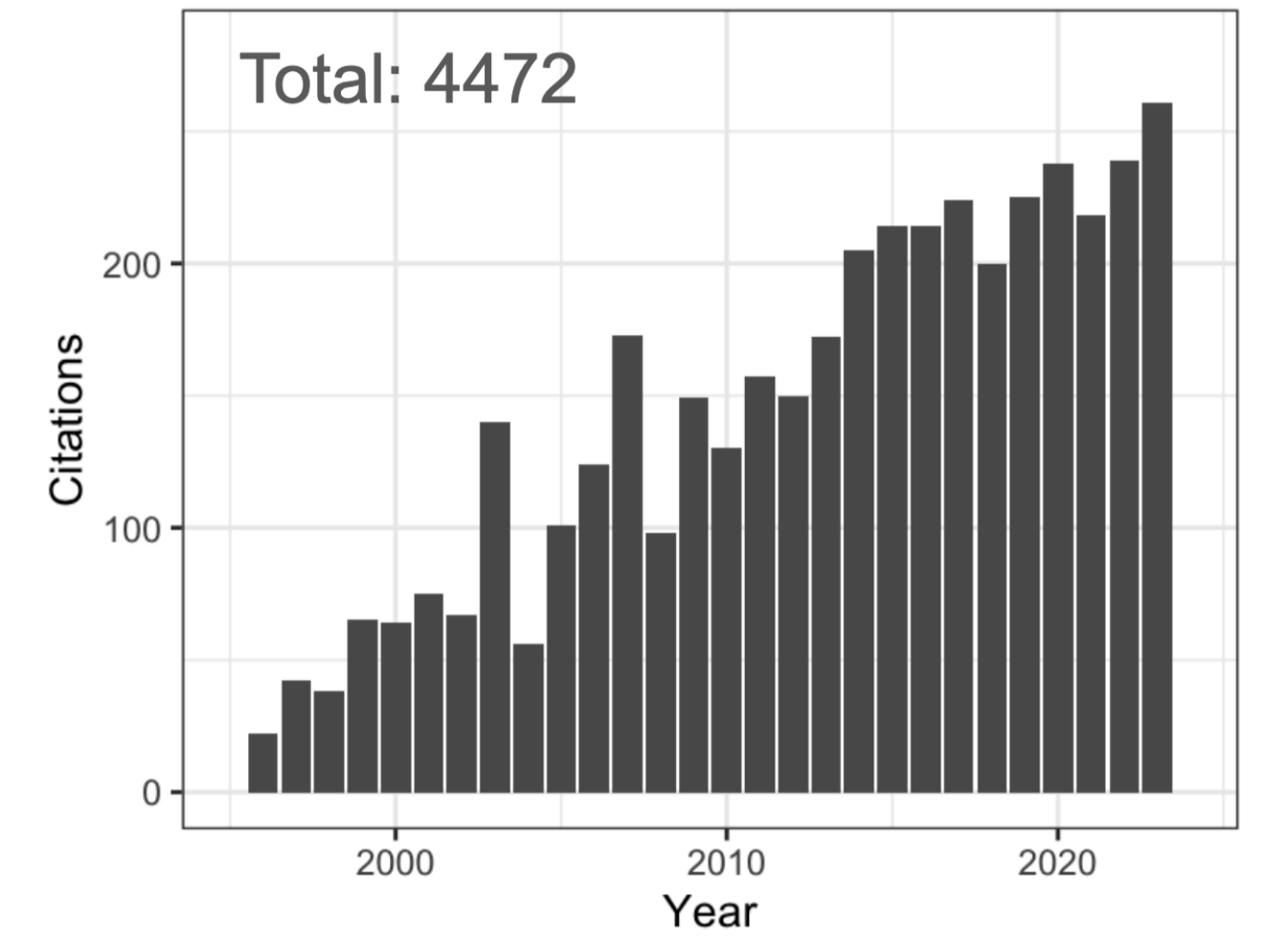
## Background



Ned Block

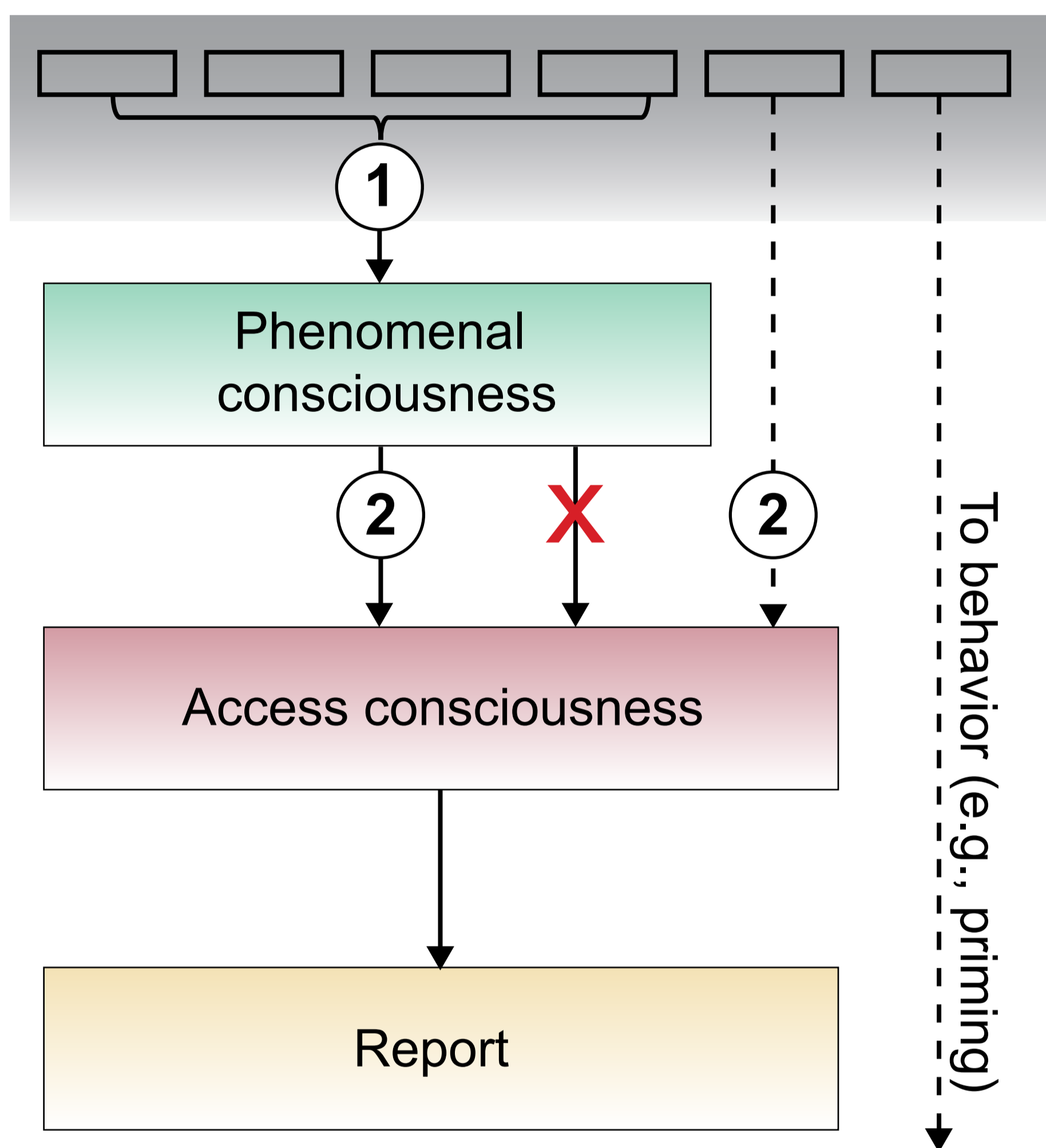
BEHAVIORAL AND BRAIN SCIENCES (1995) 18, 227–287  
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## On a confusion about a function of consciousness



