

# CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES NEWSLETTER

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*CS Newsletter!*



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## EDITORIAL

Are you curious about the mysteries of the human mind? Want to delve deeper into the science behind consciousness and explore the latest research in this fascinating field? Look no further than our comprehensive news and views on Consciousness Studies!

We maintain an [Archives](#) of past issues, and when you subscribe, we'll bring you up-to-speed with a free copy of the illustrated, indexed, 235-page book Consciousness Studies.

I believe this emerging field will become the source of profound new insights into the nature of reality. And perhaps some day, that will lead to a merging of science and spirituality in a new vision of the role of mind in the universe.

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## Relativistic Consciousness Theory



## RESULTS OF POLL

In the last issue of the *CS Newsletter*, readers were asked: "What do you believe is the true nature of consciousness?"

The vast majority of our readers (45.5%) favored the answer "Present throughout the universe at various levels" as their response to that question.

In second place, 14.2% chose "A force of nature that originated in the Big Bang singularity." 13.6% picked "Part of a holographic universe of just One Mind," and 13% picked "Effects the quantum level of reality to create the physical world."

5.1% of the respondents chose "Brain selects different realities from a multiverse of possibilities." 4.5% chose "Arises through quantum effects in the neuronal

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## The *Urgrund* and the *Urbild* -- Paul Tillich's God of Consciousness



Paul Tillich was a German Christian existentialist philosopher, religious socialist, and noted theologian who is widely regarded as one of the most influential thinkers of the twentieth century.

In this essay, the focus will be on Tillich's sense of the *Urgrund* -- a German word for the primeval Ground of Being-- and the *Urbild*, which means the Original Archetype.

Religious studies professor and psychologist John Dourley said: "Tillich's thought can be compared to Jung's with certain interesting parallels. Unlike Jung, Tillich draws a more consistent distinction between an intra-Trinitarian reality within the life of God itself, and an extra-Trinitarian procession into creation. In terms of the Trinity itself, Tillich contends that all created possibility is expressed in its essential perfection by the father in the Logos.

In [The Psyche as Sacrament: A](#)



Consciousness can not simply be reduced to neural activity alone, researchers say. A novel study reports the dynamics of consciousness may be understood by a newly developed conceptual and mathematical framework.

The ability of the brain to create consciousness has baffled some for millennia. The mystery of consciousness lies in the fact that each of us has subjectivity -- something that it is like to sense, feel and think. In contrast to being under anesthesia or in a dreamless deep sleep, while we're awake we don't "live in the dark" — we experience the world and ourselves. But how the brain creates the conscious experience and what area of the brain is responsible for this remains a mystery. According to Dr. Nir Lahav, a physicist from Bar Ilan University in Israel: "This is quite a mystery since it seems that our conscious experience cannot arise from the brain, and in fact, cannot arise from any physical process." As strange as it sounds, the conscious experience in our brain, cannot be found or reduced to some neural activity. "Think about it this way," says Dr. Zakaria Neemeh, a philosopher from the University of Memphis, "when I feel happiness, my brain will create a distinctive pattern of complex neural activity. This neural pattern will

microtubules in the brain" while 4.0% picked "Broadcast into our brains from a transmitting source outside the universe."

Only 1% chose "Result of a high number of connections in the brain or machines," and no one selected "Arises in the brain and leaves when the brain dies."

*(This was a multiple-choice poll with 283 respondents.)*

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## The Hard Problem



One of the most enduring human mysteries is why we possess sentient awareness, a paradox known to science as the "hard problem of consciousness." At the physiological level, we have a good understanding that consciousness is driven by electrical impulses and chemical signals between neurons in the brain. Though precisely what regions of the brain are responsible for thoughtful experience is still a matter of debate. However, scientists still do not understand why the same essential elements of the universe can come together to form an inanimate object like a rock or a highly complex organic structure like the

[Comparative Study of C.G. Jung and Paul Tillich](#) (Inner City Books, 1981), John P. Dourley notes that Tillich believed the "essential perfection within the Godhead remains in a state of 'dreaming innocence,' meaning that divine ideas, expressed in the divine mind, though they constitute the essential perfection of all that can be, remain somehow unreal unless they are expressed beyond God in existence." It would seem that Tillich throws the divine ball into Creation, into the milieu of Matter, into our very own laps!.

Dourley proceeds: "Hence man's situation in existence is depicted in the tension between his experience of his essential self and his existential distance and alienation from it. Tillich believes that man cannot destroy the "groundedness" of his essential being in God, but neither can he regain it or confer it upon himself. The movement towards or back to the essential is still the basic movement of life.

