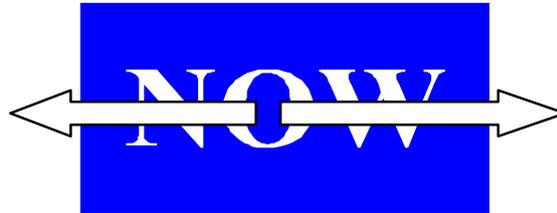


Issue 189—June 2016 - Backnumbers at
<http://www.capacitie.org/now/archive.htm>

HOME PAGE



Next Greville Street Meeting –Sunday June 19

Dave Knowles on The Fabric of Reality

CONTENTS

Remembering J. Krishnamurti	Trisha English	2
What is reality	Doug Lloyd	4
Quantum Notes	B. Cox & D. Forshaw	6
Bonhoeffer extract	Paul Tulip	7
Body/Mind as an Instrument of Consciousness	Colin Drake	7
Diune	Jim Clatfelter	9
Letters to Carl – No. 19	George Schloss	11
Two Poems	Paul Tulip	13
Letter to Sam Harris	Sam Blight	13
The Creation of Deity	Trisha English	14
Emerson's God	R. W. Emerson	17
Eckhart's God	Meister Eckhart	17

Next Greville Street Meetings p.18

Thanks to this month's contributors and my apologies to those of you who sent your articles some months ago and which I failed to pick for the last issue. Please don't hesitate to remind me if your contribution does not appear, if it is missing it almost certainly means it has been filed in the wrong place or because I read it on its arrival and later incorrectly assumed I must have read it in the NOWletter. If there is any reason for me knowingly not including a contribution I will always write and explain the reason.

Remembering J. Krishnamurti from Trisha English

My introduction to the Teachings of J. Krishnamurti occurred around 1955 when Donald Ingram Smith, a veteran broadcaster at the ABC in Sydney, handed me a copy of *The First and Last Freedom*, Krishnamurti's first published book.

I was around sixteen at the time and this was a challenge indeed. Donald was "a larger than life" individual. He had enough energy and drive to power a steam engine, and when he was in the office, the whole place was alive with energy, debate and counter-debate. I used to wonder if Krishnamurti was the same powerhouse personality. But actually, when I did see Krishnamurti many years later, a solitary figure sitting on the stage, I was struck by an immense sense of "vacant energy". There was no personality present at all. It was like looking into the vacuum of space – it had immense energy, but no form, and one was somehow aware of a vast stillness.

Krishnamurti had recently visited Australia and Donald was captured by the Teachings. We would discuss them for hours, or rather Donald would tell me what the Teachings revealed to him. His parents had been Theosophists, and the association with Krishnamurti stretched back to when Krishnaji was first discovered by Leadbeater and later adopted by Annie Besant. These leaders of the Theosophical Society, conferred on Krishnamurti the title of "The World Teacher."

Krishnamurti grew up in a rarified environment of wealthy aristocrats, both Indian and Western. He mixed with title people in the UK and politically and religiously influential people in India, Europe and the USA.

By 1929 Krishnamurti was considered something of a Messiah figure within the world Theosophical movement. Whether by divine intervention, or human realization, he came to the understanding that his mission could not be accomplished within the confines of any "organized religion or system". He renounced the role expected of him, dissolved the Order of the Star which had been formed as his personal vehicle within the TS, turned his back on a huge world following and returned the money and property which had accrued to him for his work.

Last February 2016, marks the 30th anniversary since his death in 1986.

During the sixty or so years after leaving the Theosophical Society, he devoted

his life to what became known as the Teachings. On several occasions he was to say: “these are not my teachings” and be that as it may, he was certainly the vehicle through which these Teachings were made available to humanity. The Teachings are not meant to be studied or intellectually apprehended in the way that knowledge is generally understood and acquired. The Teachings only make sense if you “see” the actuality to which they point, and “act” on them. It is true to say, “that his teachings transcend man-made belief systems, nationalistic sentiment and sectarianism”. His insights are timeless and universal. I have no hesitation in saying that once the Teachings seep into your consciousness they will be part of the air you breathe for the rest of your life. Once you have seen the ocean for yourself, touched it, bathed in it and realize the vastness of it, the marvellous freshness of it, it is not possible to ever forget it. It is something beyond which nothing else can exist.