## Original proposal

A & P as two types of consciousness



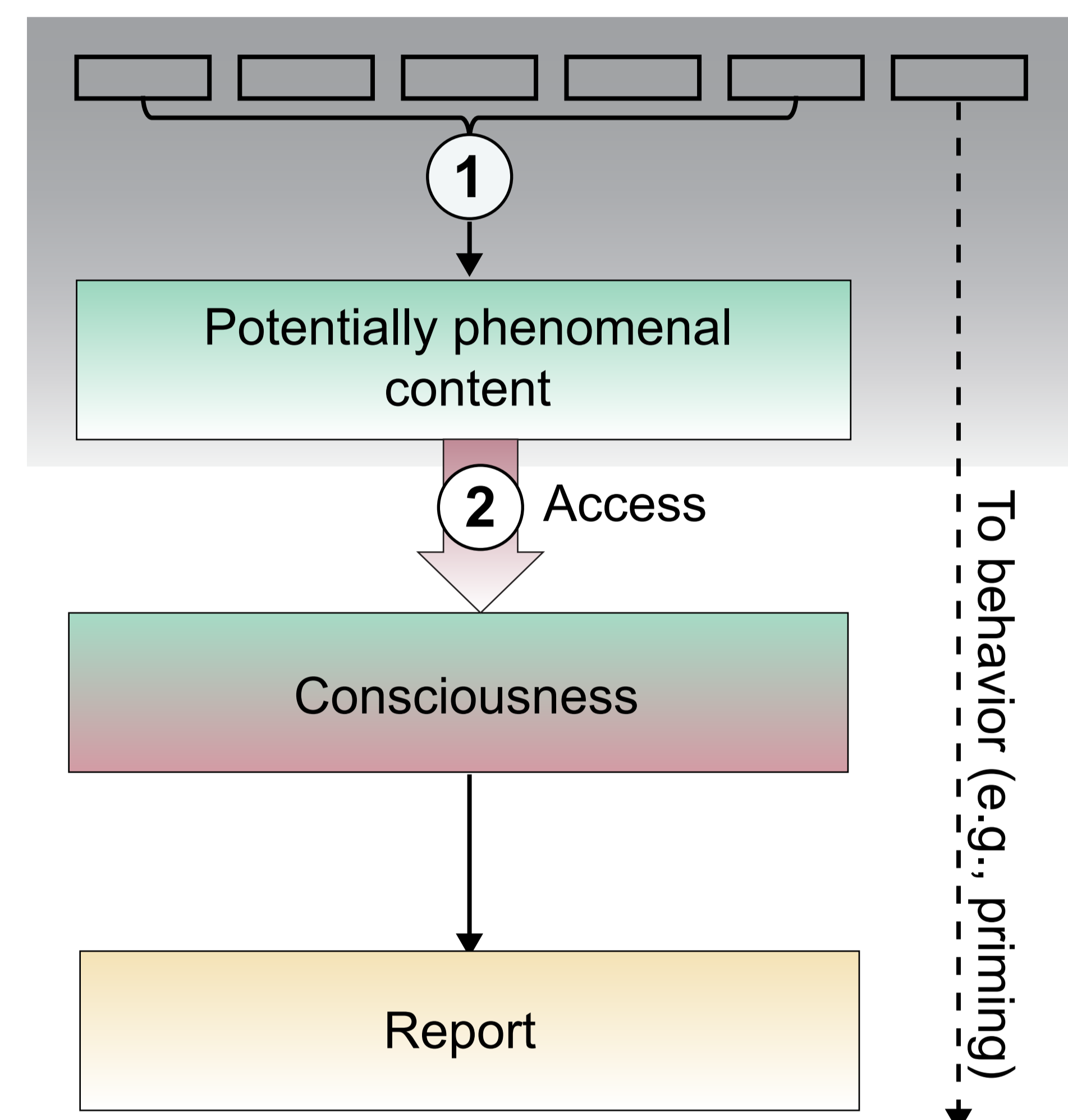
Specialised modules ① Content mechanism  
Unconscious proc. ② Access mechanism

### BBS open commentaries

- D. Dennett:** It is not that we others are "conflating" two sorts of consciousness; it is that he is inflating differences in degree into imaginary differences in kind.
- G. Harman:** Trivially, a self is conscious of something only if it accesses it.
- P. Kitcher:** If P-consciousness essentially involves what it is like to be in a state, then [...] this would seem to require monitoring consciousness.
- B. Kobes:** No state is P-conscious intrinsically, in and of itself. Any state is P-conscious only in virtue of its relations to a larger person or system.
- J. Levine:** Experience is essentially connected with a subject for whom it is an experience, and this immediately brings with it a relation of access.
- T. Natsoulas:** A representation of the content of a phenomenal mental state is necessary for the latter state to be access-conscious.

## Revised proposal

A & P as two conditions for consciousness



## Implications

### Theories of Consciousness

Existing theories are incomplete: sensory theories focus on phenomenality, cognitive theories focus on access

A complete ToC must integrate **both**: how content becomes potentially phenomenal *and* accessed

Comparing theories **within** each domain (phenomenality/access), while integrating **between** domains may be most productive

### Neural Correlates of Consciousness

Posterior regions likely support phenomenal content; anterior regions might enable access

Both sets of regions are necessary consciousness is not an "either/or" but an "and"

This multi-stage view aligns with data from no-report paradigms and front/back NCC studies

### Timing of Consciousness

Consciousness unfolds over time—phenomenality and access are multi-stage processes, described by evidence accumulation

Early and late neural signals may reflect when the two conditions of consciousness are met

Like trichromatic & opponent processes in color vision, consciousness may require sequential processing stages

|     | Mechanism for content                                 | Mechanism for access                 |
|-----|---|--------------------------------------|
| IIT | Integration and differentiation                       | ?                                    |
| GNW | ?   | Global broadcasting                  |
| RPT | Perceptual organization<br>Local recurrent processing | ?                                    |
| DIT | ?   | Ascending/descending synchrony       |
| AST | ?   | Attention schema                     |
| HOT | ?   | Second-order representation/indexing |

