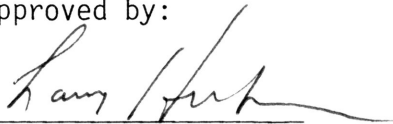


Rethinking the Mind-Body Problem

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A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Larry Hickman", written over a horizontal line.

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## Rethinking the Mind-Body Problem

The division of the organism into mind and body has been a feature of Western philosophy since before Socrates. For Socrates himself, the body was "The prisoner of the soul;" for Descartes, body, or res extensa, was diametrical to mind, or res cogitans. This dualism, or reductions of it which claim either that the body is illusory or that the mind is illusory, were dominant features of the philosophical landscape until the contributions of the American pragmatists in the late nineteenth century. Their concern was not to treat the organism as a mind in a body but as an organism functionally conscious of itself as embodied.

In what follows, I shall review the traditional arguments of the mind-body problem and then focus on a critique of the ontological dualisms of the seventeenth century French philosopher, Rene Descartes and the twentieth century French existentialist, Jean-Paul Sartre. I will then present the philosophical monism of the nineteenth century philosopher, William James and its further development in the context of the human body by the twentieth century French phenomenologist, Maurice Merleau-Ponty. Furthermore, I will present James' characterization of his monism, "the stream of consciousness," and then I will elucidate the implications of its character. Finally, after establishing the philosophical

## Rethinking the Mind-Body Problem

### Abstract

What is the relation of mind to body? Are there separate entities called "mind" and "body," or is there only one kind of substance of which they are manifestations. If so, what is that one kind of substance? These are the questions which philosophers have traditionally called the "mind-body problem."

I will first review the history of the mind-body problem from Descartes to the present and present the basic stance of each of the major theories. These include: interactionism, occasionalism, parallelism, pre-established harmony, epiphenomenalism, idealism, materialism, the double aspect theory, and functionalism.

Following this, I will review the traditional arguments for dualism and then argue that the functionalism of William James and the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty give the strongest insight into the mind-body problem. Finally, I will incorporate the literature of psychotropics as empirical support for the philosophical model.

model, I will support the claims made with literature on psychotropic research from R.E.L. Masters and Jean Houston's Varieties of Psychedelic Experience, James Bakaler and Lester Grinspoon's Psychedelic Drugs Re-considered.

## BACKGROUND

### DUALISTIC THEORIES

Interactionism, the dualism advanced by Rene Descartes in the seventeenth century, includes the thesis that between a physical substance (res extensa) and a mental substance (res cogitans), body and mind interact. His dualism is termed "interactionism," because the mind somehow acts on the body through a "gate mechanism" in the brain.

Occasionalism was a type of dualism advanced by Descartes' contemporaries, Geulinx and Malebranche, to clean up problems with the "gate in the brain" theory of interaction. They rejected the notion of causal mechanism between the mental and the physical. But since experience seemed to show the existence of connections between the two, they proposed "God" was the intermediary link connecting them, thus "occasioning" their interaction.

Parallelism went further by proposing that mental and physical events are correlated but without any causal or occasional connection, because with three different kinds of things--the mental, the physical, and God--there could be neither cause nor occasion among them. This view was argued by Gustav Fechner in the nineteenth century.

In the late seventeenth century, G.W. Leibniz proposed a

pre-established harmony existing between mind and body. Since no causal relation between the mental and physical could be argued, Leibniz proposed that God synchronizes mind and body mechanisms at their time of origin, so that the sequence of mental and physical events are in "harmony" and happen together as if they were "different clocks striking at the same hour because they were designed and set by a perfect craftsman."

Epiphenomenalism is the theory that causal connections operate in one direction only from body to mind, so that mental events are only the effects and never the causes of brain events. This form of dualism is based on the thesis that physical events are autonomous, and the behavior of human bodies can be explained by physical laws. The brain, then, secretes thought as, for example, the liver secretes bile.

#### MONISTIC THEORIES

Materialism, the theory that matter is fundamental and whatever exists is physical, was held by the logical behaviorists of the 1930's. Their stance was that no mental events are psychological but just behavioral events which are bound by causal laws.

In the eighteenth century, George Berkeley advanced idealism, the view that physical objects exist only in the mind as classes of perceptions. To be is to be perceived or to be a perceiver. This theory eliminates the physical and divides the world into "ideas" and "perceivers" for "anything God could achieve with physical bodies, he could achieve without them."

In the double aspect theory, the mental and the physical are proposed as different aspects of something that is itself neither mental

nor physical. Benedict Spinoza, in the seventeenth century, thought that man was an extended bodily thing and equally a thinking thing, but neither one nor both together exhaust the underlying substance of man; mind and body are just descriptions of man under different categories.

Functionalism suggests that mental activity and physical activity are functions of the human organism in its adaptation to and control of its environment, but that mental and physical activity are not ontologically distinct. This was the view of William James and, in general, the American Pragmatists.<sup>1</sup> Functionalism is supported in contemporary philosophy by Daniel C. Dennett, who writes, "Functionalism not only seems satisfactorily to evade the philosophical objections to all the other forms of materialism, but it is particularly well-suited to serve as the conceptual underpinning for current work in psychology, linguistics, and cybernetics or artificial intelligence."<sup>2</sup> Functionalism and the double aspect theory will be supported in this thesis.

