

BOOK REVIEW**Transcendent Mind: Rethinking the Science of Consciousness**

by Imants Barušs and Julia Mossbridge. American Psychological Association, 2016. 256 pp. \$69.95. ISBN 978-1433822773.

Once upon a time, not so long ago, there was a kingdom called Science whose citizens were guided by a uniform belief—that their consciousness is produced by the chemistry, physiology, and anatomy of the physical brain. Forfeited in this belief was the capacity for free will, as well as any higher meaning and purpose to existence. The possibility that consciousness might survive the physical death of the brain and body was considered heretical and blasphemous. The guardians of science exerted enormous pressure to conform to the concept of materialism undergirding this precious belief system. In support of these beliefs, an enormous body of data was marshalled that, they were convinced, confirmed their views. They were so committed to their position that evidence to the contrary was largely dismissed as irrelevant, and those who dared to challenge the materialistic perspective were often denigrated as traitors to the scientific tradition. But just when the materialistic edifice was considered beyond reproach and safe from significant challenge, there came this shocking announcement from two prominent consciousness researchers:

We are in the midst of a sea change. Receding from view is materialism, whereby physical phenomena are assumed to be primary and consciousness is regarded as secondary. Approaching our sights is a complete reversal of perspective. According to this alternative view, consciousness is primary and the physical is secondary. In other words, materialism is receding and giving way to ideas about reality in which consciousness plays a key role. (p. 3)

This is the opening salvo of *Transcendent Mind: Rethinking the Science of Consciousness*. The authors believe that the materialistic credo is not merely off-base in a few minor details, but is fundamentally flawed beyond repair and is in retreat. The exploration of this “sea change” is the theme of *Transcendent Mind*.

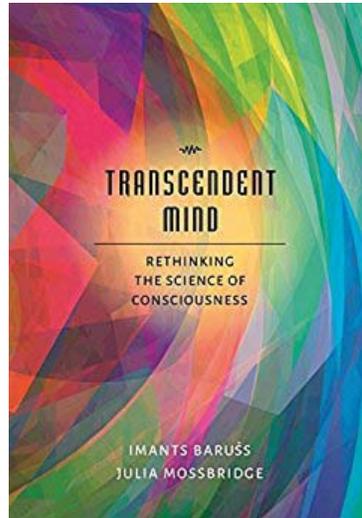
I have introduced my comments about *Transcendent Mind* as a kind of fairytale, a product of the imagination, because that is how this book may be regarded by materialists and anyone who has not followed the implications

of consciousness research for the past few decades, elaborated by authors Imants Barušs, Ph.D., professor of psychology at King's University College at University of Western Ontario, Canada, and Julia Mossbridge, Ph.D., experimental psychologist and cognitive neuroscientist at the Institute of Noetic Sciences and a Visiting Scholar in Psychology at Northwestern University.

Chapter 1, "Beyond Materialism," defines materialism, "the paradigm that is disappearing." This discussion includes a brief history of the philosophy of materialism and "the billiard-ball version of reality." This is the view that "if we know all the equations governing the spatial positions of fundamental particles at a given time, along with their initial conditions, then we would know everything there is to know about reality." Barušs and Mossbridge identify the key characteristics of the materialistic worldview: It is scalable, deterministic, objective, and reductionistic; it depends on an absolute space and an absolute time, in which there is an ordered linear progression of events from the past to the future. The authors explain why "each of these six prongs of historical materialism has been pretty much dismantled by now" (p. 8).

In a brief review of key developments that led to quantum mechanics, they introduce a key assertion of the book, that "quantum events are not somehow encapsulated in a microdomain that has nothing to do with us." They assert an "upward creep" of quantum events into everyday life. "[P]eople-sized events [are] just what microevents look like at the people-sized level," they state (p. 11).