"Jung speaks of this process as one of coming into a fuller or more compendious personality through the progressive integration of the unconscious, but like Tillich he believes that man can neither reject this movement in his life with impunity nor bring it to a definitive completion within a lifetime.

comparatively correlate with my conscious feeling of happiness, but it is not my actual feeling. It is just a neural pattern that represents my happiness. That's why a scientist looking at my brain and seeing this pattern should ask me what I feel, because the pattern is not the feeling itself, just a representation of it." As a result, we can't reduce the conscious experience of what we sense, feel and think to any brain activity. We can just find correlations to these experiences.

After more than 100 years of neuroscience we have very good evidence that the brain is responsible for the creation of our conscious abilities. So how could it be that these conscious experiences can't be found anywhere in the brain (or in the body) and can't be reduced to any neural complex activity?

This mystery is known as the "hard problem" of consciousness. It is such a difficult problem that until a couple of decades ago only philosophers discussed it and even today, although we have made huge progress in our understanding of the neuroscientific basis of consciousness, still there is no adequate theory that explains what consciousness is and how to solve this hard problem. Dr. Lahav and Dr. Neemeleh recently published a new physical theory in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology* that claims to solve the hard problem of consciousness in a purely physical way.

According to the authors, when we change our assumption about

human brain. Solving this question of what makes the human brain come together to form the most sophisticated object in the known universe has proven to be a challenging problem.

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## RESOURCES

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[INTERVIEWS](#) with presenters from the University of Arizona Science of Consciousness conferences.



[CATALOG](#) of academic journals on consciousness studies, including the [Journal of Consciousness Studies](#).



[CURRENT RESEARCH](#) in consciousness studies newsletter from the government (free subscription).

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"Modern variants of this position are to be found in the thought of Hegel and Teilhard de Chardin, both of whom see creation and history as necessary emanations from God -- destined to return to Him as contributions to His completion. In fact, Teilhard contends that a theory of creation which cannot be shown to complete the Godhead both devalues creation and cripples human creativity within it."

So it would seem fairly obvious that all three of these thinkers are considering a creation in Process, a creation that somehow has a Divine Purpose, a creation that must "work" not only outwardly, but inwardly towards this goal. And the way and means to accomplish this is through creativity.

As Tillich puts it in his Systematic Theology (University of Chicago Press, 1951): "Such questions have forced theologians to relate nonbeing dialectically to being-itself and consequently to God. Boehme's 'Urgrund,' Schelling's 'first potency,' Hegel's 'antithesis'. Being, limited by nonbeing, is finitude. Nonbeing appears as the 'not yet' of being and as the 'no more' of being. It confronts that which is with a definite end.

"This is true of everything except being-itself--which is not a

consciousness and assume that it is a relativistic phenomenon, the mystery of consciousness naturally dissolves. In the paper the researchers developed a conceptual and mathematical framework to understand consciousness from a relativistic point of view.

According to Dr. Lahav, the lead author of the paper, "consciousness should be investigated with the same mathematical tools that physicists use for other known relativistic phenomena."

To understand how relativity dissolves the hard problem, think about a different relativistic phenomenon, constant velocity. Let's choose two observers, Alice and Bob, where Bob is on a train that moves with constant velocity and Alice watches him from the platform. there is no absolute physical answer to the question what the velocity of Bob is.

The answer is dependent on the frame of reference of the observer.

From Bob's frame of reference, he will measure that he is stationary and Alice, with the rest of the world, is moving backwards. But from Alice's frame Bob is the one that's moving and she is stationary.

Although they have opposite measurements, both of them are correct, just from different frames of reference. Because, according to the theory, consciousness is a relativistic phenomenon, we find the same situation in the case of consciousness. Now Alice and Bob are in different cognitive frames of reference. Bob



[Psychology of Consciousness: Theory, Research, and Practice](#) - free subscription to this new journal form the [American Psychological Association](#).

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Read the [Neuroscience of Consciousness Journal](#) online for free.

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[Consciousness News Wire](#) lists the latest news in Consciousness Studies in snippets linked to complete articles."

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The online newspaper the [Independent](#) offers current news and human interest stories in Consciousness Studies.

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[Scientific American](#) lists numerous articles on consciousness work.

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'thing.' As the power of being, being-itself cannot have a beginning and an end. Otherwise it would have arisen out of non-being. But nonbeing is literally nothing except in relation to being. Being precedes nonbeing in ontological validity.

