

Living Consciousness: The Metaphysical Vision of Henri Bergson (SUNY Series in Transpersonal and Humanistic Psychology)

G. William Barnard

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Living Consciousness examines the brilliant, but now largely ignored, insights of French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941). Offering a detailed and accessible analysis of Bergson's thought, G. William Barnard highlights how Bergson's understanding of the nature of consciousness and, in particular, its relationship to the physical world remain strikingly relevant to numerous contemporary fields. These range from quantum physics and process thought to philosophy of mind, depth psychology, transpersonal theory, and religious studies. Bergson's notion of consciousness as a ceaselessly dynamic, inherently temporal substance of reality itself provides a vision that can function as a persuasive alternative to mechanistic and reductionistic understandings of consciousness and reality. Barnard closes the work with several "ruminations" or neo-Bergsonian responses to a series of vitally important questions such as: What does it mean to live consciously, authentically, and attuned to our inner depths? Is there a philosophically sophisticated way to claim that the survival of consciousness after physical death is not only possible but likely?

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