

An Inquiry on Déjà vu

Have you ever gotten the sense or feeling that you were certain that you had been somewhere or heard something or seen something before experiencing it in the present moment? The strangest part about this feeling being that there is a relative certainty that there is a rift in the sense of having experienced flashes of that moment, but not actually having “been” there before. There is a word for this, and it’s called Déjà vu, which translates to “already seen” ([P.N. Vlasov](#),^a [A.V. Chervyakov](#),^{b,*} and [V.V. Gnezditskij](#)^b). There are many cases such as this, and it has baffled scientists throughout history. In fact, it occurs in most healthy individuals at one time or another in their lives. A recent study has estimated up to 97% of the general population has experienced a sense of déjà vu (Déjà vu phenomenon-related EEG pattern. Case report). But what causes this sense of Déjà vu? Some scientists claim that it is as simple as brain functionality or dysfunction, drugs, or mental illness. Others might claim that it is an experience in reference to Parallel universes or higher states of consciousness.

Quantum Physicist Michio Kaku quotes an analogy first expressed by physicist Steven Weinberg in an article, how the vibrating atoms of our body/consciousness can be related to the frequency of a radio signal and the ‘multiverse’. “If you’re inside your living room listening to BBC radio, that radio is tuned to one frequency. But in your living room there are all frequencies: radio Cuba, radio Moscow, the top 40 rock stations. All these radio frequencies are vibrating inside your living room, but your radio is only tuned to one frequency.” But sometimes more than one radio frequency can be heard on the radio at the same time. (Marshall, Colin).

Another example of the possibility of déjà vu being a psychological/consciousness phenomenon has been referenced in ancient Aryan and Hindu texts such as the Vedas, and the

Upanishads, where states of consciousness are identified as certain terms including Brahman, and Atman. These texts explain Brahman as “an enormous field that constitutes the true reality of the universe and is not divided into objects with larger or smaller dimensions, but remains what is at the basis of reality, namely reality itself – even though it manifests itself in each and every form and object of the visible universe” (Tombetti, Pierluigi). In the eastern Philosophy, Atman is the individual concept of ‘Soul’, as a subjective projection of the all encompassing Atman. In some ways, this appears to hint at the idea of the unified field that is mentioned in quantum physics.

Psychiatrist Carl Jung, even had some notes to share on the psychic phenomenon of Déjà vu or “Significant Coincidences”. The main system which was used to explain such phenomenon became known as entanglement; “a particle can influence another instantaneously even if very far away from it. It is a phenomenon verified and tested by several laboratories” (Tombetti, Pierluigi). Jung gave this expression with the idea of ‘Unus mundus’, which translates to ‘one world’. He was convinced these phenomenon were connected on a deeper level than coincidences, and related the phenomenon to “frozen pinnacles emerging from the sea [that] may appear as individual elements, but they actually are a part of the same iceberg when you look deeper below the surface of the water” (Tombetti, Pierluigi).

These previous statements lightly address the significance of déjà vu being a psychic phenomenon, as messages or signals of experience that goes beyond simple identity as a separate individual, but perhaps as part of something larger. Very much like individual neurons sending/receiving signals within a larger brain or mind. The following statements will briefly

address how déjà vu has been studied to be a localized phenomenon within the brain of individuals who suffer from certain physiological conditions.

A case report study attempted to explain the physical phenomenon in the brain by having subjects participate in a survey. The group was divided into two groups, one with Epilepsy, and the other without, or “Pathological-epileptic déjà vu” and “nonpathological-nonepileptic déjà vu”. The subjects were tested with ambulatory EEG monitoring at 12-16 hour sessions. In patients with epilepsy, déjà vu episodes began with a polyspike activity in the right temporal lobe region, and occasionally ended with slow-wave theta-delta activity in the right hemisphere. ([P.N. Vlasov](#),^a [A.V. Chervyakov](#),^{b,*} and [V.V. Gnezditskij](#)^{b:}). Theta and delta wave activity generally constitute feelings of “deep relaxation, meditation, mental imagery, deep dreamless sleep (“Understanding Brain Waves”). Some scientific authors believe that déjà vu stimulates certain areas of the brain that are considered psychoactive zones, and even disturb the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex areas. This creates an aberrant sense of experience that is related with new sensory information, via coordinated comparison from the parahippocampal system. It was concluded that “déjà vu occurs as a result of impaired contact between the neocortex and the medial temporal lobe structures, when the cortical influence weakens [by fatigue or during sleep, etc.]... ([P.N. Vlasov](#),^a [A.V. Chervyakov](#),^{b,*} and [V.V. Gnezditskij](#)^{b:}). Curiously enough, the analysis revealed that the volume of grey matter of the brain was inversely correlated with the frequency of déjà vu. ([P.N. Vlasov](#),^a [A.V. Chervyakov](#),^{b,*} and [V.V. Gnezditskij](#)^{b:}).

From what I have researched on the topic of Déjà vu, all of these aspects are valid in some regard to defining and explaining the phenomenon in question. They are all connected

and relative to each other in the sense that several aspects are required for the experience of the phenomenon, including: awareness, perception, memory, a brain, consciousness, sensory data input/output, frequency, and thematic subjective experience. I feel as if the riddle of déjà vu is still at large, but that is fitting for such an elusive experience such as déjà vu itself.

However I do feel that from the research of this topic, I have come to understand myself more than the déjà vu itself, as if it was the messenger, and I was the vessel, and the message was perception and awareness; existence.

Works Cited

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