Thomas Kuhn writes in The Structure of Scientific Revolutions that "research is a strenuous and devoted attempt to force nature into the conceptual boxes supplied by professional education."<sup>3</sup> I have exhibited nine cases of this activity which is predicated on the assumption that the scientific (philosophic) community knows what the world (mind and body) is like."<sup>4</sup> The mind-body paradigm exists in philosophy today, because we assume to know that which we are made of, minds and bodies and, hence, can develop a model to explain these phenomena. In following Kuhn's thesis, when paradigms and patterns of basic assumptions about nature conflict, and anomalies build up, a more encompassing paradigm

is needed to simplify the field. Seeing the human solely in terms of "the mental" and/or "the physical" is the main reason why the mind-body problem continues to persist and complicate. The endeavor of this thesis is to illuminate a broader paradigm which realigns basic, ordinary assumptions about mind and body.

Charles Hampden-Turner's psychological/philosophical anthology, Maps of the Mind, covers no less than sixty representative "maps" or theories of the mind and its workings. The book is aimed at piecing in holistic fashion the reduced and fragmented mind that religion, the sciences, and philosophy have intellectually and empirically dissected.<sup>5</sup> Hampden-Turner's treatment of considering many perspectives of mind attempts to glimpse the totality of what "the mind" entails. It is an attempt to free our natural mind from "conceptual boxes," to reveal the mind phenomena in its full esteem.

In the same way, we must consider the whole realm of our humanness, which includes examining the "aliveness" of the total organism. As Richard Grossinger in Planet Medicine puts it,

For centuries now, mainstream science has attempted to train its best minds to perceive phenomena objectively and derive their characteristics separate of man's internal being. We thus come to think of ourselves as dead matter which has life in it, or as carbon flesh activated and maintained by a genetic code.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, he reveals the shortcomings of this approach.

We neglect a whole category of information that floods us from the entity that is both mind and body. Yet it is exactly that information which forms the background of our lives, our existences. We take it for granted because it is omnipresent, and we prefer to focus on the foreground of thoughts and actions. We pretend our thoughts give us

intentions which our bodies carry out. We have no language for the deep body/mind pool that we are, so we borrow language from either mind or body to explain systemic changes.<sup>7</sup>

In the next section, we will argue against ontological dualism, with its separate substances for body and mind. We will then present the wider monistic paradigm of American philosopher William James and the French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty. We will find that their theories are the sort which can "revolutionize" their field, since they approach the mind-body problem from the experiential as well as the "scientific" viewpoints and give full justice to the varieties of human being; and their new pattern of assumptions about our nature pays homage to previous philosophical works, while avoiding their anomalies and conflicts. In short, the paradigm of James and Merleau-Ponty goes beyond "mind" and "body" into "the deep body/mind pool that we are."

Proponents of dualisms claim the human being is an amalgam of two substances, one mental and the other physical. Descartes outlined human dualism in the following manner: 1) res extensa (body) is extended, solid and has figure, while res cogitans (mind) is simple, unextended, and is the repository of secondary qualities, the sensible qualities which denote particular colors, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures; 2) body can be perceived by the senses, while mind perceives, thinks, doubts, denies, and imagines; 3) body is movable but not self moving, while mind wills and is self moving.<sup>8</sup>

Observe that Descartes makes these distinctions with his reason, an operation of the mind. What Descartes has done is to separate aspects of human being, that is, he has categorized two different descriptions of



the self. For example, I can say, "I weigh 130 pounds," and also "I thought about the mind-body problem" and then discern I am a body thing and I am a mind thing, and, therefore, conclude I am two different kinds of things. But only in my mind am I two different things, for in reality and to use Spinoza's double aspect theory, I am still one organism moving and thinking.

Jean-Paul Sartre, the twentieth century French existentialist, was also a strong proponent of ontological dualism. On the one hand, consciousness (the mental), he argued, was unstructured, non objective, and sought unity with Being (to be at one with all existence). He described and labelled consciousness with the term "no-thing-ness." On the other hand, things or the objects of consciousness (the physical) were structured and objective. Because their fundamental natures are different and because a permanent unity could never be achieved, Sartre felt that a real metaphysical distinction between consciousness and everything external to it, including the human body, existed.<sup>9</sup>

Critics of Sartre point out that his ontological distinction between consciousness and the world (the physical) is not a real distinction, but like Descartes', one within his own consciousness. He has grouped thoughts and sense data separately, attributing thoughts to consciousness and sense data to a world.<sup>10</sup> To claim an ontological dualism, one would have to somehow transcend his own consciousness and see it as separate and distinct from things. But this cannot be done, for one could never be conscious of being separated from his consciousness nor separated from any object of consciousness; i.e., consciousness must be conscious of

something, be it consciousness itself or the world of things.<sup>11</sup>

Given that consciousness is nothingness, it would seem, then, that Berkeley's idealism, the view that physical objects exist only in the mind as classes of perceptions, is our strongest metaphysical alternative, since the substance of things can never be known without being separated from consciousness, and this separation being an impossibility. Yet idealism remains difficult because of our cultural belief or, perhaps, our personal intuition that our inner world of mind and the external world are still somehow distinct in essence. The world of things before me and the world of my mind seem different. We must ask, then, how can we account philosophically for the seeming difference?