Our technological advancement today makes it possible for anyone interested in Krishnamurti to see, hear and gain access to the Teachings through the internet. You don't need an interpreter. What you need is exposure, undiluted by translation or explanation.

To all those who are interested in exploring the Teachings, they can do no better than to access the hundreds of tapes, books and videos which are freely available on the internet.

If you can approach the Teachings with a clear, uncluttered mind, you will discover the meaning of Krishnamurti's Teachings for yourself. When that moment arrives, there is no “you” or “me” or “Krishnamurti” - there is only *seeing*.

Trisha English

[Back to Top](#)

(The following article ‘What is Reality’ from Doug Lloyd refers to a lecture series The Brain with David Eagleman. It can be watched online or purchased as a CD. The CD introduction reads as follows:

Neuroscientist David Eagleman explores the wonders of the human brain in an epic series that reveals the ultimate story of us, why we feel and think the things we do. This ambitious project blends science with innovative visual effects and compelling personal stories, and addresses some big questions. By understanding the human brain, we can come close to understanding humanity. Editor)

What is Reality from Doug Lloyd

A brain scientist and the first person scientist on what is reality?

Brain Scientist

Dr Eagleman: Welcome to the program. This is the first of a series I will be presenting on the human brain. On this session I want to raise a question of paramount importance. What is reality? What if I told you reality is all processed in your brain. There is reality outside your brain but it consists of such phenomena as sound waves, light waves and electrical currents.

From this outside phenomena images are formed in the brain. At this moment I am seeing cars, people, buildings and a TV camera.

But this is all going on in my brain. There might not be any of those realities out there. Perhaps they are an illusion.

I am now looking up. There appears to be what we speak and write of as sky. It is blue and white. There is also a round object known as the sun.

It is a wonderful, majestic sight, but it could be an illusion. It might not exist, for as I have previously said, all this seeing goes no further than my brain. And that is true of your brain also.

The First Person Scientist

Thank you Dr Eagleman for your informative view on what is reality.

However, it leaves me somewhat mystified. You say light waves, sound waves and electrical currents enter the brain via the eyes and lead to images being formed in the brain. So at this moment I am not seeing you with your blue jeans and your mouth opening and shutting and hearing you talk. All that is going on in my brain.

I am even more bewildered by how you know that there are such realities as light and sound waves and electrical currents outside the brain when you insist all processing of reality goes on in the brain.

Well, let's put that aside for the moment.

That picture of a human brain now appearing on the screen all on its own looks ever so lonely. It looks forlorn, helpless, dead. And so it is because it is separated from a human body.

In order for that brain to perform the marvellous work it does in processing reality, it needs a human body. A body which includes eyes, ears, nose, liver, heart, lungs, hands and feet.

That body like all human bodies cannot live without air, food and water. So it is, the whole of creation is needed for the brain to process reality.

Let us imagine that I, Doug Lloyd, have a P.E.T. scan of my brain to see if there is any evidence of a brain tumour.

The doctor shows me the images. He sees me looking at the images of my brain. I say to him: "Who is looking at the images of my brain?"

He looks startled. "You are. Why do you ask?"

I say, "I am just confirming that you see me looking at the images of my brain. You see, from where I am, it is not me, Doug Lloyd looking at the images of my brain, but that which no words can describe."

I would like to finish with paraphrasing a paragraph on page 31 of Douglas Harding's book, *The Hierarchy Of Heaven And Earth*.

Dr Eagleman, a neuro- scientist tells me my world is not over there but in my head. I find this to be true, only there is one important difference. I put only the world on my shoulders. He puts my head as well.

Dr Eagleman overcrowds the spot I call "here". Here there is no trace of a head, or eyes or a brain. They are out there for me to see, to hear, to taste and to smell.

My world and my brain will not mix. This is because my world is central and my brain regional.

This is only common sense. Obviously my head cannot contain the sun. Furthermore, it is quite clear I know the Sun, not a brain that knows the Sun. I see you Dr Eagleman, not my eyes seeing you. Furthermore, I smell a rose, not your nose. I enjoy fresh air, not your lungs. I enjoy my dinner, not your palate.

I am where the sun is, not where your brain is. However, it is true that your brain plays its part in bringing about the Sun's presence here. This is because your brain is out there with the rest of you, and it receives light waves from the Sun that are then processed in your brain.

So what is reality? It is that which participates in all the created world by being aware of the world. Awareness and the world of what it is aware of, are one invisible, indivisible, boundless "WHOLE".