"Being is the beginning without a beginning, the end without an end. It is its own beginning and end, the initial power of everything that is. However, everything which participates in the power of being is 'mixed' with nonbeing. It is finite."



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will measure that he has conscious experience, but Alice just has brain activity with no sign of the actual conscious experience, while Alice will measure that she is the one that has consciousness and Bob has just neural activity with no clue of its conscious experience. Just like in the case of velocity, although they have opposite measurements, both of them are correct, but from different cognitive frames of reference. As a result, because of the relativistic point of view, there is no problem with the fact that we measure different properties from different frames of reference. The fact that we cannot find the actual conscious experience while measuring brain activity is because we're measuring from the wrong cognitive frame of reference. According to the new theory, the brain doesn't create our conscious experience, at least not through computations. The reason that we have conscious experience is because of the process of physical measurement. In a nutshell, different physical measurements in different frames of reference manifest different physical properties in these frames of reference although these frames measure the same phenomenon.

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Submit your own research or read original works in Consciousness Studies at the [Frontiers in Psychology](#) site.



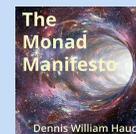
[Phys.org](#) offers a page on consciousness articles links and a free subscription to their *Science-X-Daily* newsletter.

### THE CONVERSATION

[The Conversation](#) is an academic magazine with news and articles in Consciousness Studies.



Free subscription to the [TS Digest](#), a digital edition of The Scientist magazine with articles on Consciousness Studies.



The [Monad Manifesto](#) offers a variety of articles and videos on topics in Consciousness Studies.

## FILM & BOOK REVIEWS

### AI and the Future

# of Humanity

with [Yuval Noah Harari](#)

[WATCH VIDEO](#)



In this keynote address from the April 2023 [Frontiers Forum](#) in Switzerland, Yuval Noah

Harari summarizes and speculates on 'AI and the future of humanity'. There are a number of questions related to this discussion, including: In what ways will AI affect how we shape culture? What threat is posed to humanity when AI masters human intimacy? Is AI the end of human history? Will ordinary individuals be able to produce powerful AI tools of their own? How do we regulate AI? Yuval Noah Harari is a historian, philosopher, and the bestselling author of [Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind](#) (2014), [Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow](#) (2016), [21 Lessons for the 21st Century](#) (2018), and the video series "Sapiens: A Graphic History" (launched in 2020 with David Vandermeulen and Daniel Casanave). Yuval speaks internationally and teaches at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

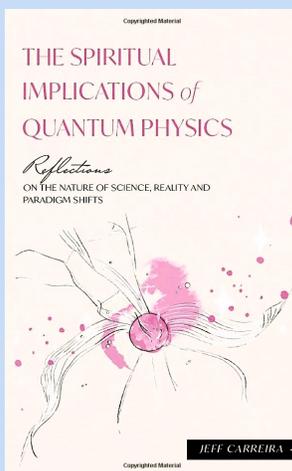
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## The Spiritual Implications of Quantum Physics

Reflections on the Nature of Science, Reality, and Paradigm Shifts

by [Jeff Carreira](#)

Paperback – February 2023



Linking the realm of the mind to the concept of a universal soul and the ancient yet still provocative notion that consciousness itself is something of the Prime Mover of existence, Hauck's impassioned treatise draws deeply on the histories of philosophy, religion, and physics to argue "The focused awareness you feel right now reading this page—that spark of consciousness you take for granted—is more mysterious and powerful than anything you will ever read in any book." That's the first chapter's grabber of a first line, an arresting introduction to concepts that are quite literally heady—Hauck links, with

passion and some persuasive power, the elusive truth of what happens in our minds to the Pythagorean concept of the "monad," the "single, indivisible source" that creates reality—or, as Ibn Sina posited a millennium ago, "the infinite mind" that creates "intellect and self-awareness in individuals." Call it God, the Big Bang, the universal soul, or whatever else. The *Monad Manifesto* argues not that it's any one thing that we can comprehend, but that it's something we can sense, and feel an intimate connection with, especially as we come to understand "the fundamental role consciousness plays in the creation of cosmic reality"—that consciousness is more fundamental even "than matter, energy, space, or time." Hauck grounds these searching, complex arguments in the cogent examinations of the Monad-related thought from Ancient Greece and Egypt, in Gnostic teachings, the *Tao Te Ching*, Jainist spiritualism, Buddhism, and the work of philosophers and scientists up to the age of relativity and beyond. But his message, for all that, is practical, a call for humanity to shine "with inner light." He pleads, "Stop ignoring the subtleties of existence because they are beyond your comprehension!" Chapters on meditation and Monadic experiences are richly detailed and inviting. .- from the *Publisher*