William James writes in the opening line of his lecture, "Does consciousness exist?", that "'thoughts' and 'things' are names for two sorts of objects, which common sense will always find contrasted and will always practically oppose to each other."<sup>12</sup> In this essay and one entitled, "The Notion of Consciousness," James cites further shortcomings of metaphysical dualism and posits a monism which accounts for the seemingly ontological distinction between thought and thing, subject and object, consciousness and the world.

James' argument against dualism contains the following central theme: the attributes of subject and object, thought and thing, etc. are functional distinctions. When we perceive external reality, the content of the physical is identical with the psychical or mental. And phenomena in dreams and memories are objective and physical until they are related to particular emotions, the attention given them, or the ideas that evoked

them. James writes, "The two worlds differ, not by the presence or absence of extension, but by the relations of the extension which in both worlds exist."<sup>13</sup> For James the mental and the physical "intermingle and confuse." He asks: does beauty reside in the work or in the mind? And he lists common phrases which reveal that the subjective marries the objective--"a frightful storm," "a hateful man," "a mean action," "an arduous road," "a sullen sky," "a superb sunset."<sup>14</sup> James believes this "animistic" manner of perception reveals the real and whole perception. Note the similarities to Berkeley's idealism; the physical exists in the perception; esse is percipi. Yet James goes a step further by arguing that subject and object are entwined and one, and in as much for Berkeley, thing is thought; for James thing and thought are practical distinctions made up of the "stuff of experience in general."

What James means by the "stuff of experience" is not consciousness as it is normally connoted. In the essay "Does Consciousness Exist?," James argues that consciousness is not an entity; that "consciousness as it is ordinarily understood does not exist, any more than does that Matter to which Berkeley gave the coup de grace,"<sup>15</sup> For James, consciousness is a field of relations of experiences:

Consciousness connotes a kind of external relation and does not denote a special stuff or way of being. The peculiarity of our experiences, that they not only are, but are known, which their conscious quality is invoked to explain, is better explained by their relations; these relations themselves being experiences--to one another.<sup>16</sup>

Consciousness as it is normally understood, then, is the name we address to a group of related experiences; the thing we make out of them. But in reality, consciousness is no such thing.

James describes the "stuff of experience" in the following way.

The instant field of the present is at all times what I call the 'pure' experience. It is only virtually or potentially either object or subject as yet. For the time being, it is plain, unqualified actuality, or existence, a simple that.<sup>17</sup>

Until we file the experience as "subjective" or "objective," it is neither. And since the field of the present flows, we do not have consciousness but consciousing or awaring.<sup>18</sup> Given James' description of consciousness, these gerund terms corroborate with our flowing experience, and they preserve the "on-ness" or "knowing" quality of the experience which James wishes to emphasize. What is the "stuff of experience?" It is not thought (relations of experiences delegated to "the subjective"), and it is not thing (relations of experiences delegated to "the objective"), but the "stuff" is the neutral "awaring"--the ability of experiences to be known to each other. Or, as James describes it, "awaring" is

. . .the susceptibility possessed by the parts of experience to be reported or known; this susceptibility is explained by the fact that certain experiences can lead some to the others by means of distinctly characterized intermediary experiences, in such a fashion that some play the role of known things, the others that of knowing subjects; these two roles can be defined perfectly without departing from the flow of experience itself and without invoking anything transcendental.<sup>19</sup>

As we experience or "aware," we have been conditioned to discern an external world of matter and body against an internal world of mind. So often we speak of our experiences being of the world or of mind, but James inverts this process. The experience or the "awaring" happens, then we cut it up into things external and internal. It must be emphasized that this dichotomy is a construct with no ontological grounds.

Let us revive Spinoza's double aspect theory--"the mental and the physical are proposed as different aspects of something that is itself neither mental no physical. . .mind and body are just descriptions of man under different categories." This is in agreement with James. The language of John Lilly in The Deep Self is also similar--"there are two aspects of the self that we separate into two concepts. The observing self we name 'the observer.' The doing, participating self we name 'the operator.' The whole self is named 'the observer-operator.'"<sup>20</sup> James describes the whole self as the activity of the body.