"I'm picking God's brains when I see that almost headless man off, and this Completely Headed God in --this God-head that contains, and is, all creatures great and small, headed and headless, brainy and brainless." *D. Harding*.

"And still they gaz'd, and still the wonder grew

That one small head could carry all he knew."

Oliver Goldsmith, *The Deserted Village*.

Further reading and reference:

D. Harding . *The Trial Of The Man Who Said He Was God* . p 78 f.

D.Harding. *The Science Of The First Person*. 52f. and 66 f

D. Harding. *The Hierarchy Of Heaven And Earth*. 2010 Edition p28- 37.

For Viewing: The Brain. By Dr. Eagleman. TV SBS 3. 7th March, 2016.

(<http://www.pbs.org/the-brain-with-david-eagleman/episodes/what-is-reality/>)

Doug Lloyd. April, 2016.

[Back to Top](#)

Quantum Notes

Concluding comments from The Quantum Universe—Everything that can happen does happen. By Brian Cox and Jeff Forshaw

To put some rather surprising numbers on all of this, the energy stored up within 1 cubic metre of empty space as a result of quark and gluon condensation is a staggering 10^{35} joules, and the energy due to Higgs condensation is 100 times larger than this. Together, that's the total amount of energy our Sun produces in 1,000 years. To be precise, this is 'negative' energy, because the vacuum is lower in energy than a Universe containing no particles at all. The negative energy arises because of the binding energy associated with the formation of the condensates, and is not by itself mysterious. It is no more glamorous than the fact that, in order to boil water (and reverse the phase transition from vapour to liquid), you have to put energy in.

What is mysterious, however, is that such a large and negative energy density in every square metre of empty space should, if taken at face value, generate a devastating expansion of the Universe such that no stars or people would ever form. The Universe would literally have blown itself apart moments after the Big Bang. This is what happens if we take the predictions for vacuum condensation from particle physics and plug them directly into Einstein's equations for gravity, applied to the Universe at large. This heinous conundrum goes by the name of the cosmological constant problem and it remains one of the central problems in fundamental physics. Certainly it suggests that we should be very careful before claiming to really understand the nature of the vacuum and/or gravity. There is something absolutely fundamental that we do not yet understand.

With that sentence, we come to the end of our story because we've reached the edge of our knowledge. The domain of the known is not the arena of the research scientist. Quantum theory, as we observed at the beginning of this book, has a reputation for difficulty and downright contrary weirdness, exerting as it does a rather liberal grip on the behaviour of the particles of matter. But everything we've described, with the exception of this final chapter, is known

Brian Cox and Jeff Forshaw

[Back to Top](#)

Bonhoeffer extract from Paul Tulip

At our recent meeting Alan asked for a copy of the piece I read out from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book *Ethics* so here it is. Bonhoeffer was the Lutheran minister who returned to Germany from the US at the start of the war and was eventually executed in a concentration camp in 1945, two weeks before the Americans arrived.

.....our period more than any earlier period in the history of the west, is oppressed by a superabounding reality of concrete ethical problems. It was otherwise when the established orders of life were still so stable as to leave room for no more than minor sins of human weakness, sins which generally remained hidden, and where the criminal was removed as abnormal from the horrified or pitying gaze of society, in these conditions ethics could be an interesting theoretical problem.

Today there are once more villains and saints, and they are not hidden from the public view. instead of the uniform greyness of the rainy day we now have the black storm-cloud and the brilliant lightning-flash. The outlines stand out with exaggerated sharpness. Reality lays itself bare. Shakespeare's characters walk in our midst. But the villain and saint have little or nothing to do with systematic ethical studies. They emerge from primeval depths and by their appearance they tear open the infernal or the divine abyss from which they come and enable us to see for a moment into mysteries of which we had never dreamed.....

