

Charles Tart

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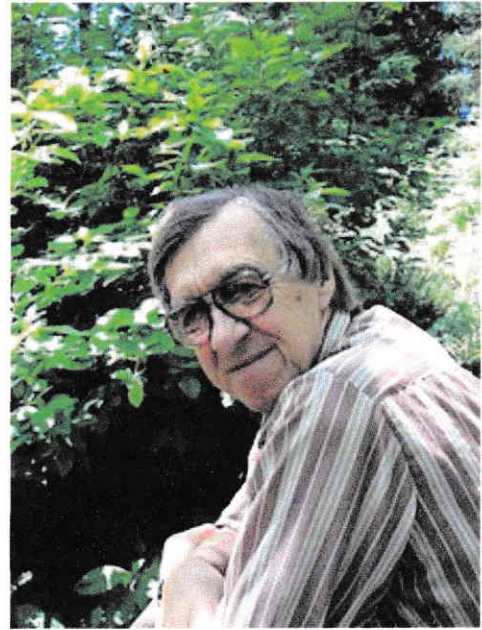
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Charles T. Tart (born 1937) is an American psychologist and parapsychologist known for his psychological work on the nature of consciousness (particularly altered states of consciousness), as one of the founders of the field of transpersonal psychology, and for his research in parapsychology.^[1]

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Charles Tart



Charles Tart, psychologist

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| Born | April 29, 1937 |
| Nationality | American |
| Occupation | psychologist and author |
| Known for | Altered states of consciousness |

Biography

Charles Tart was born on April 29, 1937 in Morrisville, Pennsylvania and grew up in Trenton, New Jersey. He was active in amateur radio and worked as a radio engineer (with a First Class Radiotelephone License from the Federal Communications Commission) while a teenager. As an undergraduate, Tart first studied electrical engineering at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology before transferring to Duke University to study psychology, on the advice of Dr Rhine of Duke. He received his doctoral degree in psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1963, and then received postdoctoral training in hypnosis research with Professor Ernest R. Hilgard at Stanford University.^[1]

His first books, *Altered States of Consciousness* (1969) and *Transpersonal Psychologies* (1975), became widely used texts that were instrumental in allowing these areas to become part of modern psychology.^[1] He is currently (2005) a Core Faculty Member at the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology (Palo Alto, California) and a Senior Research Fellow of the Institute of Noetic Sciences (Sausalito, California), as well as Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the University of California, Davis, where he served for 28 years, and emeritus member of the Monroe Institute board of advisors. Tart was the holder of the Bigelow Chair of Consciousness Studies at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas and has served as a Visiting Professor in

East-West Psychology at the California Institute of Integral Studies, as an Instructor in Psychiatry at the School of Medicine of the University of Virginia, and a consultant on government funded parapsychological research at the Stanford Research Institute (now known as SRI International).^[1]

He was also integral in the theorizing and construction of the automatic ESP testing device the ESPTEACHER machine that was built at the University of Virginia. He supports Joseph McMoneagle's claim of having remote viewed into the past, present, and future and has predicted future events.^[2]

As well as a laboratory researcher, Tart has been a student of the Japanese martial art of Aikido (in which he holds a black belt), of meditation, of Gurdjieff's work, of Buddhism, and of other psychological and spiritual growth disciplines. Tart believes that the evidence of the paranormal is bringing science and spirit together. His primary goal is to build bridges between the scientific and spiritual communities, and to help bring about a refinement and integration of Western and Eastern approaches for knowing the world and for personal and social growth.

In his 1986 book *Waking Up*, he introduced the phrase "consensus trance" to the lexicon. Tart likened normal waking consciousness to hypnotic trance. He discussed how each of us is from birth inducted to the trance of the society around us. Tart noted both similarities and differences between hypnotic trance induction and consensus trance induction. He emphasized the enormous and pervasive power of parents, teachers, religious leaders, political figures, and others to compel induction. Referring to the work of Gurdjieff and others he outlines a path to awakening based upon self-observation.

OBE experiment

In 1968, Tart conducted an OBE experiment with a subject known as Miss Z for four nights in his sleep laboratory.^[3] The subject was attached to an EEG machine and a five-digit code was placed on a shelf above her bed. She did not claim to see the number on the first three nights but on fourth gave the number correctly.^{[4][5]}

During the experiment Tart monitored the equipment in the next room, behind an observation window, however, he admitted he had occasionally dozed during the night.^[6] The psychologists Leonard Zusne and Warren Jones have written that the possibility of the subject having obtained the number through ordinary sensory means was not ruled out during the experiment. For example when light fell on the code it was reflected from the surface of a clock located on the wall above the shelf. The subject was not constantly observed and it was also suggested she may have read the number when she was being attached to the EEG machine.^[4] According to the magician Milbourne Christopher "If she had held a mirror with a handle in her right hand, by tilting the mirror and looking up she could have seen a reflection of the paper on the shelf... The woman had not been searched prior to the experiment, nor had an observer been in the sleep chamber with her — precautions that should have been taken."^[6]