None of which means that materialism should be discarded. "[M]aterialism works reasonably well for our everyday experience of people-sized events, which follow the rules of classical mechanics, chemistry, and so on." The problem is that "bias blindness" commonly enters into our deliberations about how the world and we ourselves function. "So we may know intellectually that historical materialism is false, . . . but many of us, including psychologists and neuroscientists, are still reasoning as though it were true." Thus, for many materialists, materialism evolves into *physicalism*, "the view that the world contains just those types of things that physics says it contains." A widespread version of materialism



is “neuroscientism,” the contention that consciousness is “necessarily the result of neural activity that is assumed to be isolated from quantum considerations” (pp. 11–13).

For the authors, consciousness is a term referring to phenomena that are not available “from the outside” but only “from the inside.” “Thus, *subjective consciousness* refers to the contents of experience that occur subjectively for a person within the privacy of her own mind.” The attempts of materialistic neuroscience to understand consciousness “from the outside” runs into insuperable difficulties. The overall evidence, the authors assert, points compellingly to the existence of “transcendent mind,” the book’s title—“the notion that mind is ‘transcendent’ in nature, in that it cannot be adequately characterized in physical terms” (pp. 14–15).

Particularly incompatible with materialism are “anomalous phenomena,” in which the authors include remote viewing, remote sharing of thoughts, remote influence, precognitive dreams, the survival hypothesis including near-death experiences—generally the panoply of psi phenomena that will be familiar to *JSE* readers. “[These phenomena] have been called ‘anomalous’ not because they occur rarely or because there are no data to support their existence, but because, from a materialistic point of view, they should not exist.” Much of the rest of the book is a discussion of the empirical evidence for these phenomena and their implications for an understanding of consciousness (pp. 20–21).

Part of the forcefulness of *Transcendent Mind* is the method of argumentation employed by Barušs and Mossbridge. They frequently put themselves in the shoes of the materialist and argue from her position. For instance (p. 21), they have the materialist saying, “Wait! You can’t expect me to buy into that sort of woo. I was taught that this kind of thing is not science; that it’s a pseudoscience!” This literary device permits them to take seriously the customary reasons why psi is rejected: the strategy of denigrating research of anomalous phenomena by calling it ‘pseudoscience’; unjustly treating the results of psi research by rejecting publication of studies regardless of their quality; baseless accusations of fraud; dismissing psi experiences as hallucinations, delusions, and wishful thinking; dismissing those who experience psi events as mentally unstable or actually suffering from schizotypal personality disorder; the objection that extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence; and the downright insistence that there is no evidence for psi phenomena whatsoever (pp. 21–24). They summarize the root of these fallacies with a telling comment by physicist Bernard Haisch, former *JSE* Editor-in-Chief:

Modern western science regards consciousness as an epiphenomenon that cannot be anything but a byproduct of the neurology and biochemistry of

the brain. . . . While this perspective is viewed within modern science as a fact, it is in reality far stronger than a mere fact: It is a dogma. Facts can be overturned by evidence, whereas dogma is impervious to mere evidence. (Haisch 2007:63)

The authors describe three types of attitudes toward the nature of consciousness and how they influence one's beliefs about reality:

Thus, materialists regard consciousness as an emergent property of neural activity or as information in an information-processing system and tend to emphasize the behavioral and objective aspects of consciousness. For them, consciousness is an incidental aspect of reality. Those tending toward conservative transcendence endorse the subjective definitions of consciousness, believe that consciousness gives meaning to reality, and that it is a significant aspect of reality. Those tending toward the extraordinarily transcendent position prefer definitions of consciousness that emphasize the significance of altered states of consciousness. For them, consciousness is the ultimate reality that can only be known through a process of psychological change. Consciousness is all that exists. (p. 27)

In a study supporting this array of attitudes, of the 212 attendees responding to a survey at the 1996 conference "Toward a Science of Consciousness" in Tucson, Arizona, one-third thought that anomalous phenomena do not occur, another third thought they occur but could in principle be explained in physical terms, and another third thought not only that anomalous phenomena occur but also that consciousness is primary (p. 28).

