On the Quantum Mechanics of Consciousness, with Application to Anomalous Phenomena

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Foundations of Physics, 6, No. 8 (1986)
<www.princeton.edu/~pear/pdfs/FP_PEAR.pdf>

In our first attempt to comply with the epistemological injunctions of the preceding article, we deployed a variety of quantum physical concepts as metaphors for the general representation of mind/matter interactions, under the over-arching premise that quantum characteristics are actually imposed by consciousness in its process of experiencing events, rather than by the events, *per se*. This model appears as Section IV of *Margins of Reality* (Reference 2), as a lengthy article in *Foundations of Physics* (Reference 10), and as a pair of PEAR Technical Reports (Reference 173). Given the length and detail of these, we here can afford only an abstract, but a particularly salient aspect of this approach, termed the "Complementarity of Consciousness" (Reference 27) is reproduced in full.

This model has attracted resistance, extending in some cases to ridicule, from the elite physical science community, who appear to regard it as an illegitimate misappropriation of one of their most sacred formalisms. It is our position, however, that it is they who have appropriated a yet more fundamental human experiential propensity to their secular conceptualization and representation of physical phenomena, thereby artificially constraining the underlying intangible information mechanics.

Abstract

Theoretical explication of a growing body of empirical data on consciousness-related anomalous phenomena is unlikely to be achieved in terms of known physical processes. Rather, it will first be necessary to formulate the basic role of consciousness in the definition of reality before such anomalous experience can adequately be represented. This paper takes the position that reality is constituted only in the interaction of consciousness with its environment, and therefore that any scheme of conceptual organization developed to represent that reality must reflect the processes of consciousness as well as those of its environment. In this spirit, the concepts and formalisms of elementary quantum mechanics, as originally proposed to explain anomalous atomic-scale physical phenomena, are appropriated *via* metaphor to represent the general characteristics of consciousness interacting with any environment. More specifically, if consciousness is represented by a quantum mechanical wave function, and its environment by an appropriate potential profile, Schrödinger wave mechanics defines eigenfunctions and eigenvalues that can be associated with the cognitive and emotional experiences of that consciousness in that environment. To articulate this metaphor it is necessary to associate certain aspects of the formalism, such as the coordinate system, the quantum numbers, and even the metric itself, with various impressionistic descriptors of consciousness, such as its intensity, perspective, approach/avoidance attitude, balance between cognitive and emotional activity, and receptive/assertive disposition. With these established, a number of the generic features of quantum mechanics, such as the wave/particle duality, and the uncertainty, indistinguishability, and exclusion principles, display metaphoric relevance to familiar individual and collective experiences. Similarly, such traditional quantum theoretic exercises as the central force field and atomic structure, covalent molecular bonds, barrier penetration, and quantum statistical collective behavior become useful analogies for representation of a variety of consciousness experiences, both normal and anomalous, and for the design of experiments to study these systematically.

ISSN 1550-8307/07/$32.00

doi:10.1016/j.explore.2007.03.015