

Educating the Multistate Mind –  
 A Review of ***Psychedelic Horizons***  
 By Thomas B. Roberts, PhD  
 Foreword by Roger Walsh



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During the 1960s Timothy Leary predicted that college students would soon be routinely taking classes in psychedelics and that "Psychedelics 101" would become an essential part of everyone's university education (instead of just being a clandestine extracurricular activity for particularly precocious students). Although Leary may have been a bit overly optimistic about the time-scale on which these educational upgrades would be implemented, psychedelics have become a legitimate subject for college students to study. In fact, educational psychologist Thomas Roberts, PhD, has been teaching a class on the psychedelic mindview at Northern Illinois University since 1975. His newly published book, *Psychedelic Horizons*, summarizes the material that he has been teaching in his popular class – as well as what he has learned from teaching this course for more than 30 years – and explores the possible role of psychedelic mind states in future scientific research, creative problem-solving, and education.



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The central thesis of Roberts' fascinating book revolves around the notion that our educational system, as well as psychology in general, has largely ignored our species' ability to learn and solve problems in any state of consciousness other than our normal, unaltered waking state. Roberts suspects that many types of intelligence and untapped mental abilities become accessible in different states of consciousness - or through the use of different "mindbody psychotechnologies," such as psychedelics - and that a well-educated person should have the ability to choose which type of mindbody state would be most appropriate for solving a particular type of problem. Roberts offers some compelling examples of how psychedelic mind states have played essential roles in important scientific discoveries in genetics and critical developments in computer science.

Roberts offers a paradigm-shifting view of our educational system and suggests a vast array of mind-expanding research possibilities. The ideas touched upon in this book could serve as the seeds for a vast array of new research projects, dissertation topics, books, and late-night philosophical discussions. Roberts certainly knows how to ask lots of good questions. *Psychedelic Horizons* brings together a wonderful collection of fascinating ideas that can't be found easily elsewhere. The book is a bit unusual in that the writing style seems to shift between casual reflections, informal speculation, and a more academic development of ideas, which appears to be suggestive of the psychedelic mind state itself, and makes the book a great deal of fun to read.

Roberts opens the book with a delightfully insightful chapter on Stanislav Grof's interpretation of the classic "children's" story *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, pointing out the relationship between the psychedelic experience and this cryptic archetypal tale of self-

discovery. Throughout the book Roberts touches on the notion of utilizing the spiritual aspects of the psychedelic experience as an avenue toward developing a discipline of experimental theology, that, he says, will be explored more in a future book. One of the most interesting ideas in the book, I thought, was Roberts' discussion about how positive emotions are known to enhance the strength of the immune system, and how this might help us to understand the spontaneous remissions and unexplained healings that are sometimes reported after powerful psychedelic, mystical, or shamanic experiences that are accompanied by strong positive emotions.

I really enjoyed *Psychedelic Horizons*. The book contains a bounty of wonderfully creative ideas that, I think, deserve serious consideration, and are an important contribution to our understanding of how psychedelic mind states might lead to practical applications in our future. I highly recommend this book to anyone who is interested in improving our educational system or exploring the new and exciting research possibilities that psychedelics and other mindbody states have to offer. •

*David Jay Brown is the author of four bestselling volumes of interviews with leading-edge thinkers, Mavericks of the Mind, Voices from the Edge, Conversations on the Edge of the Apocalypse, and Mavericks of Medicine. He holds a master's degree in psychobiology from New York University and was responsible for the California-based research in two of British biologist Rupert Sheldrake's books on unexplained phenomena in science: Dogs That Know When Their Owners Are Coming Home and The Sense of Being Stared At. David is also the author of two science fiction novels, Brainchild and Virus. To find out more about David's work, visit his award-winning Web site: mavericksofthemind.com.*

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