In Chapter 2, "Shared Mind," Barušs and Mossbridge examine examples of nonsensory communication between distant individuals. They state that the most recent version of the American Psychiatric Association's *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)* cites "belief in clairvoyance, telepathy, or 'sixth sense' as a symptom of schizotypal personality disorder" (pp. 655–659 of the *DSM*). In opposition to this purported link to psychopathology, the authors say that "two types of *shared mind* experiences [telepathy and clairvoyance] are being discussed quietly but seriously among clinical and experimental psychologists" (p. 29). They review the increasingly cordial ways in which Freud regarded these events late in his career, and how Hans Berger, the inventor of electroencephalography, experienced a sharing of thoughts at a distance with his sister at "a time of mortal danger, and as I [Berger] contemplated certain death" (p. 32). The authors describe how investigative tools have moved from crude personal descriptions, to EEG recordings, and most recently to fMRI findings, and how systematic and meta-analyses reveal enormous statistical odds favoring these phenomena.

How to explain these happenings? The authors state,

Just because it appears that telepathy results from mind-to-mind communication does not mean that a signal is actually sent. And just because clairvoyance appears to not involve another mind, this does not mean that no other mind is involved. The point is that we do not understand the mechanism of either phenomenon, and both are anomalous. (p. 47)

One way to think about both telepathy and clairvoyance, they say, is that “we are sharing minds, but not necessarily with other individual people. The idea here is that we could be sharing access to a larger pool of information, like a unified, larger mind. . . . Such a source of information could be considered to be analogous to the long body [of the Native American Iroquois], or Carl Jung’s . . . collective unconscious” (pp. 47–48). The key realization, the authors suggest, is that “the boundary between individuals breaks down when we recognize that our primary, and indeed only, direct experience is mental. . . . [I]t is possible that our individual experiences are connected to one another as well as to other sources of information of which we are not necessarily conscious”—a view reminiscent of William James’s “continuum of consciousness . . . a mother-sea or reservoir” (pp. 50–51).

In “Rethinking Time,” Chapter 3, Barušs and Mossbridge tackle the thorny, unresolved issue of the nature of time. They distinguish between an *apparent time* to which we feel we have access, and *deep time* “that structures the nature of consciousness and physical manifestation, and a possible relationship between the two” (p. 54). Their discussion of time in physics includes the second law of thermodynamics, the classic double-slit experiment, the role of an observer in quantum mechanics, and the famous delayed-choice experiments of physicist John Wheeler and others in which retrocausation appears to come into play (pp. 55–59). They explore the role of the unconscious in the presentiment studies pioneered by researcher Dean Radin, in which autonomic physiological effects seem to occur prior to their cause. A discussion of experiments in precognitive remote viewing pioneered by researchers Hal Puthoff, Russell Targ, Stephan Schwartz, Ed May, Robert Jahn, Brenda Dunne, and others continues from Chapter 2. The “implicit precognitive” studies of psychologist Daryl Bem and others also are examined, as well as the potential relevance of psi researcher James Carpenter’s intriguing “first sight” model of how psi operates in daily life. The sense of altered temporality in life reviews and the experience of timelessness in mystical experiences and drug-induced states are addressed as well. What comes out of this bravura survey is the suggestion that “the deep structures underlying our waking consciousness are fundamentally spatially and temporally nonlocal in nature. This is a key reframing of

our understanding of consciousness in that consciousness now has been extended into temporal domains beyond apparent time. . . . Deep time may run concurrently with apparent time . . .” (pp. 63–81).

Chapter 4, “Interactions with Discarnate Beings,” surveys the evidence suggesting contact with deceased individuals. If valid, these phenomena would be crucial evidence favoring a transcendent mind that in some sense survives physical death. Cases involving spontaneous and deliberate contact with the dead are described, as well as fascinating accounts of mediumship. The authors discuss the two contentious explanations usually offered for these happenings—the super-psi versus the survivalist hypotheses. Their sentiments lie with the latter. Citing the writings of philosophers Stephen Braude and Chris Carter, they note, “Taken together, features such as these have sometimes been judged to tip the scales in favor of survival” (p. 97).