[View on Amazon](#)

# EVENTS & CONFERENCES



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Center for  
Consciousness Studies

## THE SCIENCE OF CONSCIOUSNESS CONFERENCE 2023

April 22-28, 2024, Tuscon, Arizona

### [MORE INFO](#)

The [Science of Consciousness \(TSC\)](#) conferences have been held annually since 1994, alternating yearly between Tucson, Arizona in even-numbered years, and other locations around the world in odd-numbered years. TSC locations have included Italy, Denmark, Japan, Sweden, Czech Republic, Hungary, Hong Kong, India, California, Switzerland, and Finland.



### ASSC Annual Conference

June 22-25, 2023, New York City

### [CONFERENCE PROGRAM](#)

The [Association for the Scientific Study of Consciousness \(ASSC\)](#) is an academic society that promotes rigorous research and coordinates annual conferences directed toward understanding the nature, function, and underlying mechanisms of consciousness. The ASSC includes members working in the fields of cognitive science, medicine, neuroscience, philosophy, and other relevant disciplines in the sciences and humanities.



The [Academy for Spiritual and Consciousness Studies \(ASCSI\)](#) aims to offer an arena where those with an interest in the study of consciousness and the fringe sciences can gain access to articles, links and other research to educate and interchange ideas in the zone where spirituality and scientific research interface. Our main event of the year is our annual conference. We feature a wide range of exceptional speakers presenting subject matter that appeals to both scholars and the general public. At the academy we wish to provide a venue for those who wish to publish, the Academy prints two publications, *The Journal for Spiritual and Consciousness Studies* and *The Searchlight*, available to those with paid memberships to ASCS. No new conferences have yet been schedules by this

organization. View the [CONFERENCE PROGRAM](#) from the last conference.

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Weeklong for Advanced Focusers  
Weeklong para Focalizadores Avanzados



June 25 - July 1, 2023  
25 de Junio - 1 de Julio de 2023

Hybrid format - Online only or Online with an  
in-person option in Dublin

**INTERNATIONAL  
FOCUSING INSTITUTE  
(TIFI) CONFERENCE**

JUNE 25 - JULY 1, 2023

[MORE INFO](#)

The weeklong Conference is the flagship event of [The International Focusing Institute \(TIFI\)](#) and began in 1979. You will go online on Zoom on your computer to experience the plenaries, but all else will be in person (including Home Groups and in-person workshops offered by fellow

participants). You have the option to attend additional workshops online, but the daily plenaries are the only times you are required to be online. Location: Dominican Retreat Centre, Tallaght Village, Dublin 24, Ireland.

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**ICCSHEC 2024**

February 25, 2024  
Washington, US

**International Conference on Cognitive  
Science, Human Experience, and  
Consciousness**

February 25-26, 2024 in Washington, US

[MORE INFO](#)

The [Cognitive Science, Human Experience and Consciousness Conference \(ICCSHEC\)](#) aims to bring together leading academic scientists, researchers and research scholars to exchange and share their experiences and research results on all aspects of Cognitive Science, Human Experience and Consciousness Conference. It also provides a premier interdisciplinary platform for researchers, practitioners, and educators to present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends, and concerns as well as practical challenges encountered and solutions adopted in the fields of Cognitive Science, Human Experience and Consciousness Conference.

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### [MORE INFO](#)

The [Institute of Noetic Sciences \(IONS\)](#) offers free online webinars on topics in Consciousness Studies. Archives of previous webinars are open to non-members for one week following the event; members have unlimited access. You can sign-up on their webinar page to receive notifications about upcoming webinars. The mission of IONS is to reveal the interconnected nature of reality through scientific exploration and personal discovery. Their scientists apply the rigors of their respective disciplines to explore such phenomena, with a focus on understanding humanity's inherent interconnectedness and the inner wisdom common to us all. The idea is that when we collectively embody our true interconnection and embrace our inner wisdom, we envision the creation of a more compassionate and thriving world.

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[UNIVERSITIES OFFERING CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES](#)



Religion is the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern, a concern which qualifies all other concerns as preliminary and which itself contains the answer to the question of a meaning of our life.

— Paul Tillich —

AZ QUOTES



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