The individualized self, which I believe to be the only thing properly called self, is a part of the content of the world experienced. The world experienced (otherwise called the "field of consciousness") comes at all times with our body at its centre, centre of vision, centre of action, centre of interest. . . So far as "thoughts" and "feelings" can be active, their activity terminates in the activity of the body, and only through first arousing its activities can they begin to change those of the rest of the world. The body is the storm centre, the origin or coordinates, the constant place of stress in all that experience-train. Everything circles round it, and is felt from its point of view. The world "I," then, is primarily a noun of positions, just like "this" and "here."<sup>21</sup>

We are reminded of "the instant field of the present" and now with the body found at the center of the field. Body and "awaring" are integral and one. The whole self is the conscious organism, the "awaring-bodymind."

As James argued, there is no essential difference between the experience of the physical and psychical perception, likewise, Frenchman, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, corrected the early phenomenologists by arguing that one cannot assume the existence of a real objective world, that to speak of the inner-self is also to label experience rather than reveal its true nature, and that when Being (all existence) is revealed, all

that is present is an essentially neutral perception. Reminiscent of James' neutral stuff of experience, "awaring," Merleau-Ponty writes in the Phenomenology of Perception that the perception is what we perceive without interpretation and that the perceiving is peculiar to our human being; to be in the world is to be condemned to meaning and interpretation. In our "awaring" or experiencing of our being, we impose patterns and theories upon Being in order to arrive at meaning and interpretation.<sup>22</sup> This is what causes us to give names and entities to phenomena and fields of experiences. In other words, because of the nature of perception or "awaring," we learn to file these phenomena into conceptual areas. Merleau-Ponty, like James, inverted perception (experience) of the world to the world of perception (experience).

But what does it mean to say that "the perception is peculiar to human being?" Merleau-Ponty held the traditional phenomenologists' view that consciousness was inseparable from its objects. Yet for Merleau-Ponty, the human body was the mediator of their union, that is, consciousness is attached to the world through the body. The movement of consciousness through the body to the world he called "motility." The meaning of the world, then, comes through the mediating acts of our human body.<sup>23</sup>

The question now arises, what is Merleau-Ponty's body? Merleau-Ponty agreed that "consciousness" and "the world" were labels for fields of perceptions, and he claims that the body is the go-between for these constructs. Before we have "consciousness" and "the world," we have the neutral perception. The perception, then, is the process and product of

the body. In parallel with James, Merleau-Ponty describes the body synonymous with the neutral "perceiving." And he writes of the body-mind as he defines motility--"consciousness through the body" or "bodily consciousness." The point is made: the total organism is the perceiver and awareness.

In order to be more fully acquainted with "the instant field of the present," we return to James' characterization of consciousness. The characterization is necessary to open the channels we will take in studying psychotropics, because James' ideas extend the view of empirical inquiry into all realms. We will examine James in contrast and in response to the British empiricists' characterization of consciousness as a thing. For James, consciousness is a stream and flow of fields of relations of experiences.

The British empiricists believed thought arose from the "ideas" of sense. John Locke termed the immediate object of perception the idea. Locke distinguished ideas of perceptions as sensations of primary and secondary qualities. Primary qualities refer to the simple yet real qualities denoting the particular geometry of an object, while the secondary or sensible qualities denote particular colors, sounds, smells, tastes, and textures. For Locke, we perceive original qualities as they singly fall under our senses.<sup>24</sup>

For George Berkeley, the objects of thought "are collections of ideas or sensible things such as trees, books, and other wholes. We observe that certain simple perceptions congregate and group, hence, we name this unity and endow it with a name, and it becomes, then, a

thing. However, the unity of a thing is an abstract concept, because a thing or a "particular combination of ideas" is "arbitrarily put together by the mind." Nevertheless, the ideas of sense are "regular, vivid, constant," "orderly and distinct."<sup>25</sup> For Berkeley, objects of thought come into consciousness in discreet, defined bundles.

David Hume was in general agreement with Berkeley as to the objects of thought. Moreover, Hume writes that "nothing can ever be present to the mind but an image or perception."<sup>26</sup> And Hume was perceptive of the fact that experience involved a "constancy" and "coherence" that empiricism, as it was developed by Locke and Berkeley, could not account for. He, thus, developed an argument to show that we are, in fact, deceived into thinking of experience as an empirical continuum, i.e., imagination is responsible for our aberrations of perceptual truth. Hume saw that British empiricism failed to corroborate exactly with experience, yet he took a conservative stance, in effect, arguing away the need for a wider empirical theory to account for the constancy and coherence in our experience. Trapped within a language allowing only things as objects of thought, consciousness was presumably contained and defined until the writings of the American philosopher and psychologist, William James.

According to James, the traditional empiricist view was not near radical enough. He felt that the process of consciousness apprehending simple sensations as simple mental facts and then somehow constructing a thing from them was a treatment far too insensate. For James, consciousness was of "a teeming multiplicity of objects and relations, and simple perceptions are results of discriminative attention pushed to a



very high degree."<sup>27</sup> James' endeavor was to found a radical empiricism which accounted for the wide varieties of experience.

