

Exploring the Frontiers of the Mind-Brain Relationship

Edited by

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The conscious mind defines human existence. Many consider the brain as a computer, and they attempt to explain consciousness as emerging at a critical, but unspecified, threshold level of complex computation among neurons. The brain-as-computer model, however, fails to account for phenomenal experience and portrays consciousness as an impotent, after-the-fact epiphenomenon lacking causal power. And the brain-as-computer concept precludes even the remotest possibility of spirituality. As described throughout the history of humankind, seemingly spiritual mental phenomena including transcendent states, near-death and out-of-body experiences, and past-life memories have in recent years been well documented and treated scientifically. In addition, the brain-as-computer approach has been challenged by advocates of quantum brain biology, who are possibly able to explain, scientifically, nonlocal, seemingly spiritual mental states.

Exploring the Frontiers of the Mind-Brain Relationship argues against the purely physical analysis of consciousness and for a balanced psychobiological approach. This thought-provoking volume bridges philosophy of mind with science of mind to look empirically at transcendent phenomena, such as mystic states, near-death experiences and past-life memories, that have confounded scientists for decades. Representing disciplines ranging from philosophy and history to neuroimaging and physics, and boasting a panel of expert scientists and physicians, including Andrew Newberg, Peter Fenwick, Stuart Hameroff, Mario Beauregard, Deepak Chopra, and Chris Clarke the book rigorously follows several lines of inquiry into mind-brain controversies, challenging readers to form their own conclusions—or reconsider previous ones.

Key coverage includes:

- Objections to reductionistic materialism from the philosophical and the scientific tradition.
- Psychic phenomena and the mind-brain problem.
- The neurobiological correlates of meditation and mindfulness.
- The quantum soul, a view from physics.
- Clinical implications of end-of-life experiences.
- Mediumistic experience and the mind-brain relationship.

Exploring the Frontiers of the Mind-Brain Relationship is essential reading for researchers and clinicians across many disciplines, including cognitive psychology, personality and social psychology, the neurosciences, neuropsychiatry, palliative care, philosophy, and quantum physics.

“This book ... brings together some precious observations about the fundamental mystery of the nature of consciousness ... It raises many questions that serve to invite each of us to be more aware of the uncertainty of our preconceptions about consciousness ... This book on the frontiers of mind-body relationships is a scholarly embodiment of creative and open-minded science.”

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