One of the admirable features of this book is the willingness of the authors to venture into areas almost guaranteed to evoke pushback from many readers. This is nowhere more obvious than in the section “Unwanted Intrusions,” in which they ask whether “those who have previously been human are the only entities that are present around us, or whether there are other types of disembodied entities of varying intelligence, character, and morality that we could encounter” (p. 97). Barušs and Mossbridge believe the decisions we make regarding this question “greatly complicate matters, including our understanding of the nature of consciousness. . . . It would be much easier to pretend that these sorts of problems cannot exist, and we are good at doing so.” They quote J. Henderson, who probed this area more than three decades ago: “It is accordingly fashionable at least in professional circles to dismiss the notions of possession and exorcism as outmoded medieval superstitions of, at best, historical interest” (p. 97). They urge caution.

[C]ontrary to the claims of some grief therapists that interactions with the deceased are always benign, that is not true of interactions with apparent discarnate entities in general. In fact, whatever psychological mechanisms allow for pleasant apparent interactions could equally allow for dysphoric apparent interactions were it not for whatever psychological mechanisms protect a person from apparent unwanted intrusions. . . . In fact, however those events are explained, there are already lots of cases in which people have ended up in serious trouble by stumbling into various practices for which they were not prepared. (p. 101)

This discussion segues into a discussion of deathbed visions and the extraordinary clinical benefit of these experiences, not just for the dying person but for loved ones as well. The work of psychiatrist Peter Fenwick is

emphasized, in which he describes three beneficial themes: the comfort felt by the dying individual and the attendant loved ones, the conviction that the vision was real, and a sense of relief in being able to talk freely about these visions. Barušs and Mossbridge sensibly conclude,

Thus, it appears that we ought to at least reassure people that such experiences are normal and common, and perhaps even veridical. The end of life could well not be the end of life but a transition into other dimensions of being. If that were to be the case, then we would clearly need more research to understand that process and learn how to prepare people for it and to facilitate it within the context of their own death. (p. 101)

Chapter 5, “Separation of Mind from Brain,” tackles more directly “the hypothesis that the mind is not an epiphenomenon of the brain, but instead is independently real even as it exists in some sort of relationship to the brain” (p. 103). Terminal lucidity—the unexpected return of mental clarity and memory shortly before death—sometimes occurs when the brain is substantially compromised in degenerative states such as Alzheimer’s disease. Near-death experiences and veridical reports of visual information occurring in the congenitally blind is another major challenge to materialists. The authors critique the well-worn “explanations” offered by materialists for NDEs, such as a lack of oxygen or a buildup of carbon dioxide in the blood bathing the brain, temporal lobe seizures, drug effects, hallucinations, pre- and retrocognition, and so on. Particularly difficult to explain physiologically, the authors note, is the profound change in worldview and outlook and the complete lack of fear of death and a profound love for all living things in NDE survivors. They note,

[I]t looks as though the less the brain is able to function properly, the more vivid the experiences that are occurring, assuming that the experiences are occurring at the same time as the brain is shutting down. . . . An alternative explanation that better fits the facts would be that mind, loosened from the brain, comes into its own, functioning without the constraints imposed by the brain. (pp. 110–111)

In this chapter Barušs and Mossbridge acknowledge the sheer magnitude of the task they have taken on, saying,

In seeking information about the nature of consciousness in the afterlife the problem is not that there is no useful information out there, but, on the contrary, that there is way too much. In fact, there is so much information that we cannot effectively summarize it, let alone evaluate it, for the purpose of this book. (p. 118)

They honor psychologist and psi researcher David Fontana for making one of the most thorough analyses of this blizzard of data in his 2005 book *Is There an Afterlife? A Comprehensive Overview of the Evidence* (Fontana 2005), in spite of these challenges.

