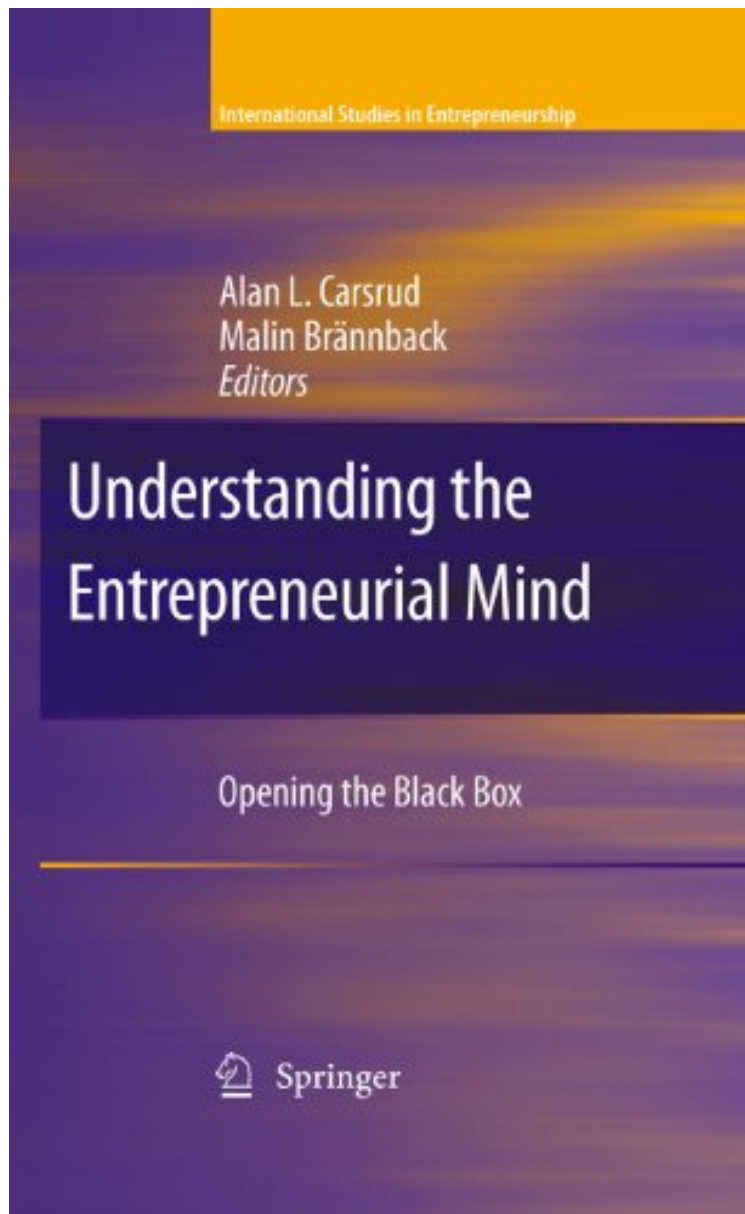


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Understanding the Entrepreneurial Mind: Opening the Black Box: 24 (International Studies in Entrepreneurship)

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Interest in the functioning of the human mind can certainly be traced to Plato and Aristotle who often dealt with issues of perceptions and motivations. While the Greeks may have contemplated the human condition, the modern study of the human mind can be traced back to Sigmund Freud (1900) and the psychoanalytic movement. He began the exploration of both conscious and unconscious factors that propelled humans to engage in a variety of behaviors. While Freud's focus may have been on repressed sexuality our focus in this volume lies elsewhere. We are concerned herein with the expression of the cognitions, motivations, passions, intentions, perceptions, and emotions associated with entrepreneurial behaviors. We are attempting in this volume to expand on the work of why entrepreneurs think differently from other people (Baron, 1998, 2004). During the decade of the 1990s the field of entrepreneurship research seemingly abandoned the study of the entrepreneur. This was the result of earlier research not being able to demonstrate some unique entrepreneurial personality, trait, or characteristic (Brockhaus and Horwitz, 1986). It was both a naive and simplistic search for the "holy grail" of what made entrepreneurs the way they are. However, many of the researchers in this volume have never given up the belief that a better understanding of the mind of the entrepreneur would give us a better understanding of the processes that lead to the creation of new ventures.

From the Back Cover Why do some people start business and others do not? Is entrepreneurship a natural quality or can it be taught? Do entrepreneurs think differently from others? While there is a great deal of literature exploring the dynamics of new firm creation, policies to promote innovation and technology transfer, and the psychology of creativity, research on entrepreneurial mindset or cognition is relatively new, and draws largely from such related fields as organizational behavior, cognitive and social psychology, career development, and consumer research. Over the past fifteen years, the initial model, the theory of reasoned action (TRA), and its successor, known as the theory of planned behavior (TPB), have successfully been applied to entrepreneurship. However, recent findings suggest that considerably more research is required to understand the role of intentions in the entrepreneurial decision process. In this volume, editors Carsrud and Braun have assembled the most prominent researchers in entrepreneurial psychology to showcase state-of-the-art insights on its many dimensions. Covering such topics as perceptions, motivations, risk, passion, and opportunity recognition, and featuring both quantitative empirical studies and qualitative case examples, *Understanding the Entrepreneurial Mind* challenges conventional approaches to entrepreneurial behavior and establishes a research agenda for the future.