Back to Top

Body/Mind as an Instrument of the Divine (Consciousness) Colin Drake

Introduction. Dear Fellow Explorers (of the infinite), Yesterday I had the opportunity to talk to a group, of about a dozen, at a retreat on 'deep imaging' (I think that was the term used). It was quite a challenge as, apart from the one who invited me, it seems they had not been exposed to 'self-inquiry', in fact none of them had even heard of Sri Ramana Maharshi! It went well and, after a preamble, I took them through 'Investigation of Experience' which for me is the key practice for becoming established in 'awareness of, and identification with, Awareness'. During the Q & A that followed it became apparent how much of what I have discovered since I wrote that, back in 2005, is dependent on the realization that we are ephemeral (expressions and) instruments of Consciousness. So for members of that group and for all of you who have only 'Beyond The Separate Self', or none of my books, here is 'Instruments of The Absolute' from 'A Light Unto Your Self' which is also included as an appendix in all of my later books. There was also some discussion around 'purpose and meaning' so I have attached my essay on that, also from the same book, Love, Colin

Article: If you sit quietly noticing the sensations in (and on the surface of) your body, you can easily see that these occur, are detected by the nervous system and then appear in awareness, i.e. you become aware of them.

In the same vein you can notice that sounds occur, are detected by the ears, and then appear in awareness.

Sights occur, are detected by the eyes, and then appear in awareness.

Aromas occur, are detected by the nose, and then appear in awareness.

Flavours occur, are detected by the taste buds and then appear in awareness.

Thoughts occur, are detected by the mind, and then appear in awareness.

Mental images occur, are detected by the mind, and then appear in awareness.

Therefore the physical mind/body is an instrument through which awareness (consciousness at rest) can sense and contemplate the physical manifestation of cosmic energy (consciousness in motion, or motion in consciousness).

So the body/mind is an instrument through which awareness can experience the physical world, for experience *is* awareness of thoughts/mental images/sensations.

The body/mind is also an instrument through which awareness can interact with, and enjoy, the universal manifestation of cosmic energy.

Thus the body/mind is an instrument through which consciousness can 'know itself' when manifest as the physical world, that is when in motion.

The human mind has the added advantage of being capable of 'self realization' that is of realizing the deeper level of 'pure awareness', consciousness at rest, the unmanifest.

Therefore the human mind/body is an instrument through which consciousness can 'know itself' in both 'modes': at rest and in motion. That is as 'pure awareness' and as the physical universe.

This realization of humans as instruments of the divine (consciousness) occurs in many of the world's religions. In Judaism, as instruments to enjoy and continue the creation; in Islam, as instruments through which Allah could know Himself; in Advaita Vedanta, as instruments through which Brahman could know Himself and His manifestation; and in Vaishnavism, as instruments to perform Yagnas (sacrifices) for the satisfaction of Krishna (Vishnu). There are also echoes of this in Christianity where man can be seen as an instrument to glorify God and receive His benefits. Mahayana Buddhism also has the concept of the Bodhisattva as an instrument to work for the enlightenment of all beings.

This is particularly stressed in Advaita Vedanta where we find the idea delineated in the Upanishads:

As Brahman is everything, it follows that we all are Brahman and that He is the agent by which the mind thinks, eye sees, tongue speaks, ear hears and body breathes (Kena I v.5-9). He is also described as the 'ear of the ear, eye of the eye, mind of the mind, word of the words and life of the life' (Kena I v.2). Thus He is the 'pure awareness' (Brihadaranyaka 4 v.7) in which all thought, life and sensation appears; and He is the 'seer' (Isha v.8) and 'all knowing' (Katha 2 v.18).

The Katha Upanishad likens man to a chariot, of which the atman (the Self, awareness, Brahman within each individual) is the master, the body is the chariot, the mind is the charioteer, the sense organs are the horses and the roads they travel on are the objects of sensation. The atman is the enjoyer and experiencer of the ride, which is made possible by the charioteer, chariot and horses. (Katha Upanishad 3v.3-4) So Brahman needs the mind and senses, to enjoy and experience the physical world. However when the mind is unaware of the master's presence, through lack of discrimination, it is unable to control the senses which run amok like wild horses (Ibid 3v.5). Brahman, pure consciousness, is hidden in every heart, being the eternal witness watching everything one does. He is said to be 'the operator' whilst we are his 'innumerable instruments'. (Svetasvetara Upanishad 6v.10-12)

Moreover, it is not only humans but all 'sensing' organisms that are instruments through which consciousness can 'know itself' when manifest as the physical world, that is when in motion.

Obviously different organisms have different capacities in this respect as all senses are limited to certain wavelengths, or range, of sensation (experience). As far as we know humans are the only species capable of 'self realization' that is of realizing the deeper level of 'pure awareness', consciousness at rest, and thus are the only beings through which consciousness can 'know itself' when at rest as pure awareness. However, there could well be other species, terrestrial and non-terrestrial, that are capable of this. Humans are also only limited instruments in terms of sensing, contemplating and 'knowing' the manifest and the unmanifest.