Chapter 6, “Direct Mental Influence,” examines whether consciousness can cause physically demonstrable perturbations in the world by acting independently from the brain and body. They cite artist Ingo Swann’s apparent mental influence on a magnetometer in studies supervised by physicist Hal Puthoff at Stanford Research Institute in 1972, since supported by experiments by consciousness researcher Dean Radin (Radin et al. 2012). The panoply of experiments at the Princeton Anomalies Research (PEAR) lab, conducted across three decades, also are explored.

Barušs and Mossbridge address the failure of a consortium of research centers to replicate PEAR’s original positive findings involving the ability of subjects to influence the activity of random event generators (REGs). They hypothesize that the reason for this outcome is the failure of the experimenters to pre-test the subjects or “operators” for whether they could or could not affect the machines in the first place. “In other words,” they say, “if one wishes to determine whether any human can play the piano, then one had better try to find a person who can actually play the piano. Once this person is found, we can begin to explore the necessary and sufficient factors required for piano playing” (p. 129). This caution applies beyond REG research. For example, it is likely that some studies that explore the effects of healing intentions show no positive results because the “healers” had no healing abilities in the first place. Some experimenters in this field do not seek out individuals with recognized healing abilities because they are eager to demonstrate that healing is democratically distributed among all people. This sort of distribution of talent is unlikely. Most humans cannot play the piano, run a four-minute mile, or master the Lorentz equations, but this does not mean these skills do not exist.

Barušs and Mossbridge add,

It was found at the PEAR laboratory that one did not need to be physically present to demonstrate the intended effects. Further, one did not need to try to influence the machine at the time it was running to demonstrate the intended effects. (p. 131)

They then consider experimenter effects—the intended or unintended effects of an experimenter on the outcome of her experiments. Might *any* human influence an experiment if mind is transcendent, nonlocal, and unitary? Is *anyone* completely exempt from influencing an experiment? “Whether this entire-world explanation holds is not clear, but what is clear is the so-called

experimenter effect is something that needs to be carefully empirically investigated more so than it has been until now” (p. 131).

Researcher Dean Radin’s replicated experiments showing that direct mental activity can affect photon interactions with double-slit devices get special attention by the authors. Macro-PK effects such as poltergeist activity and remote healing are also singled out as evidence for direct mental influence.

Chapter 7, “Reintegrating Subjectivity into Consciousness Research,” is a plea for consciousness researchers to hone their “subjective observation skills” as a way of identifying and transcending their own biases. Failure to do so, they say, results in “scientists espousing materialist worldviews that are not reasonable if one takes into account the accumulating data from physics and psychology” pointing to a critical role of consciousness. The authors explore “how people have used controlled introspection and have combined first-person observational techniques with third-person observational techniques to investigate consciousness” (pp. 146–147).

Their recommendations are rooted in science from its earliest beginnings, including the view of Francis Bacon, who was well aware of the flaws that can bias observation. The human mind, he said, “is rather like an enchanted glass, full of superstition and imposture, if it be not delivered and reduced” (p. 147). Max Planck, the founder of quantum mechanics, appears to have agreed in principle, saying, “We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness” (Planck 1931)—which opens the door for observational inaccuracies. Flawed observation becomes particularly problematic “in a situation like the current one, in which the dogma of scientism demands young scientists to conform their observations and inferences to the norm of materialism” (p. 150).

The authors describe specific methods “that scientists and clinicians alike can carefully use for becoming skilled first-person observers of conscious awareness” (pp. 162–166). They state, “If some forms of meditation training can allow us to more accurately perceive consensus reality, this suggests that each of us, nonmeditators and meditators alike, has some potential ability to perceive and act on information that is not available to our conscious waking awareness” (p. 168). In making these recommendations, the authors are following trails blazed by psi researcher Charles Tart in his 1969 landmark book *Altered States of Consciousness* (Tart 1969), and his concept of “state-specific sciences” (Tart 1972). Tart, and now Baruš and Mossbridge, realized that the psychological state of an investigator influences not only what *is* seen, but what *can* be seen.

