

## ***The bereitschaftspotential and the cognitive neuro-ontology of voluntary action***

The problem of "free will" is a problem about how actions are generated. Understanding what happens before a voluntary action is clearly relevant to understanding what voluntariness is. The readiness potential has a distinctive place in the history of neuroscience because it seemed to offer the first neural window into endogenicity. A current central question in volition is whether the readiness potential reflects a cognitive process of preparation for endogenous action, or merely some randomness in the action-triggering process. I will review the tradition of readiness potential studies in psychology and neurology, with the aim of addressing the following questions: (a) is the readiness potential a specific marker of a distinctive cognitive process of endogenous action generation? (b) is the readiness potential associated with consciousness? My tentative answers are: (a) kind of, perhaps at least sometimes; and (b) maybe.