He begins by characterizing thought\* in his seminal work, The Principles of Psychology. James' first postulate of thought is that it takes place or goes on, and it is only found with an accompanying self. Clearly, each consciousness is personal and separate from someone else's consciousness. Consequently, one's perceptions of a tree are distinguished from someone else's perception of the "same" tree. For James, "The Universal conscious fact is not 'feelings and thought exist,' but 'I think' and 'I feel.'"<sup>28</sup>

Secondly, thought is always changing. James quotes Shadsworth Hodgson (The Philosophy of Reflection, I p. 290) ". . .consciousness is a sequence of differentents." He also lists how one might experience: e.g. we look, then listen, feel emotion, then move, make a decision, have a memory, etc. . . James says there is no proof that we get the same sensation twice; no facts remain unchanged in consciousness. As consciousness changes, so sensibility changes as a result. To quote James, "We feel things differently according to whether we are sleepy or awake, hungry or full, fresh or tired; differently at night and in the morning, differently in summer and winter, and above all things, differently in childhood, manhood and old age."<sup>29</sup> James argues it is simply "convenient"

\* James characterized consciousness before he wrote that it is not consciousness as it is normally understood. So for clarification, James uses thought, consciousness and subjective life synonymously, and these are also synonymous with "stuff of experience" and "awaring."

to formulate mental facts as simple, discrete ideas and that these build complex thought. A mental state fact is a "mythological entity." Consciousness always changes; hence, no "permanently existing 'idea'" exists.<sup>30</sup>

Thought is also sensibly continuous. James defines 'continuous' as "that which is without breach, crack or division."<sup>31</sup> He illustrates this by considering two types of breaks: "time gaps" and breaks in the quality of thought. James relates that when we experience a time gap as in sleep or loss of consciousness, we recognize our consciousness by its qualities of "warmth, intimacy and immediacy." A break in quality, for example, a change in sensation, sudden action or any type of interruption, is not an actual break in the thought continuum. James explains:

The transition between the thought of one object and the thought of another is no more a break in the thought than a joint in a bamboo is a break in the wood. It is a part of consciousness as much as the joint is part of the bamboo.<sup>32</sup>

When James says thought is "continuous," he means it not only in the time sense but also in the sense that thought is "inwardly connected" and whole. Since thoughts are related from next to next, then the entirety of consciousness forms a "common whole" which is "myself, I, or me." And the name James gives to the whole is the "stream of consciousness."<sup>33</sup>

The roots of James' radical empiricism are found in James' characterization of consciousness as being "inwardly connected." What this means is that "relations" or "transitive states" between thoughts can be accounted for empirically. As consciousness flows, it apprehends objects which James terms the "substantive" areas of the stream. In between the

apprehension of objects, we are aware of a "'passage,' a 'relation,' and transition from it or between it." James terms these areas the "transitive" parts of the stream.<sup>34</sup> He claims we can feel and experience the transitive states within thought: "We ought to say a feeling of and, a feeling of it, a feeling of but, and a feeling of by, quite as readily as we say a feeling of blue or a feeling of cold."<sup>35</sup> James thinks we do not ordinarily recognize these feelings, because we have been convinced only substantive states or things exist. With experience empirically concatenated, consciousness becomes an uncontained, indiscrete flow of thoughts.

James further characterizes thought as having "psychic overtones, suffusion and fringe."<sup>36</sup> His purpose is to unify thought and bind it with meaning throughout the transitive areas. James quips that young children can understand stories dispersed with words they do not know because of the "transitive nature" of words which carries them to "familiar and intelligible substantive meanings."<sup>37</sup> Also, James writes, "The 'and so forth' casts its shadow back, and is as integral a part of the object of thought as the distinctest of images would be."<sup>38</sup> James' argument is given with examples which show associations, implications, and expectations within words themselves, sentences, or coherent groups of words and sentences which illustrate his point that thought meanings reside in wholes with each whole affected by the relations of its constituent substantive and transitive states.

Since James speaks of thoughts as wholes yet consciousness as a continuum itself, it becomes necessary to distinguish a particular

object of thought. James somewhat obscurely defines it thus:

The object of every thought, then, is neither more nor less than all that the thought thinks, exactly as the thought thinks it, however complicated the matter, and however symbolic the manner of the thing may be.<sup>39</sup>

Far beyond the British empiricists' notion of object, James' validity rests in the fact that his object of thought is an "undivided state of consciousness." Just as the simple sensation is the object whole for Locke, so is a complex perception for James. The empiricist requires an ego or a transcendental unifier to "glue" the simple perceptions into complex thoughts, but for James, if things are thought in a relation, then they are already a unity a "single pulse of subjectivity, a single psychosis, feeling or state of mind."<sup>40</sup> James' example is that if we have the thought: "The pack of cards is on the table" then our thought is not the discrete thoughts of each individual card plus a discrete thought of the table-top plus a discrete thought of the table legs or even further reduced to miniscule ideas of perceptions, then all added together "arbitrarily" by the mind to give the whole picture. Rather, the thought is of: "the-pack-of-cards-is-on-the-table."<sup>41</sup> The meaning of the sentence arises whole, because the substantive and transitive meanings of the words mirror the perceptions as a whole. Objects of thought, then, need not be reduced to particulate simples.