“Transcendent Mind,” Chapter 8, is a summing up of the postmaterialist

perspective. The authors examine filter theories of brain function that suggest that the brain restricts information input, resulting in a reduced and modified output of conscious awareness that Aldous Huxley called a “measly trickle,” a stepped-down efferent of awareness that is designed to meet our creaturely survival needs (Huxley 1954). What is lost in this process, the authors state in agreement with Huxley, is awareness of our “disembodied . . . and expanded consciousness” (pp. 176–177). Throughout history, humans have struggled mightily to thwart the brain’s filter function and expand awareness, thereby opening “the doors of perception,” as Huxley put it. As the authors state,

Timelessness, nonduality, bliss, and other features of transcendent states of consciousness could be explained as experiences that ensue when either the filter is removed or one’s subjective point of reference somehow passes beyond the filter to the unconstrained mental level . . . with the caveat that such permissivity could lead us to become overwhelmed with unwanted influences. (p. 178)

They propose a “flicker-filter model” that introduces time into the brain-as-filter concept, and which permits the possibility that both the future and the past can be changed (p. 183). The authors’ discussion of filter models of the brain is one of the best I’m aware of. Their position echoes that of physicist David Darling, that we are conscious not *because* of the brain, but *in spite* of it (Darling 1995).

The final chapter emphasizes a central tenet of the book—that consciousness cannot be set aside and disregarded as a “nuisance . . . in any explanation of the nature of the universe” (p. 174). The authors challenge the view of many physicists that they are “‘discovering’ a physical world that is independent of what they think it should be like”—for, as a result of the ineradicable presence of consciousness, it appears that “we not only ‘discover’ but also ‘create’ what we find, although the proportion of creation to discovery remains to be established.” They ask, “To what extent are the expectations of scientists, with Nobel prizes at stake, unintentionally producing experimenter effects? We can no longer naïvely assume that we are just ‘discovering’ subatomic particles using various elaborate machines without considering that in some cases we may just be creating the appearance of having found them” (p. 175).

What are the limits of a transcendent mind? The authors imply that there may not be any. They reverse the materialist assumption that consciousness is a by-product of the brain by suggesting that the brain is a by-product of consciousness. “This is not a new position,” they state. “In fact, *idealism*, the notion that mind is the fundamental reality from which the physical

world is derived, was a prominent philosophical position before the rise of analytic philosophy at the turn of the 20th century” (p. 179). But rather than revisit previous versions of idealism, they ask blunt questions: “How do we get a brain from consciousness? Why is brain activity correlated with conscious awareness? And what is the point of having a brain?” (p. 179). For readers who are shocked by these questions, the authors offer a consolation that might at least take the edge off: “[A]nyway, it is difficult for those who put forward the idea that the brain creates consciousness to explain why we have consciousness in the first place, so the difficulty is at least symmetrical” (p. 180).

The book ends on a practical note—ten guidelines that constitute “a field guide” for consciousness researchers (pp. 184–189). They also discuss the implications of *Transcendent Mind* for clinical practice by mental health professionals (pp. 189–192), as well as for scientific discovery in general (pp. 192–195).

In conclusion, Barušs and Mossbridge put their cards on the table:

Okay, but what do we, the authors, really think consciousness is? . . . We think consciousness has an aspect that is a deep reality that we might only be able to partially know conceptually. On the basis of the evidence described in this book, we think it is likely to exist ontologically prior to space and time, at least as space and time are usually experienced. We speculate that consciousness creates physical manifestation through which it then expresses itself in stepped-down, accessible form. On the basis of this idea, in everyday waking consciousness, human beings are explicitly aware of only a fragment of the scope of consciousness. Self-development is necessary to deepen one’s understanding of the nature of consciousness and reality. Deep consciousness offers an invitation to explore what it means to exist. Perhaps. . . . On the basis of what we have discussed in this book, such a process could lead beyond itself to states of mind in which we can more adequately comprehend what is happening mentally and physically, in time and space. That is the adventure that awaits us. (p. 195)