Colin Drake

[Back to Top](#)

Diune from Jim Clatfelter

In Alan's latest Nowletter (188) he quotes John David Miller on No-Facebook quoting John Heron from his book Participatory Spirituality: A Farewell to Authoritarian Religion. From John Heron to John Miller to Alan Mann to me, a Nowletter reader, to you on lookforyourself (and now, NOWletter readers).

John David Miller writes: I prefer John Heron's term 'diune' to the term 'non-dual.' Is anyone familiar with his book 'Participatory Spirituality: A Farewell to Authoritarian Religion'? Here is a quote for anyone interested - I will also post a link to the book...I apologize for the length of this post!
<http://www.human-inquiry.com/psfar.pdf>

"The traditional monism of absolute spirit denies the full interdependence of the manifest and the spiritual, insisting they are nondual in a way that essentially reduces the manifest to the spiritual, form to emptiness, fullness to the void. A more radical kind of monism affirms the divine as the one ultimate being embracing the irreducible interdependent poles of the manifest and the spiritual, and proposes that they are diune. The traditional view tends to promote the liberation of souls from the manifest; the contemporary radical view calls for the liberation of persons in a just and flourishing society within the manifest. The diune is a developing realization, a situational unfolding; the nondual is an end-state of realization. Conceptually and intentionally, it is more liberating, fruitful and world-transformative to speak of two-in-one than not-two."

This is just the way I see it. Two-in-one. I searched the LFY conversations and found that I've used that term since 2002. Diune says it in one word. Diune, diunity -- great terms. This and that. Here and there. Seer and scene. These are diune terms. They go-together, as Alan Watts used to say. Mutual arising, Laozi's great insight. Douglas showed it as two-way seeing, wordlessly, as present experience, as the diune nature of presence.

I also like the reference to situational unfolding. This sounds like Daoist spontaneity (ziran), which David Hinton, in his Daoist writings calls a boundless generative burgeoning forth.

Jim Clatfelter

The LFY referred to above is a long-established Yahoo email conference which considers matters arising from the revelation provided by the Harding experiments.
Alan

Back to Top

Letters to Carl – Letter 19 – August 16, 2004 – by George Schloss

This is the nineteenth of the Schloss letters I am serializing in the NOWletter. All the letters are archived at the link below where individual letters or the complete volumes can be downloaded as PDF files.. Hardcopies of the books from LULU.

<http://www.capacitie.org/schloss/articles.htm>

Yet once more into the breach only this time—to mix my metaphors—I think I’ll take a slightly different tack. I figure I’ve more or less exhausted all I have to say, at least for the moment, as regards the Voegelin-Nishitani-Altizer axis but that still leaves an indefinite, not to say infinite, amount of material yet to be explored. And a good thing, too, since it ought to keep us occupied for as far (and as near) as the eye can see. This in response to those who fear that “the end of history” in our sense of the Word—as *telos* rather than *finis*—somehow correlates with its parody, with the end of human life on earth (rather than with its direct opposite, a new beginning), and so will leave us, God forbid, with no-thing to do no less say—a consummation that, running true to form, appears, on the surface at least, to be every inch as uncompromising as its Original. Which, speaking of parodies and ends and ends of parodies, immediately brings to mind the latest in that long line of mirror images that positively demands a list (and will no doubt get one, one day, if only from me): how best provide the finishing touch and, piling Pella on Ossian, square our long-anticipated arrival at our lowest common denominator with our equally unanticipated landing at – parody of parodies – Ground Zero no less, the other side of the coin? Well, thanks to the experiments, it’s now as easy as *pi*. We distinguish the two by turning an indifferent eye to the evil one with its bag of tricks posing as a wealth of viewpoints and, at the same time, reserve its opposite, the pristine and singular sighting peculiar to the All-Possible, for all things great and small. That’s assuming, of course—and it’s a rather large assumption—that our zero is a number at all and as such capable of owning up to an opposite without containing it.