But they can be, for consciousness chooses among objects presented. The British empiricists focused on this aspect of consciousness which filters extraneous sensations to a very high degree in order to arrive at the apex of a substantive state. The mind selects and chooses from the "infinite chaos of movements" the qualities, things, or scenes for

coherent consciousness. James writes that the mind makes rational, teleological, and moral selections at different times depending on circumstance. For James,

a man's empirical thought depends on the things he has experienced, but what these shall be is to a large extent determined by his habits of attention, those which suit our private interest and make our experience.<sup>42</sup>

For Locke, Berkeley and Hume, the habit of attention was in focusing on substantive states to discern the existence or nonexistence of substance. For James, it was broadening the scope of consciousness and realm of empirical inquiry.

James' contribution is in presenting the world as a relatum. Our attention may discern a particle, a single percept, a simple law-bound mechanism, but these phenomena are held, tied, and connected to the next, and the binding is experienced as well as the center of the perception. In James' terms, we experience a "focus and fringe," but too often because of habit and learning, we narrow our perceptual scope, the attention of our "awaring," to the strong-post of the focus.

Remember that awareness or "awaring" is the instant field of the present, the flowing stream of consciousness. Existential actor and author Robert Benedetti writes:

Awareness is a quiet energy that flows into a meaningful pattern of 'foreground' and 'background.' The 'foreground' is the thing you are perceiving, and the 'background' is everything else. This is not a rigidly fixed relationship, but rather one involving choice and training of the awareness.<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, the awareness may be released into a state of "nonexclusive attention" in which one is highly aware of what is happening without

focusing on any one aspect of the experience. Awareness will flow naturally if the inhibitions that impede it are released. And when consciousness is allowed to move "freely and flexibly," "new and vivid patterns of experience emerge."<sup>44</sup>

That consciousness has an attention and control of it leads us into the world of fringe of the "more" of human experience that James refers to in his writings. As James relates, we cast our attention to things of our interest, things which we deem most meaningful to our lives, but that our natural experience, our "normal experience" may only be a fragment of the real human experience. To quote James:

Every bit of us at every moment is part and parcel of a wider self; it quivers along various radii like the wind-rose on a compass, and the actual in it is continuously one with possibles not yet in our present sight.<sup>45</sup>

But who can deny the "constancy and coherence" with which we meet in our own normal realities everyday? It is that our awareness, our "awaring" finds a security in knowing the world is a certain way, and so our habit of attention defines our experiences that way time after time.

John Lilly calls this phenomena "consensus reality" and defines it as:

that set of beliefs/assumptions/postulates/interpretations/simulations that each of us is given/absorbs that are said to be real/true in our culture/society/family/school, et-cetera. . . consensus reality is thus one collection or another of simulations of internal reality/external reality.<sup>46</sup>

Our "awaring," by conforming to the habit of our attention, builds a "momentum" and "encyclopedia" of empirical reference of our experiences to which we compare and file all of our subsequent experiences. Any phenomena which does not comply with our encyclopedia is either not experienced, because the attention of the awareness is too narrow, or it

is projected as a meaningful object, or perhaps we may carry a file for unknowns, the extraneous, bizarre, and mysterious. It is when we release our attention and let our "awaring" wander into the world of "possibles" that we experience those phenomena which go into the "more" file. These are the realms of creativity: the imagination, dreams, schizophrenia and the psychedelic.

#### The Literature of Psychotropics

Today I have to pound the nail that Genaro put in, the fact that we are luminous beings. We are perceivers. We are an awareness; we are not objects; we have no solidity. We are boundless. The world of objects and solidity is a way of making our passage on earth convenient. It is only a description that was created to help us. We, or rather, our reason, forget that the description is only a description and thus we entrap the totality of ourselves in a vicious circle from which we rarely emerge in our lifetime.

-Yaqui Shaman<sup>47</sup>

The word "psychotropic" literally means "mind-changing." Psychotropic substances are ingestibles which produce the "psychedelic" or "mind-manifesting" experience, the profoundly altered state of consciousness. Lysergic diethylamide 25, lophophora williamsii and mescaline, and psilocybe cubensis are common examples of psychoactive substances which are able to produce the "nonordinary reality." "Mind altering substances" which we should correct to "awaring enhancers" have always been in the medicine bags of human beings. They are an integral and inseparable part of many human cultures, and their study and knowledge can reveal real realities like the one described so succinctly in the opening passage of this section. We should view psychotropics not as a meaningless trip to never-never land but as a tool to explore uncharted realms of human knowledge.

In this section, I will be reviewing analyses and conclusions of the following works: R.E.L. Masters and Jean Houston's The Varieties of Psychedelic Experience, a comprehensive guide to the effects of LSD on personality; and Lester Grinspoon and James Bakalar's Psychedelic Drugs Reconsidered, a comprehensive survey of psychedelic drugs and the scientific and intellectual issues they raise. The authors review the chemistry of psychedelics, their effects, and the history of man's experience with them--as well as assessing the potential value of the drugs. My endeavor will be to introduce aspects of this literature, the nature of the psychotropic experience as support for our philosophical model developed in this paper, "the awaring-bodymind."