If these ideas appear radical, we should acknowledge that they have an impressive pedigree. The premise that consciousness is fundamental and transcendent has been endorsed by some of the greatest figures of twentieth-century science. To reiterate, Max Planck, the founder of quantum mechanics, observed, “I regard consciousness as fundamental. I regard matter as derivative from consciousness. We cannot get behind consciousness. Everything that we talk about, everything that we regard as existing, postulates consciousness” (Planck 1931). Erwin Schrödinger, another Nobel Prize-winning physicist, agreed: “Although I think that life may be the result of an accident, I do not think that of consciousness.

Consciousness cannot be accounted for in physical terms. For consciousness is absolutely fundamental. It cannot be accounted for in terms of anything else” (Schrödinger 1994). More recently, mathematician-philosopher David Chalmers states, “I propose that conscious experience be considered a fundamental feature, irreducible to anything more basic. . . .” (Chalmers 1995). And neuroscientist Christof Koch: “I believe that consciousness is a fundamental, an elementary, property of living matter. It can’t be derived from anything else” (Koch 2012).

As to Barušs and Mossbridge’s endorsement of shared, unitary minds, we again find Schrödinger in agreement: “The overall number of minds is just one. . . . In truth there is only one mind.” And as the eminent physicist David Bohm observed, “Deep down the consciousness of mankind is one. This is a virtual certainty . . . and if we don’t see this it’s because we are blinding ourselves to it” (Bohm 1986).

Are the authors correct that a “sea change” is occurring and that the influence of materialism is receding in our understanding of the origins and destiny of consciousness? The verdict is still out. As physicist Neils Bohr is alleged to have said, “Prediction is very difficult, especially about the future.” However, the fact that *Transcendent Mind* is published by the book section of the American Psychological Association, the venerable APA, is noteworthy. This *suggests* a sea change is taking place, especially since surveys have consistently shown that psychologists have the lowest level of belief in psi among healthcare professionals.

In any case, if Barušs and Mossbridge are correct that we do not merely *discover* what’s real, but in some sense consciously or unconsciously *construct* reality, I choose to lean toward agreement with their contention of a sea change. I once asked the late futurist Willis Harman if he were optimistic about the future of consciousness research. He replied, “Of course. I have to be. My optimism—and pessimism—shape things.”

According to journalistic protocol, reviewers are expected to include some criticism to demonstrate their critical distancing and objectivity, since no book is perfect. I’ll break tradition, because my objections are trivial when compared to this book’s overall contribution. This is simply a flat-out courageous, evidence-based, tightly reasoned document that no doubt will infuriate many paid-up materialists who read it—but that is one of the best compliments that a book of this genre could receive. Those who instinctively bridle at the authors’ views perhaps might benefit from the following maxim, variously attributed:

There is a principle which is a bar against all information, which is proof against all arguments and which cannot fail to keep a man in everlasting ignorance—that principle is contempt prior to investigation. (Keyes 2006)

As to criticisms of this book that I might have made, its authors have already beat me to them. As they say in the final pages (p. 184):

The quantum mind, filter, consciousness-as-primary, and flicker-filter models, along with every other model of consciousness of which we are presently aware, are incomplete. Assuming the existence of something like what we have loosely identified as deep consciousness, extended mind, shared mind, the prephysical substrate, and so on, we are likely a long way from understanding consciousness. What is needed is a surge of creative research taking the investigation of consciousness in new directions.

Readers of *JSE* who are already committed to the philosophy elaborated by Barušs and Mossbridge—that of a transcendent, nonlocal, unitary, shared mind—will find affirmation of their views in *Transcendent Mind*; and any open-minded individual uncommitted to these views can find delight in exploring them as an intellectual adventure. You may not agree that these ideas constitute a sea change, but as you engage them you might just experience a C-change—a change of Consciousness—in this case, your own.

LARRY DOSSEY

larry@dosseydossey.com

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