



# **The Committee of Sleep: How Artists, Scientists, and Athletes Use Their Dreams for Creative Problem Solving-And How You Can Too**

*Deirdre Barrett*

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"It is a common experience that a problem difficult at night is resolved in the morning after the committee of sleep has worked on it." --John Steinbeck Scientific research confirms what people have always known: answers, ideas, and inspiration do come to us in dreams. Harvard psychologist and world-renowned dream specialist Deirdre Barrett, Ph.D., offers this rich collection of examples of how the world's most creative practitioners in art, music, film, science, literature and other fields have used the revelations of their dream life to inform their work. Dr. Barrett offers insights showing us how to encourage lucid, meaningful dreaming, and how to apply the meanings of our dreams to solving problems--from the everyday to the extraordinary. This is the stuff dreams are made of. In the visual arts, Jasper Johns couldn't find his unique artistic vision until he dreamed it in the form of a large American flag. Salvador Dali and his colleagues built the startling new genre of surrealism out of dreams. Kubla Kahn dreamed the design for his stately pleasure dome; thousands of years later, Lucy Davis, chief architect at a major firm, continues the tradition of dreaming designs into life in her extraordinary buildings. Film is a fertile avenue for dreams: "Twice I have transferred dreams to film exactly as I had dreamed them," confides director Ingmar Bergman, as have Federico Fellini, Orson Welles, Akira Kurosawa, Robert Altman, and John Sayles. From Mary Shelley's terrible nightmare, which became Frankenstein, to Stephen King's haunting dream as a little boy, which led to his first bestseller, countless writers have consulted the Committee. Musicians from Beethoven to Billy Joel and Paul McCartney have whistled the Committee's tunes. In science, physiologist Otto Loewi dreamed the medical experiment that earned him the Nobel Prize. In sports, Marion Jones dreamed she'd broken a world record, then brought the dream to life. Gandhi translated his dream of resistance into a movement that changed the world. Since Freud, we take it for granted that our dreams reflect our past. In *The Committee of Sleep*, Barrett reveals how dreams can also tell us about our future potential--and how to reach it. Read this book, sleep on it, and see what transpires! Deirdre Barrett, Ph.D., is on the psychology faculty of Harvard Medical School. She is the author of the widely acclaimed *The Pregnant Man: And Other Cases from A Hypnotherapist's Couch*. *Supernormal Stimuli*, and *Waistland*. She is Past President of both the International Association for the Study of Dreams and The Society for Psychological Hypnosis. She is Editor-in-Chief of the journal *Dreaming*, and has published numerous professional articles and chapters on dreams. Her commentary on dreams has been featured on NBC, *Life Magazine*, *Self*, and other national venues. She has lectured on dreams in the U.S., Russia, Kuwait, Israel, England, and Holland. "This fascinating and balanced compendium is the first critical examination of the tricky subject of the role of dreams and dreaming in creative life--a question which has been pondered since antiquity. Dr. Barrett draws vividly and eloquently on the world's literature as well as her own clinical experience; one leaves this book with much more respect for sleep and dreaming." --Oliver Sacks, author of *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* and *An Anthropologist From Mars*

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