In the complexity of the psychedelic experience one finds alterations in perceptions, moods, thought patterns, and intellectual and physical performance. We will focus on the sensory level of experience, that is, the perceptual effects and how they may relate to particular moods and thought patterns, because these effects are the most notably undergone and offer a language most similar to our needs.

Both texts agree that, for consciousness, a "heightened intensity of awareness" is experienced.<sup>48</sup> A synopsis of this activity is given below:

1) Vision is the sense most profoundly affected.

People and objects become fascinating as if they were the first of their kind ever seen. . . Anything in the environment--a painting on the wall, a pattern in the carpet--may become a universe to be entered and explored. . . colors seem a dazzlingly bright and intense. . . everything may seem bathed in a theatrical or lunar light or illuminated from within. . . objects change their shape and size; walls and floors undulate as if breathing; stationary objects look as though they are in motion.<sup>49</sup>



2) Hearing, touch, taste, and smell are also heightened.

There is a greater sensitivity to background sounds. . . Music can assume a previously inconceivable emotion. . . A pleasant taste becomes ambrosial; an unpleasant one disgusting; smells set off equally fierce reactions. The blending of senses called synesthesia is common, seeing lights when sounds are heard, a color has a taste or produces a burning sensation; light shatters and gives out the sound of a bell; a voice that seems cold causes a shiver. .<sup>50</sup>

3) Changes in body and body image are experienced.

The body may feel hollow, boneless, transparent, its substance may seem to change to wood, metal, or glass; it may feel heavy or light at once, or hot and cold at once. . . There may be orgasmic feelings throughout the body, or no feeling at all. . . Consciousness sometimes appears to be localized or concentrated in some body part. . . People may sense internal organs and physiological processes kept out of consciousness. One of the most powerful effects is the total dissolution of the body or some part of it into the environment.<sup>51</sup>

According to our philosophical model, if consciousness or "awaring" is allowed to move freely, impediments removed, "new and vivid patterns of experience emerge." We might say that the ingesting of the psychotropic substance will remove the normal inhibitions of our attention. A common interpretation of the perceptual effects is that an unusual member of sensory stimuli are reaching awareness which can no longer integrate them in the normal way. Experience, then, overflows the boundaries our attention guards for practical purposes. The power of the senses are no greater, but the power of noticing transcends ordinary "awaring." And with the wider field of experience, the subject-object filing mechanism is overloaded. Masters and Houston write:

That the subject is seeing 'better' or 'more clearly' appears to be explained by the fact that the object in such cases is no longer being apperceived in terms of function, symbolism or label categorizations not accessible to sense

perception alone and which usually work to dilute the immediacy of the perception. . . On this sensory level, the classification of things seems to be dismissed as irrelevant and so has little or no effect on the perception.<sup>52</sup>

Moreover,

The sensory level is to free the subject from the limitations of his old ways of perceiving, thinking, and feeling. It would seem that only when consciousness has been freed from these limitations is the unconscious free to release (and consciousness to accept?) those materials and initiate those processes which become conscious and increasingly purposive.<sup>53</sup>

Grinspoon and Bakalar agree. With the heightened awareness of body sensations and the filing of experience less subject to will, they write, "the body is transformed by the projection of the unconscious wishes and thoughts, and every aspect of experience undergoes a multiplication of meanings and symbolic metamorphoses."<sup>54</sup> Indeed, new and vivid patterns of experience emerge. In other words, the "wider self" is touched upon and experienced.

To separate meaning from the heightened perceptual awareness is not to give full justice to the experience. We find that changes in perceptions are "intermingled and confused," to use James' terms, with thoughts and emotions. Grinspoon and Bakalar give an effective description:

New sights and sounds, new meanings, and new feelings come together. As in dreams, names and things merge magically, words become suffused with the qualities of the objects they designate, puns take on great significance, and the mechanisms of condensation and displacement operate. The flow of associations speeds up and moves erratically, thoughts are projected as images, meaningful connections appear between seemingly unrelated objects.<sup>55</sup>

Masters and Houston show that the body and thought may be reflexive and one:

A subject may experience his body as abnormally heavy because he is depressed, because he has begun to think of himself as being too fat, or because he is 'thinking weighty thoughts'--in this last case, the verbalization 'weighty' being applied first to the thoughts and then to the body; or as sometimes happens only to the head which 'contains' the 'weighty thoughts.' The heaviness associated with depression is also sometimes the product of verbalization as when the subject thinks of himself as 'burdened with grief' or 'weighted down by sorrows.'<sup>56</sup>

The heightened perception of the psychotropic experience is as "animistic" as James described the normal experience. The relations of the body to the perceptions and thoughts is also exemplified soundly in the literature of psychotropics.