The psychologist James Alcock criticized the experiment for inadequate controls and questioned why the subject was not visually monitored by a video camera.^[7] Martin Gardner has written the experiment was not evidence for an OBE and suggested that whilst Tart was "snoring behind the window, Miss Z simply stood up in bed, without detaching the electrodes, and peeked."^[8] Susan Blackmore wrote "If Miss Z had tried to climb up, the brain-wave record would have showed a pattern of interference. And that was exactly what it did show."^[9]

The experiment was not repeated at the laboratory, Tart wrote this was because Miss Z moved from the area where the laboratory was located.^[10]

Reception

Tart has drawn criticism from the scientific community for his comments on a failed psychokinesis (PK) experiment. The targets from the random number generator that were used in the experiment were not random. Tart responded by claiming the nonrandomness was due to a PK effect. Terence Hines has written that a procedural flaw in the experiment itself was used by Tart as evidence for psi and that this is an example of the use of a nonfalsifiable hypothesis in parapsychology.^[11]

In 1980, Tart claimed that a rejudging of the transcripts from one of Russell Targ and Harold Puthoff's remote viewing experiments revealed an above-chance result.^[12] Targ and Puthoff refused to provide copies of the transcripts and it was not until July 1985 that they were made available for study when it was discovered they still contained sensory cues.^[13] The psychologist David Marks and Christopher Scott (1986) wrote "considering the importance for the remote viewing hypothesis of adequate cue removal, Tart's failure to perform this basic task seems beyond comprehension. As previously concluded, remote viewing has not been demonstrated in the experiments conducted by Puthoff and Targ, only the repeated failure of the investigators to remove sensory cues."^[14] Tart has also been criticized by the skeptic Robert Todd Carroll for ignoring Occam's razor (advocating the paranormal instead of naturalistic explanations) and for ignoring the known laws of physics.^[15]

Tart's book about marijuana *On Being Stoned* has received mixed reviews.^{[16][17]} Harris Chaiklin wrote the book rejected medical evidence and laboratory experiments in favor for the opinions of marijuana users and probability statistics were inappropriately used.^[17] In his book *Learning to Use Extrasensory Perception*, Tart endorsed experimental methods from learning theory and the results from card guessing experiments in support for ESP. Richard Land wrote that Tart's data was unconvincing but concluded "the book will be enjoyed by believers in ESP, and sceptics will regard it as a curiosity".^[18]

In 1981, Tart received the James Randi Educational Foundation Media Pigasus Award "for discovering that the further in the future events are, the more difficult it is to predict them."^[19]

Publications

- *Altered States of Consciousness* (1969), editor. ISBN 0-471-84560-4
- *Transpersonal Psychologies* (1975)
- *On Being Stoned: A Psychological Study of Marijuana Intoxication* (1971)
- *States of Consciousness* (1975)
- *Symposium on Consciousness* (1975) With P. Lee, R. Ornstein, D. Galin & A. Deikman
- *Learning to Use Extrasensory Perception* (1976)
- *Psi: Scientific Studies of the Psychic Realm* (1977)
- *Mind at Large: Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers Symposia on the Nature of Extrasensory Perception* (1979, with Harold E. Puthoff & Russel Targ)
- *Waking Up: Overcoming the Obstacles to Human Potential* (1986)
- *Open Mind, Discriminating Mind: Reflections on Human Possibilities* (1989)
- *Living the Mindful Life* (1994)
- *Body Mind Spirit: Exploring the Parapsychology of Spirituality* (1997)
- *Mind Science: Meditation Training for Practical People* (2001)

- *States of Consciousness* (2001). ISBN 0-595-15196-5
- *The End of Materialism: How Evidence of the Paranormal is Bringing Science and Spirit Together* (2009) ISBN 978-1572246454

Awards

- *Distinguished Contributions to Scientific Hypnosis*, The Society of Psychological Hypnosis (Division 30 of the American Psychological Association), 2001.^[20]
- *Abraham Maslow Award* (given to an individual for an outstanding and lasting contribution to the exploration of the farther reaches of human spirit), The Society for Humanistic Psychology (Division 32 of APA), 2004.^[21]
- *Charles Honorton Integrative Contributions Award*, Parapsychological Association, 2008.^[22]
- *Pegasus Award, Category 1* (To the scientist who said or did the silliest thing relating to parapsychology in the preceding twelve months), presented by James Randi, 1981.

