Part IV: Theoretical Approaches
Introduction

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Recently, the major psychological and psychophysiological frameworks for understanding lucid dreaming were reviewed (Gackenbach, 1991). In that review it was noted that several of the psychological approaches take an information processing view of lucid dreaming. Such perspectives range from conceptualizing lucidity in sleep as a cognitive tool through more fully developed approaches which include a model of "self." This view of lucidity in sleep as one form of intensified dreaming along a self-reflectiveness dimension is an aspect of most frameworks. Lucid dreaming is also thought of as a bridge to post–formal operation functioning within dreaming sleep and thus related to the meditative traditions.

Psychophysiological perspectives on lucid dreaming have shown that lucidity is a significantly more aroused REM sleep experience then nonlucid REM sleep. The EEG and lucidity work is based on the association of lucidity to meditation focusing on alpha power and coherence. This sleep experience is also viewed from the framework of spatial skills especially as implicated in vestibular system functioning. Finally, the connectionist view of neural nets is another explanatory vehicle touched upon in this review.

This section of the commemorative issue of Lucidity Letter has a small segment of the theoretical perspectives which have arisen in recent years to account for the experience of knowing you are dreaming while you are dreaming. It will enable the reader to get some glimpse of how social scientists are beginning to understand lucid dreams. In addition, other sections of this special issue have papers which are of considerable theoretical interest.

Reference

Gackenbach, J.I. (1991). Frameworks for understanding lucid dreaming: A review. *Dream-ing: The Journal of the Association for the Study of Dreams*. 1(2), 109–128.