

John Searle

Quotes

Understanding, Car, Consciousness, Speech, Mean, Umpires, Problem, Simple, Computer, Machines, Utterance, Matter, Two, Believe, Materialism, Ifs, Mind, Expression, Appearance, Animal

An utterance can have Intentionality, just as a belief has Intentionality, but whereas the Intentionality of the belief is intrinsic the Intentionality of the utterance is derived.

~John Searle

Our tools are extensions of our purposes, and so we find it natural to make metaphorical attributions of intentionality to them; but I take it no philosophical ice is cut by such examples.

~John Searle

The Intentionality of the mind not only creates the possibility of meaning, but limits its forms.

~John Searle

We often attribute 'understanding' and other cognitive predicates by metaphor and analogy to cars, adding machines, and other artifacts, but nothing is proved by such attributions.

~John Searle

I want to block some common misunderstandings about "understanding": In many of these discussions one finds a lot of fancy footwork about the word "understanding."

~John Searle

You can't *discover* that the brain is a digital computer. You can only *interpret* the brain as a digital computer.

~John Searle

Many people mistakenly suppose that the essence of consciousness is that of a control mechanism

~John Searle

Where consciousness is concerned, the appearance is the reality.

~John Searle

"Akrasia" [weakness of will] in rational beings is as common as wine in France.

~John Searle

The problem posed by indirect speech acts is the problem of how it is possible for the speaker to say one thing and mean that but also to mean something else.

~John Searle

Whatever is referred to must exist. Let us call this the axiom of existence.

~John Searle

How do we get from electrons to elections and from protons to presidents?

~John Searle

You do not understand your own tradition if you do not see it in relation to others.

~John Searle

If you can't say it clearly, you don't understand it yourself

~John Searle

There is no success or failure in Nature.

~John Searle

Dualism makes the problem insoluble; materialism denies the existence of any phenomenon to study, and hence of any problem.

~John Searle

Where questions of style and exposition are concerned I try to follow a simple maxim: if you can't say it clearly you don't understand it yourself.

~John Searle

Where conscious subjectivity is concerned, there is no distinction between the observation and the thing observed.

~John Searle

I will argue that in the literal sense the programmed computer understands what the car and the adding machine understand, namely, exactly nothing.

~John Searle

Berkeley had a liberal element in the student body who tended to be quite active. I think that's in general a feature of intellectually active places.

~John Searle

My car and my adding machine understand nothing: they are not in that line of business

~John Searle

There are clear cases in which "understanding" literally applies and clear cases in which it does not apply; and these two sorts of cases are all I need for this argument.

~John Searle

The ascription of an unconscious intentional phenomenon to a system implies that the phenomenon is in principle accessible to consciousness.

~John Searle

Materialism ends up denying the existence of any irreducible subjective qualitative states of sentience or awareness.

~John Searle

In many cases it is a matter for decision and not a simple matter of fact whether x understands y; and so on.

~John Searle

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