



Communing with the Gods: Consciousness, Culture and the Dreaming Brain

Charles D. Laughlin

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Communing with the Gods presents the most comprehensive account of culture and dreaming available in the anthropology of dreaming, and is written by an anthropologist who is also trained in neuroscience, and who is himself a lucid dreamer and Tibetan Tantric dream yoga practitioner. –The book examines the place of dreaming in the experience of peoples from diverse cultures and historical backgrounds. –Communing with the Gods surveys anthropological theories of dreaming, what we know about how the brain produces dreams and why, and lucid dream research and how the notion of lucidity applies to dreaming of traditional societies. It explores the ways that societies encourage, evoke, experience and interpret dreams, as well as how people act in response to information obtained in the dream state. A comprehensive theory of brain, culture and dreaming is presented that explains the neurobiological functions of sleep and dreaming, the evolution of dreaming, the universality of, and cultural variation in dream elements, and the role of dreaming as a system of intra-psychic communication. –This theory is then applied to an examination of dreaming in modern society. The book discusses how modern dream-work may ameliorate wide-spread alienation, spiritual exhaustion and despair in modern society.

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