

Mutual Experiences

The notion of Mutual or Group Experiences is not a new one. When a thought or intention is shared by enough people it can create a critical mass or tipping point. We see examples of this today in mass UFO sightings in a particular region, such as the Hudson Valley in the late 1990s or Gulf Breeze Florida in the late 1080's. Other examples would be mass poltergeist activities that may affect an entire block instead of one house.

Mutual or Group experience is also referred to as Contagion. It is the most likely explanation for mass demonic possession, hysteria, and other forms of collective belief. Cults, Religions, and even politics operate on a form of contagion. When enough people believe something and accept it into their consciousness, they manifest it as a reality. A freaky example comes to mind from Loudon, France in 1632-34, when Ursuline nuns were overwhelmed by demonic possession. Beginning on the night of September 22, 1632, two nuns claimed to have encountered a spirit. Several days later a large black ball rolled through the refectory, pushing several nuns to the ground. A few days later, a human skeleton was seen walking through the convents corridors. With each passing day, more and more activity manifested itself within the confines of the Convent. Voices were heard; nuns were beaten and slapped by unseen hands. The nuns began displaying feats of superhuman strength, screaming, crying, fainting, seizures, all typical signs of demonic possession. The local Clergy organized an Exorcism Ritual. During the exorcism, the nuns accused (via demons speaking through their mouths) a local priest (Fr. Grandier) of having entered into a pact with Satan. He endured a series of trials and was found guilty and executed on August 18, 1634.

The possessions ended and the town returned to normal. Whether the nuns were actually possessed or practicing contagion, the results were the same. A priest was executed. Historians argue it was caused by the pressure of the current witch hunting atmosphere of the times that triggered the episode; others claimed it was a convenient way for the women to remove a nasty man from their life.

However, as some parapsychologists pointed out, numerous physical manifestations were recorded, such as moving objects, levitation, plasma, balls of light, shadowy figures, all appearing and disappearing, sometimes even moving through walls. Sure, it is all anecdotal evidence. But it makes one pause to wonder.

We have all witnessed contagion in one form or another all around us. Even in the various paranormal websites I have a presence in, I have seen people note how the atmosphere has changed from time to time, based on the moods of the group and the groups dynamics. Someone comes in with a bad mood, and it spreads, infecting others. Since energy has the ability to attract similar energy, is it possible that this may also apply it to emotions and moods, which are manifestations of energy? Many Eastern Philosophies use this concept in their healing practices. Aligning one's Chi is based on tuning the positive and negative energies into a Ying and Yang balance.

Contagion, however, is capable of far more than just influencing people's feelings, beliefs and emotions. It can also affect how the world looks to people. As mentioned previously in the paper "Quantum Consciousness", many researchers believe that we create a lot of the phenomena we measure; UFOs, strange beasts, ghostly encounters, all manufactured by the mind. Is this possible? We have demonstrated that to a certain

degree, this is true. The human brain is a very complex bio-machine that we are just starting to explore and one day need to understand fully. But as a group, I believe that we have do indeed hold some influence, but that we don't universally create. Instead, when we observe, we may enable, we may alter, interfere or even create individual percepts, but what are the odds of creating an effect of energy that allows for everyone to see the same thing? While we don't create the phenomena, we may open the door for it by observing it.

But contagion works both ways. Just as it may allow us to see something, it may also prevent us from seeing something, or isolate or insulate us from its effects. Just as acceptance of paranormal manifestations may spread like the plague, denial may also spread like swine flu.

So which is it?

There is a neat book out by F. David Peat called "*Synchronicity*". In it, he explains that nature contains archetypal patterns and symmetries that do not exist in any explicit material sense but are enfolded within the various dynamic movements of the material world. Matter does not represent a fundamental reality, but instead is the manifestation of something that lies beyond the material domain.

I have a hard time with these theories because they deal in realms that are hard, if not impossible to quantify, with today's current technology. However, it is worth keeping this in the back of one's mind for reference, as it does have a possibility of being a key. This is why studying the observer's role in paranormal phenomena, the consciousness, and how our bodies affect the environment around us during these events is vitally important. We simply do not know yet, what effect we truly have.

Additionally, how can one consciousness create something that is perceived the same as many other folks, each unique in some way? Quite simply, it can't.

So where are we now?

We are in a constant state of flux. Scientists believed they had proven the Inflation Theory as fact. Now we are finding evidence that casts doubts on a single Big Bang and the whole concept of the Singularity. Instead of inflation as we thought we knew it, we may be expanding due to multiple "Big Flows" from various points in space and time. We have discovered a tenth planet in our Solar System and Pluto has been demoted to a planetoid. Scientists have incorporated quantum mechanics into a modified theory of gravity called Loop Quantum Gravity. They have measured the gravitational equivalent of a magnetic field in the laboratory. Roger Penrose has found evidence that there may indeed be a multiverse. We are designing nanobots to cure disease. RNA has been converted into DNA. Robotic surgery, which was a science fiction subject when the second Star Wars movie "*The Empire Strikes Back*", was released on May 21, 1980, is today a routine procedure for many conditions. Nanotechnology is growing by leaps and bounds and quantum computers may be a reality that is just around the corner. In the macro-realm of the universe we have discovered "Dark Flow", galaxies that date to only a few million years after the point in which we believed our universe began, and the curious discovery that every galaxy we can observe has an entangled pair of wormholes at its center.

And the hits just keep on coming!

Researchers are trying to use thought to create life in a test tube filled with sterile water (LEMUS, Genesis Experiment), a new telescope in Massachusetts is powerful enough to reveal alien light signals. We have not only discovered exoplanets (planets outside our solar system) but we have found Earth-like planets complete with water present. The Large Hadron Collider at CERN in Switzerland, may prove string theory any day now. They are trying even now to create a true string. They may prove M-Theory by detecting a brane. They HAVE discovered the existence of new dimensions, hundreds of new particles, but so far they haven't been able to create a microscopic Black Hole, that had every one of its critics up in arms. Personally, it is my hope that they discover a graviton. They routinely create antimatter, and recently "bottled it".

Science by itself may never fully explain reality. Religion by itself won't either, for each theory is overthrown by a new hypothesis, with human experience adding more possibilities daily. But we will need a different kind of unification theory to understand. The physical must be reconciled with the metaphysical, just as physics must be reconciled with Quantum Physics. Everybody knows something and collectively, if we work together and share our knowledge, we will indeed find the answers to our questions, be it in Science, or Religion, and most likely, a combination of the two. Until scientist stop denying that any experience that cannot be duplicated in a lab, or held up against a standard is imaginary, and until paranormal investigators, and religious folk stop denying the science behind the spirit, we will go nowhere. It is, I believe,

EVERYONE'S DUTY TO INVESTIGATE THE UNEXPLAINED, NOT EXPLAIN THE UNINVESTIGATED!

I have tried to reach across the void into no man's land.

Someone take my hand.