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THE BRUNSWICKAN-9

MAN AND MYTH "HOW MANY SOULS"

By RICHARD K. ANDERSON

"Situating dead center in the middle of the brain is the largest and most mysterious information transmission system in the world - the corpus callosum. With it intact, the two halves of the body have no secrets from one another. With it sanctioned, the two halves become two different conscious mental spheres." (Ca70)

The two halves of the human brain are connected by a bundle of tissue called the corpus callosum. In the past couple of decades several groups of patients with severe and uncontrollable epilepsy have been cured by surgical severing of this bundle, thus separating the two halves of the brain, resulting in almost total elimination of the epileptic attacks. The most remarkable discoveries have been made with these split-brain patients, and in some cases each half of the brain appears to have an independent conscious mind.

Each half of your brain controls the opposite half of your body, i.e., your left-brain receives the input from and controls your right hand, foot, and half of the face, and your right-brain is responsible for the entire left half of your body. In particular, the optic nerve from each eye divides so that everything in the right half of your visual field is seen only by the left brain and vice versa. Normally the two halves of the brain keep each other fully informed about their half of the world, through the corpus callosum, but when it is cut they are isolated from each other. Would this mean literally that the right hand wouldn't know what the left hand was doing? Could each half of the brain have separate and independent thoughts, even separate emotions? Welcome to this brochure for a mind-blowing voyage: the answer is yes.

The fact that our verbal centre resides in our left-brain produces some bizarre and fascinating results. When the split-brain patients watched a spot in the middle of the screen in the laboratory and a picture of an object was flashed on the left side of the screen (to the right brain) the patients usually denied having seen anything. This was a truthful response, for the talking left-brain but the non-verbal right-brain saw the object, knew quite well what it was, and could readily pick it out from a collection of objects on a table with the left hand! The scientists quickly realized they were dealing with two minds: the left-brain which could talk, and the right-brain which could not, but could easily communicate with the left hand.

If a picture of an apple was flashed on the screen to the right-brain and a picture of an orange to the left brain, the patient would retrieve an apple with the left hand and an orange with the right. If an apple was flashed to the right brain alone and the left hand retrieved an apple from a selection of objects out of sight (say under the table), the patient would deny seeing anything and deny knowledge of the apple selected by and presently in his left hand.

Just as the left brain is particularly good at some functions such as verbal ones, the right-brain seems particularly good at spatial tasks. Although right-handed, the patients were generally unable to copy line drawings or arrange block patterns with the left-brain controlled right-hand, and were much more adept with the left hand. In one especially bizarre example, recorded on film, a patient is trying to arrange blocks with his right hand to copy a pattern. The right-brain in frustration finally reaches out the left hand to assist, but the experimenter pulls it back.

Both sides of the brain can display emotional reactions. When a nude was flashed on the screen to the right-brain of one female patient, she would laugh and giggle, but not be able to explain why. The non-verbal right-brain would often use these type of reactions to communicate with the left. For example, when a red light was flashed to the right-brain, and the left-brain replied that the light was green - a chance guess

"An Inspector Calls" to play

Rehearsals are already underway for Theatre Fredericton's December production of J.B. Priestley's "An Inspector Calls". In contrast with the comedies traditionally produced by Theatre Fredericton, notably last June's production, *Butterflies Are Free*, *An Inspector Calls* is a drama with a touch of mystery.

A unique feature of this production is its cast as all new faces to Theatre Fredericton will be introduced into the stage of Memorial Hall for the enjoyment of Fredericton audiences. The cast includes Robert Fanjoy as Mr. Birling, Patricia Cumming as Mrs. Birling, Danielle Gallagher as

Sheila, Eric Gagnon as Eric, Greg Nowlan as Gerald Croft, Olive Simpson as Edna and Bill Gould as the mysterious Inspector Goole.

Under the direction of Alvin Shaw, *An Inspector Calls* is sure to be another successful Theatre Fredericton production.

Theatre STU rehearsing "God"

Next week Theatre St. Thomas will present a short comedy at lunchtime. Following last year's well received presentation of Woody Allan's "God", student director Ron Spurles chose another Woody Allan short, titled "Death". It is an absurd study of a man who must re-evaluate his life, his friends, his goals, even his sanity. While this happens he is pursued by a homicidal maniac. A plan is being im-

plemented by a mob to find the killer. In the search they encounter a clairvoyant, a prostitute and a doctor.

"Death" serves as a light commentary on mob hysteria while exploring an individual's weaknesses. In less than one hour, your greatest fear will take on a new meaning!

"Death" will be presented by Theatre St. Thomas at Edmund Casey Auditorium, November 12, 14 and 16 at 12:340 p.m. Admission is \$1.50 at door, \$1.00 advance - to be sold at AD Building, November 7, 8 and 9 during noon hour.

-the right-brain would shake the patient's head and frown, resulting in the left-brain changing its mind and replying "Oh no, I mean red."

For most of the patients the right-brain had a certain amount of language comprehension, although not expression. It could recognize simple nouns and some adjectives, but had no ability to comprehend verbs. For some of the patients, however, the right-brain displayed a startling ability to understand language, leaving one with the unavoidable conclusion that within the aptient resided two self-aware conscious minds, each with its own brain, sharing a common body.

A fifteen year old patient, P.S., was supplied with two Scrabble alphabets. He was asked "Who?" and the words "are you" flash to the right-brain. The left hand spelled "Paul". He was asked to spell his favorite object, "Girl" was flashed to the right-brain, and the left hand spelled the name of his girlfriend "Lix." The right-brain replied "Car" to favourite hobby, and "Heney Wi Fozi" (Henry Winkler) to favourite person. The left-hand/right brain spelled "Sunday" in response to "What is tomorrow" and "automobile race" to answer what job he would pick. This last response is particularly interesting since the left-brain frequently asserts that it wants to be a draftsman, and replied this when asked after the test session.

The left-brain deals with the information available to it. A playign car was flashed on the screen to the right-brain of case P.S. and he was asked what he saw as his left hand spelled the answer with the Scrabble letters. He looked down and saw the letters "CAR". "A car" he answered, and his right brain/left brain added a "D" to make "Card." "Oh, a card", he added and smiled.

If you are interested in this stuff, check out the following references. Education and learning used to be the privilege of the rich who could afford the time. Life is a grand adventure, and the inner world of the human mind is one of its most fascinating facets. Be conscious, aware, and alive; introspect and know yourself.

Gazzaniga, M.S. (1970) "The Bisected Brain", Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York.

Gazzaniga, M.S.; LeDoux, J.E. (1978) "The Integrated Mind", Plenum Press, New York.

Breathless Reviewed

On Friday, November 9 and Saturday 10, the UNB Film Society will present Jean-Luc Godard's *Breathless* (France 1959).

Jean Paul-Belmondo plays a small time crook who lives solely according to his whims. After stealing a car and shooting a policeman, he heads for the home of his lover (Jean Seberg) to hide from the law. Seberg loves Belmondo, but because of his reckless and carefree style of living, she feels that there can be no serious relationship between them; after a series of long conversations she betrays him to the police.

Breathless is the first motion picture by French New Wave director Jean-Luc Godard. Godard's film has had a tremendous effect on the film world; he broke with cinematic tradition by using a hand-held camera and jump-cuts to make this tribute to the American gangster film. It is Jean-Paul Belmondo's excellent portrayal of the loveable "bad guy" that makes this study of this "lost generation" of the 1950's so appealing. *Breathless* has been heralded by the critics as "one of the landmarks of French cinema"