References

1. "Brief Biographical Data". paradigm-sys.com. April 10, 1998. Retrieved 2008-07-22.
2. Joseph McMoneagle. (1998). *The Ultimate Time Machine: A Remote Viewer's Perception of Time and Predictions for the New Millennium*. Foreword by Charles Tart. Hampton Roads Publishing Company. ISBN 978-1-57174-102-8
3. Charles Tart. (1968). *A Psychophysiological Study of Out-of-the-Body Experiences in a Selected Subject*. Journal of the American Society for Psychical Research 62: 3-27.
4. Leonard Zusne, Warren H. Jones (1989). *Anomalistic Psychology: A Study of Magical Thinking*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. p. 126. ISBN 0-8058-0508-7
5. Robert Todd Carroll. (2003). *The Skeptic's Dictionary*. Wiley. p. 110. ISBN 0-471-27242-6
6. Milbourne Christopher. (1979). *Search For The Soul: An Insider's Report On The Continuing Quest By Psychics and Scientists For Evidence Of Life After Death*. Crowell. pp. 90-91. ISBN 978-0690017601 "Dr. Tart himself noted in his article, which was revised for Edgar D. Mitchell's *Psychic Exploration* (1974): that the woman "might have concealed a mirror and telescoping rod in her pajamas" and peeked at the shelf "when she thought I might not be looking through the observation window." The woman had not been searched prior to the experiment, nor had an observer been in the sleep chamber with her — precautions that should have been taken. Dr. Tart admitted in his article, but not in the book, that "occasionally I dozed during the night beside the equipment." Could the subject have known when the parapsychologist was napping? Yes — the room in which he sat was lit, and she could see, as he himself did, through the partially open slats of the venetian blind on the window between the two rooms. It should be noted that Dr. Tart wrote the target digits about two inches high "with a black marking pen." The large size would make it easier for the subject to see them — if trickery was used. Another possibility for cheating — mentioned in Dr. Tart's article but excluded from the book — was that the number might have been reflected by the glass face of the wall clock above the shelf."
7. James Alcock. (1981). *Parapsychology-Science Or Magic?: A Psychological Perspective*. Pergamon Press. pp. 130-131. ISBN 978-0080257730
8. Martin Gardner. (1989). *How Not To Test A Psychic: 10 Years of Remarkable Experiments with Renowned Clairvoyant Pavel Stepanek*. Prometheus Books. p. 246. ISBN 0-87975-512-1
9. Susan Blackmore. (1986). *The Adventures of a Parapsychologist*. Prometheus Books. p. 176. ISBN 0-87975-360-9
10. George Abell, Barry Singer. (1983). *Science and the Paranormal: Probing the Existence of the Supernatural*. Scribner. p. 147. ISBN 0-684-17820-6
11. Terence Hines. (2003). *Pseudoscience and the Paranormal*. Prometheus Books. p. 141. ISBN 1-57392-979-4 "Parapsychologist Charles Tart (1976) used a random number generator to study the possibility of training people to use psi. Subjects were given feedback on whether or not their responses were correct following each trial. In standard learning theory, such feedback is extremely important and enhances learning greatly. Positive results were initially found, as subjects came to be able to match their responses to the numbers generated by the machine. It turned out, however, that the sequence of targets generated by the random number generator was not random. This finding renders highly problematic the contention that the experiment demonstrated psi. Tart's response to the discovery of nonrandomness was to suggest that it was partly due to PK. Thus, a serious procedural flaw in an experiment has itself been claimed as evidence for psi, in yet another example of the use of a nonfalsifiable hypothesis."

12. Charles Tart, Harold Puthoff, Russell Targ. (1980). *Information Transmission in Remote Viewing Experiments*. Nature 284: 191.
13. Terence Hines. (2003). *Pseudoscience and the Paranormal*. Prometheus Books. p. 136. ISBN 1-57392-979-4
14. David Marks, Christopher Scott. (1986). *Remote Viewing Exposed*. Nature 319: 444.
15. Robert Todd Carroll. (2013). "Charles Tart" (<http://skeptdic.com/tart.html>). In *The Skeptic's Dictionary*. Wiley. ISBN 0-471-27242-6
16. LeVon Balzer. (1972). *On Being Stoned: A Psychological Study of Marijuana Intoxication by Charles T. Tart*. *The American Biology Teacher*. Vol. 34, No. 7. p. 419.
17. Harris Chaiklin. (1973). *On Being Stoned by Charles T. Tart*. *The Family Coordinator*. Vol. 22, No. 1. pp. 145-146.
18. Richard Land. (1980). *Learning to Use Extrasensory Perception by Charles T. Tart*. *Leonardo*. Vol. 13, No. 2. p. 162.
19. James Randi (1982). *The Truth About Uri Geller*. Prometheus Books. p. 329. ISBN 0-87975-199-1
20. UC Davis News & Information :: Charles Tart (http://www.news.ucdavis.edu/search/news_detail.lasso?id=5571)
21. Abraham Maslow Award (<http://www.apadivisions.org/division-32/awards/abraham-maslow/index.aspx>)
22. Dr. Charles Tart Receives Award | Sofia University (<http://www.itp.edu/currents/editorials/tart-award.php>)

External links

- Charles T. Tart, Home Page and Consciousness Library Online (<http://www.paradigm-sys.com/>)
- T.A.S.T.E. Online journal of transcendent experiences that scientists have reported. (<http://www.issc-taste.org/index.shtml>)
- Full text of selected articles by and about Tart (<http://www.wynja.com/personality/tartdocs.html>)
- Professor Tart's blog (<http://blog.paradigm-sys.com/>)



Wikiquote has quotations related to: ***Charles Tart***

Audio interviews

- Audio Interview Series (<http://www.buddhistgeeks.com/author/charles-tart/>) on Buddhist Geeks
- Renée Scheltema's film "Something Unknown" (2009) features interviews with Charles Tart

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