

**"Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain: Perspectives on Lucid Dreaming", Edited by Jayne Gackenbach and Stephen LaBerge, New York: Plenum, 1988.**

**Reviewed By  
Deirdre Barrett**

This is the most thorough summary on lucid dreams to date. The editors have been very successful at the monumental task of gathering the major modern works on lucid dreams from across many disciplines and nationalities. For a basic introduction to lucid dreaming, two other books by these authors -- Gackenbach and Bosveld's (1989) *Control Your Dreams* and LaBerge's (1985) *Lucid Dreaming* -- would be more appropriate. However, most readers of *Lucidity Letter* will already be well enough versed in the field to appreciate the amount of depth in *Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain*.

The book starts with Stephen LaBerge's history of lucid dreaming in western traditions beginning with Aristotle and including references to dream lucidity by major writers such as Thomas Aquinas, Charles Dickens, Fredrich Nietzsche, and Thomas Mann as well as the classic lucid dreamers such as Saint-Denys, van Eeden, and Arnold-Forster. The next chapter by George Gillespie traces Tibetan Buddhism's attention to lucidity.

The second section of the book covers empirical approaches to lucid dreaming including a chapter by LaBerge summarizing the evidence that lucid dreams occur predominately during REM sleep and outlining the specific correlates of when during REM sleep lucid dreams are likeliest to occur in terms of CNS activation, temporal distribution, and EEG alpha. Another delight for researchers is a chapter by Morton Schatzman, Alan Worsley, and Peter Fenwick documenting a clear correspondence between actions in lucid dreams and actual events as recorded by such objective measures as EMG. The section concludes with a comprehensive review by Thomas Snyder and Jayne Gackenbach on individual differences associated with frequent lucid dreamers including personality, visual, intellectual, equilibratory, and oculomotor studies.

For the less empirically inclined, the third section of the book provides a rich variety of accounts of personal and psychotherapeutic uses of lucid dreaming. Patricia Garfield's chapter segment on creativity gives examples from her own and her clients' experience with using lucid dreams to generate inspiration for everything from visual art to book titles. Gordon Halliday describes using lucidity to banish nightmares, Paul Tholey provides case histories of using lucid dreaming to treat a wide variety of complaints in psychotherapy, and Alan Worsley -- arguably the most prolific and meticulous documenter among the lucid dreamers of our time -- give his most detailed account yet of the variety of phenomena which he has explored in lucid dreams. The book concludes with a section on theoretical implications of lucid dreaming, including its relation to other phenomena of consciousness such as meditation and out-of-body experiences.

The book does contain a few disappointments. Robert Denten's chapter on the Senoi is perfectly good anthropology but unrelated to the topic of the book; it takes 27 pages to tell us that the Senoi have nothing to contribute to the lucid dreaming literature. Instead, more useful inclusions related to the myth of Senoi dream control might have been a summary by Bill

Domhoff or Ann Faraday on their investigations of Kilton Stewart's fabrications and American "Senoi dreamwork" or anthropological studies of cultures that did practice lucidity-related dream control such as some Native American tribes.

Jayne Gackenbach's otherwise excellent chapter on the content of lucid versus nonlucid dreams contains 23 pages of statistical tables testifying to the frequent reluctance of editors to edit their own work as effectively as they do that of the other contributors, and Charles Tart's review of dream control experiments was only slightly changed from an earlier version of the same chapter that was published in Wolman's widely read 1979 *Handbook of Dreams*. Despite these minor shortcomings, *Conscious Mind, Sleeping Brain* is the most comprehensive book ever published on lucid dreaming. It is one which many *Lucidity Letter* readers will want for their own shelves and also the type of serious reference work which one might want to encourage your local city and university libraries to order.