In conclusion, we have argued the mental and the physical are practical distinctions of interpreting our "awaring." The "awaring" is the bodymind deciphering meanings out of the instant field of the present which flows and is always related to every experience undergone. If we release our attention, the description monitor of our awaring, new and vivid patterns of perceptions and experiences are felt and lived. In short, we experience first with our bodymind, and then we apply meaning. The psychotropic research supports this thesis by heightening the awareness and allowing the process of perception and "awaring" to be more clearly seen. In the words of Grinspoon and Bakalar, "Psychedelic drugs reveal vividly that the distinction between perception and hallucination is one of degree: in both cases we are selecting among the signals from the body and forging a creative symbolic synthesis."<sup>57</sup>

In terms of the mind-body problem itself, we can say we experience body and/or we experience mind, but both are of the "stuff of experience

in general." This is the broad paradigm we called for in the introduction. It can house materialism, idealism, and practical (nonontological) dualism, and it is worthy of the language of the "deep bodymind pool that we are." Furthermore, this paradigm contains radical empiricism, which opens for inquiry vast realms of alternative reality in the varieties of human experience.

Notes

<sup>1</sup>Jerome Shaffer, "The Mind-Body Problem," The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Vol. 5, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1967), pp. 336-346.

<sup>2</sup>Daniel C. Dennett, "Current Issues in the Philosophy of Mind," American Philosophical Quarterly, (Vol. 15, Number 4, October 1978), p. 255.

<sup>3</sup>Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 5.

<sup>4</sup>Kuhn, p. 5.

<sup>5</sup>Charles Hampden-Turner, Maps of the Mind, (New York: Collier Books, 1982), p. 9.

<sup>6</sup>Richard Grossinger, Planet Medicine, (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press, 1980), p. 9.

<sup>7</sup>Grossinger, p. 10.

<sup>8</sup>Douglas Arner, ed., "Rene Descartes," Perception, Reason, and Knowledge, (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1972), pp. 144-152.

<sup>9</sup>Robert D. Cumming, ed., The Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre, (New York: Vintage Books, 1965), pp. 110-136.

<sup>10</sup>From Dr. Manuel Davenport: Lecture March 29, 1983, Phenomenology and Existentialism.

<sup>11</sup>From Dr. Manuel Davenport: Lecture April 5, 1983, Phenomenology and Existentialism.

<sup>12</sup>John J. McDermott, ed., The Writings of William James, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 169.

<sup>13</sup>McDermott, ed., William James, p. 181.

<sup>14</sup>McDermott, ed., William James, p. 188.

<sup>15</sup>McDermott, ed., William James, p. 193.

<sup>16</sup>McDermott, ed., William James, p. 178.

<sup>17</sup>McDermott, ed., William James, p. 178.

<sup>18</sup>From Dr. John McDermott: Lecture April 13, 1983, American Philosophy.

- 19 McDermott, ed., William James, pp. 193-4.
- 20 John Lilly, The Deep Self, (New York: Warner Books, 1977), p. 89.
- 21 John J. McDermott, The Culture Experience, (New York: The New York University Press, 1976), p. 161.
- 22 Robert C. Solomon, ed., Phenomenology and Existentialism, (Washington D.C.: University Press of America, 1980), pp. 317-334.
- 23 Solomon, ed., pp. 377-386.
- 24 Arner, ed., "John Locke," Perception, Reason, and Knowledge, (Glenview, Illinois: Scott, Foresman and Company, 1972), pp. 29-42.
- 25 Arner, "George Berkeley," pp. 43-60.
- 26 Arner, "David Hume," pp. 62-76.
- 27 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 21.
- 28 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 22.
- 29 McDermott, ed., William James, pp. 27-28.
- 30 McDermott, ed., William James, pp. 30-31.
- 31 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 31.
- 32 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 33.
- 33 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 32.
- 34 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 76.
- 35 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 38.
- 36 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 51.
- 37 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 53.
- 38 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 47.
- 39 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 63.
- 40 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 65.
- 41 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 65.
- 42 McDermott, ed., William James, p. 72.

<sup>43</sup>Robert Bendetti, The Actor at Work, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1981), p. 23.

<sup>44</sup>Bendetti, p. 25.

<sup>45</sup>McDermott, ed., Introduction to William James, p. XIIX.

<sup>46</sup>Lilly, p. 90.

<sup>47</sup>Carlos Castaneda, Tales of Power, (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1974), p. 100.

<sup>48</sup>R.E.L. Masters and Jean Houston, The Varieties of Psychedelic Experience, (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1966), p. 155.

<sup>49</sup>Lester Grinspoon and James Bakalar, Psychedelic Drugs Reconsidered, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1981), 94.

<sup>50</sup>Grinspoon and Bakalar, p. 95.

<sup>51</sup>Grinspoon and Bakalar, pp. 95-6.

<sup>52</sup>Masters and Houston, p. 155.

<sup>53</sup>Masters and Houston, p. 177.

<sup>54</sup>Grinspoon and Bakalar, p. 103.

<sup>55</sup>Grinspoon and Bakalar, p. 105.

<sup>56</sup>Masters and Houston, p. 70.

<sup>57</sup>Grinspoon and Bakalar, p. 103.

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