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This article is an expansion of a lecture given by Francis Crick to the Congress of Neurological Surgeons, in which he outlined the progress that he and his colleagues had made in discovering the neural correlates of consciousness (NCC).

Crick, one of the greatest scientists of the modern era, brought respectability to the investigation of the NCC, an area that had largely been neglected by neuroscientists.

His collaboration with Christof Koch on the NCC over the past 15 years has been particularly stimulating and productive: both have written major books on the subject. Widely acknowledged as the key scientist in the origin of molecular biology, future history may also prove Francis Crick to have been at the origin of a successful solution of the structure of consciousness.

Competing interests: None declared

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