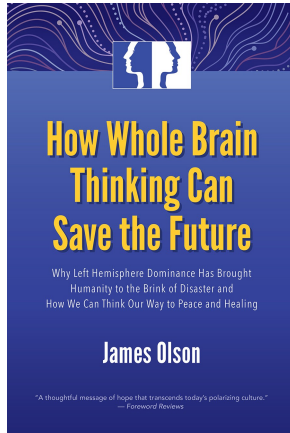


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How Whole Brain Thinking Can Save the Future

James Olson

A practical inquiry into the operating systems of the left and right brain hemispheres and their surprising influence over lifestyle, politics, business, religion, and sexual orientation

Winner of the 2017 Montaigne Medal, presented to the most thought-provoking books that illuminate, progress, or redirect thought, Silver Nautilus Award in Science, Cosmology, & Expanding Consciousness, Independent Publisher's Book Award in Psychology/Mental Health and Foreword Reviews 2017 Body Mind Spirit Book of the Year Award.

In 1981 a Nobel Prize was awarded for the discovery that each brain hemisphere was independently conscious and had contrasting functions. The public became fascinated, and popular ideas about left- and right-brain-dominant personality types entered the idiom. While that important discussion eventually tapered off, many of today's scientists and thinkers are returning once again to consider the split-brain phenomenon, and one result is a revolutionary new synthesis proposed by integral philosopher James Olson in his book *How Whole Brain Thinking Can Save the Future: Why Left Hemisphere Dominance Has Brought Humanity to the Brink of Disaster and How We Can Think Our Way to Peace and Healing* (Origin Press, January 2017). Olson's previous book on philosophy and neuroscience was winner of numerous national awards, including ForeWord Reviews Philosophy Book of the Year in 2011.

The Split-Brain's Remarkable Effect on Consciousness and Culture

Although we've been told for decades that we only use a small portion of our brain's capacity, it is now known that the entire brain is always active in some way and split into a team of specialists. Olson posits that each hemisphere houses an operating system capable of managing the whole of the brain, and depending on the effects of genetic dominance, we can inherit any one of four operating system types: the two systems can work as a team, function as a single hybrid blend, or work independently, meaning the left brain or right brain dominates. For a majority of us, only one of the two hemispheres is running the show. And in most cases, the left brain is in control.

In addition to offering an overview of how the differing perspectives of the left and right hemispheres affect our lives and cultures, including their dramatic influence on our political polarization, Olson pursues a special focus on understanding how the hemispheres act to inform consciousness, with a particular focus on the profound effect they have on gender and sexual orientation. He demonstrates how our dominant hemisphere plays a much larger role in determining sexual orientation than we have previously explored, noting that various cultures are well ahead of us

“As a gay man who has worked for decades running a comprehensive human services agency focused on youth and families, I found Olson's original treatment of sexual orientation to be plausible and very insightful. I believe his book will serve as a helpful guide for the gay community.”

—Dr. George Belitsos,
Founder and CEO Emeritus
of Youth & Shelter Services

in recognizing the correlation between sexuality and gender based on brain hemisphere dominance.

Olson's model of sexual orientation suggests that:

- Each brain hemisphere houses its own independent operating/management system with its own clearly defined operational characteristics. These characteristics reflect the qualities we associate with gender.
- Our brain's operating system, and the gender it gives us, is determined by genetic dominance, which consists of complete dominance, incomplete dominance, and codominance.
- *Complete dominance* gives us either a masculine or a feminine gender. *Incomplete dominance* creates a mixture of the two and establishes a highly fluid sexual orientation. *Codominance* establishes a team gender and creates bisexuality.
- Homosexuality results when brain dominance is reversed, that is, when the feminine side of the brain informs males, or the masculine side informs females.
- Because information *input* is independent of information *output*, and both input and output are characterized by one of four genders, we can inherit any one of sixteen possible gender combinations ($4 \times 4 = 16$).

How Whole Brain Thinking Can Save the Future explores the differing perspectives of the left and right hemispheres of the brain, but it also looks at our search for truth—who we are as human beings, and how we can achieve a peaceful world. Scientific research and observation are essential to understanding ourselves, but mere data and analysis lack the crucial dimension of those human experiences, which, if cultivated properly, lead to wisdom and ultimately to a life characterized by a more holistic approach. The book considers how we can achieve peace—with ourselves, with others, and in the world—by better understanding the functioning of the brain's two management systems and the choices they give us. When we look at how the brain influences our beliefs—the programming that governs our day-to-day existence—we see that when our beliefs are limited to the insights of only one hemisphere, they can sabotage even our best efforts to realize our deepest longings and desires.

In the final analysis, Olson shows that the product of the harmonization of the two hemispheres is *peace*—in all domains. *How Whole Brain Thinking Can Save the Future* reminds us that we have the freedom to adjust our perception—and with it our creativity—by shifting our brain perspective at will, as the occasion demands, through control of our attention.



About the Author: James Olson is an integral philosopher whose studies have included religion, art, psychology, neuroscience, and systems management. He has attended the University of Vienna; Oklahoma University, where he received a Bachelor of Business Administration; and the Kansas City Art Institute. Following the unifying guidelines of philosophy and drawing on his broad education, Olson has made it his mission to help bring the planet's masculine (dualistic left-brain) and feminine (holistic right-brain) energies into greater harmony, through his advocacy of whole-brain thinking. Olson's first book, *The Whole-Brain Path to Peace* earned several national book awards, including *Foreword Reviews* 2011 Philosophy Book of the Year. thewholebrainpath.com

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