At any rate, I think the best place to start is by doing what comes naturally—in this case by picking up what lies closest to hand, and, as I remarked a few weeks back when we spoke, what happens to lie closest to hand is a book called *Faith and History* by Reinhold Niebuhr, one that’s been lying around the house for I don’t know how long and I may even have read years ago but, significantly enough, don’t remember. Although I must say that, judging from your mildly tepid reaction to the mention of him—did I even detect a slight note of disapproval?—it’s probably just as well. The point I’m trying to make here—and it’s not a case for Niebuhr one way or the other who, as I suspect will, like most authorities however worthy, merely serve from now on in as at best a touchstone, a station on the way—is how it suddenly struck me and not for the first time but with a greater force than ever that, thanks to

the experiments, we now have the tools—I'm almost tempted to say the weapons, alas—with which to address any answerable question or, should the occasion arise in the presence of its by far more prolific kissing cousins, questionable answers

In short, we're now in a position to take full possession of, among other things, that long-sought-after gauge of the absolute, the philosopher's stone, not so much in order to be the first to cast it, sinners that we are, but, hopefully, to hold it in our hot sweaty palms just long enough for some of its magic and mystery to rub off, if only for luck. And I do believe maybe some of it has. Because merely the prospect of having it in my possession if only momentarily set me to thinking. And what did I think of? Well, you probably won't believe this unless you've had, as I did, an extended course in free association courtesy of the strict Freudian analysis that was fashionable in the days of my youth. But contemplating the possibility of an all-knowingness and how to get it across, who should pop into my head but Niccolo Machiavelli, specifically his *Discourses* on the first ten books of Livy on which I once wrote a paper in college? Well, you might ask—I certainly did—what the hell has Machiavelli, of all people, got to do with, I won't even say the art but the science of, Seeing? Aside from the obvious fact that the format he employs—a kind of question and answer analysis using Livy as a foil, a hook to hang his hat on—might offer a congenial model for us to go him one better, indeed, go all the way, by checking our heads there as well, I could think of absolutely nothing. Which “absolutely nothing,” as it has a way of doing, immediately reminded me, in fact *pro-vided* me with the key to what appears to be a dead give-away: that if, coming from the devil's camp in the person of the so-called villain of our peace, the little one is so instrumental, even necessary in exposing the Original of which it's not even a carbon copy but a mere shadow, if, as I say and as Douglas points out in *The Trial*, we're simply talking, in effect, about a not-god—well then, that's what this not-god's stomping-ground, history, has been all about, to reveal itSelf as the downward path in which if nothing human is foreign to it neither is anything divine. And, of course, now that we have a history redeemed by the instruments that prove it—the experiments—it makes absolute sense.

George

Back to Top

Two Poems from Paul Tulip

Doctor visit

'Doctor I've a fuzziness in my eyes. '
 'Let's do a medical test.
 Oh yes, it's the virus of this age,
 All you need is plenty of rest,
 Rest from anger, jealousy, and greed.
 Put in your heart garden this little
 seed,
 Water with kindness and charity.
 Soon what it is that you really need
 You'll see with utmost clarity. '

Beach visit

A bunch of Chinese tourists
 Awestruck by the sea
 Utter what is sounding like
 Little squeals of glee.
 Great waves make thunderous
 statements.
 Each crashing wave is saying
 'Know that I am Spirit
 My universe is playing.'

 They abandoned masks of normal,
 Everyday polite and formal,
 To run, jump, splash take selfies
 of happy smiling faces
 In a joyful celebration
 of what the human race is.

Back to Top

Letter to Sam Harris from Sam Blight

Following our recent correspondence on the Sam Harris You Tube videos Sam Blight wrote the following email to the other Sam which I reprint here with Sam Blight's permission.

Hi Sam (Harris), Thanks very much for sharing your recent conversation with David Chalmers, which I found fascinating. Of particular interest to me was the issue of why some of us recognise the significance of the "hard problem" while others seem to think it's the result of some kind of cognitive sleight-of-hand. Just this morning I came across this:

"Might we, inch by inch and phenomenon by phenomenon, begin to solve the "hard problem" of conscious experience?" ~ Predicting the World, article, New Scientist April 9 2016

I wonder if the disinclination, or even inability, to notice the significance and strangeness of subjective awareness maps to some extent onto the divide between those who are prepared to take in the significance of what's on view when noticing one can't see one's own head and those who dismiss it as a quirky perceptual "trick".

As someone who's been interested in Douglas Harding's approach to self-transcendence for some time now, I've noticed that responses to sharing his first person experiments vary from "That's changed my life completely, thank you" to "So what?" I've had no success in guessing in advance who will take what the experiments reveal seriously -- in many cases for it to become the core of their meditative practice -- and those for whom it means nothing at all. An impressive spiritual resume seems to be worse than no help in most cases, although I've encountered some who have been seeking and practising sincerely for decades for whom a single look back at 180 degrees seems to make the penny drop.

Regarding the hard problem itself, it implies strongly that the only consciousness we have access to is our own. The resistance to this idea is understandable, and even someone as perceptive as Douglas Hofstadter, while including an excerpt from Harding's "On Having No Head" in his "Minds Eye" anthology, nevertheless dismissed it as advocating a kind of solipsism. If though, as you and David canvassed in your discussion, consciousness is a kind of "primitive" or underlying property of reality, then there's an important sense in which we all have the same consciousness, in the same way that we experience the same gravity, albeit each of us enjoying a unique "view" in terms of it's contents.

I also wanted to let you know that through my involvement with the Headless Way website (headless.org) I've come into contact with quite a few newly "headless" explorers for whom the stepping off point has been your wonderful book "Waking Up". Warm regards, Sam.

Back to Top

The Creation Of Deity from Trish English

In the beginning – is a phrase that resonates with most human beings in the same way that modern youth relate to the phrase – *in a galaxy far, far away*. Unfortunately, no one can say what happened “in the beginning” because the story of deity has been lost to antiquity and is buried in the pre-history of man’s evolutionary development from *homo sapiens* to modern human.

One thing we can say, is that the creation of god, as a *concept* was, and is, an intellectual construct. Whether there is a “divine being” apart from a *concept* about such a being, we cannot say, though the story of human history contains

many people who by virtue of intellect, experience, and/or insight, claim that it is so.

Historical research can trace the development of the *concept* of deity through many stages. The origins take us back to the time when humans were hardly human; little more than apes. This was a pre-animistic stage, one in which signs and symbols were those connected to sky and sun. As humans adopted ways of farming however, which involved cooperation between man and the forces of Nature – rain, hail, famine, floods, trees, rivers, crops, and all manner of climate change, – a new age, referred to as the animistic stage, came into being.

This stage was characterised by deities directly linked to Nature and this animistic phase applied to all the people who lived on the planet, regardless of what cult, tribe, or race they belonged to. Over thousands and thousands of years, while the deepest refrain remained the same, the actual manifestation of belief grew in complexity and diversity. Yet the really interesting thing is the refrain of unanswered questions. Within it is enfolded *a sense of awe* on the one hand, and *fear and awe* on the other.

Writing in a much later age, Lucretius, the Epicurean poet, claimed that “fear made the gods”. That is certainly an indisputable fact. One can see clearly why primitive people feared the unknown. For them, Nature was the unknown, the crucial thing that they could neither predict nor control, and yet they depended upon it for their physical survival. The emotion which we call “awe” is something else. In one sense it conjures up something “sacred”, and though primitive people lacked the vocabulary to express this emotion, they were capable of experiencing it.

One of the earliest emotions in apes and humans alike was that of grief. The loss of the companion was one of the earliest emotions we know of. Only recently in a documentary on the apes, it showed a creature mourning for his mate. He sat in the place where she had fallen to her death. He neither ate nor slept. He simply grieved until he died. The researchers were quite astonished, and perhaps what is even more astonishing, is that they stood by and watched him die. It was clear that he could not live without his mate. And even if he could have lived, he didn't want to. They respected his decision. If a human being behaved in such a way today, the doctors would fill him full of anti-depressants, or cart him off to hospital. The human being would be made to survive even if he didn't want to, and even if grief lived on.

According to Eastwood the sense of awe “is present in all succeeding stages of religion” and he contends that it is the prime antecedent to the apprehension of the supernatural. These two emotions, *awe* and *grief*, must have battled with *fear*, for dominance in the development of humans because it was not long before humans began to bury their dead, and to invent weapons to control their many fears of famine and/or loss of territory.

The rise of polytheism - a belief in many gods – had various beginnings. In India for example there are many gods and always have been. However, I am not sure that Westerners fully appreciate that these gods are manifestations or avatars of Brahma, a supreme deity. What is evident in the turbulent history of India throughout the ages is the remarkable acceptance of “difference”, and the capacity to absorb influences rather than resist them. Unlike the People of the Book (Judaism, Christianity and Islam) Indian religion was not dogmatic and punitive in the sense that it never demanded worship should follow a particular pattern, or allegiance to a particular god. In fact the Indian understanding of words like “sacred” and “revelation” were not narrowly defined, although superstition is as deeply embedded in it, as in other world religions.

In its early development, Judaism was also polytheistic and borrowings from the Egyptian gods are still evident. Before each of these civilizations reached their peak, both were indebted to the Sumerians, but that must wait for a separate exposition. When trade and travel became part of the human story, it was inevitable that cultural and religious influences would spread beyond the Orient and Middle East to influence the entire world. In the process, *god* would become *God*. In Hinduism *Brahman* is the universal principle behind everything. It is not God, in the sense of *Brahma* and has no avatars.

There were many reasons why humans created God, goddesses, and other spiritual entities. In the first instance the God brought protection from all that was fearful; it brought power to subdue enemies and bring prosperity to the victors; it promised to nurture the good and banish evil; it brought comfort to the oppressed and hope to the dispossessed. In some cultures it brought redemption, salvation, and above all the promise of life after death. This was the greatest promise of all. Whether resurrection, reincarnation, rebirth, or something else, it held out the hope of continuity. All religions are concerned with what happens after death. It pervades everything, it understructures every civilization from the Mesopotamian period, through the Egyptian and Indian period, to ancient Israel, ancient Greece and ancient Rome. It has continued to the present day.

When the *concept* of God became vested in organized religions, it inevitably led to the establishment and maintenance of a priestly caste, or group of special individuals, who would become mediators between man and God. This in turn gave rise to the God-man, the individual who claimed “*to know*” God personally, or intimately, in some supernatural way. With the birth of organized religion, came power, corruption, intimidation and death. Great civilizations rose and fell into degeneration and corruption along with their created gods.

With education and the rise of science, some human beings began to see that they had created the gods, *who became God*, and that they lived on a fragile planet in a vast universe, possibly surrounded by yet other universes with trillions and trillions of galaxies stretching into infinity. One could say, that with the rise of modern science, humans are able to look up to the heavens and see them for the first time. We are able to behold the vastness of worlds *in a galaxy far, far away*. The old journey has finished, but the search for the Creator has just begun.

Trisha English

Back to Top

Emerson's God

From Emerson's address to the Harvard Divinity School on July 15 1858.

Once (you) leave your own knowledge of God, your own sentiment, and take secondary knowledge, as St. Paul's, or George Fox's, or Swedenborg's, and you get wide from God with every year this secondary form lasts, and if, as now, for centuries—the chasm yawns to that breadth, that men can scarcely be convinced there is in them anything divine.

Let me admonish you, first of all, to go alone; to refuse the good models, even those which are sacred in the imagination of men, and dare to love God without mediator or veil. Friends enough you shall find who will hold up to your emulation Wesleys and Oberlins, Saints and Prophets. Thank God for these good men, but say, 'I also am a man.' Imitation cannot go above its model. The imitator dooms himself to hopeless mediocrity. The inventor did it because it was natural to him, and so in him it has a charm. In the imitator something else is natural, and he bereaves himself of his own beauty, to come short of another man's.

Yourself a newborn bard of the Holy Ghost, cast behind you all conformity, and acquaint men at first hand with Deity. Look to it first and only, that fashion, custom, authority, pleasure, and money, are nothing to you—are not bandages over your eyes, that you cannot see—but live with the privilege of the immeasurable mind.

Eckhart's God

If anyone imagines he will get more by inner thoughts and sweet yearnings and a special grace of God than he could get beside the fire or with his flocks or in the stable, he is doing no more than trying to take God and wrap His head in a cloak and shove Him under the bench. For whoever seeks God in some special Way, will

gain the Way and lose God who is hidden in the Way. But whoever seeks God without any special Way, finds Him as he really is ...and he is Life itself.

Quoted by D. Loy in his book *Nonduality – A study in Comparative Philosophy*

Greville Street Meetings

After some uncertainty I can now confirm the June arrangement as:

Sunday 19 June	The Fabric of Reality	Dave Knowles
Sunday 31 July (Provisional)	The Holographic Universe	Garry Booth

There is still some uncertainty about my availability in July and about the title of Garry's talk so the details of date and title for July are provisional at this point. I'll confirm later. Note that the programme from August onwards remains wide open for offers.

Back to Top

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Night visitor – Glen Davis, 4 June 2016