

Re: Some brain questions i need help with

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"Wolf Kirchmeir" <wwolfkir@sympatico.ca> wrote in message
news:rkE4d.27315\$bL1.1103684@news20.bellglobal.com...

> *dan michaels wrote:*

> [...]>

> >

> > *Trying to analyze the dream contents, as per Freudianism, is probably*

> > *either mundane or hopeless.*

>

> *Mundane as an opposite to hoipeless???? How?*

For the most part I think dreams are just a shambles of things coming together and fading away but there are instances where dreams are pointing to something more significant that can be helpful in our conscious lives. In my current dreams I am attempting to get somewhere but being presented with barriers. Nonetheless I am getting to where I want to be. In my current life I am beset with some difficulties and sometimes feel that I am not going to get to where I want to be. It would appear that "I" of my dreams is more optimistic than me! Should we trust dreamers?

About 20 years ago I had a rare nightmare where I woke up in the early morning hours drenched in sweat and quite terrified, in the dream I was just about to be killed. This dream obsessed me for many months, somehow I knew it carried an important message and it was very symbolic in nature. It started me looking at Jung in great interest. When I finally came to understand the dream the warning has passed its used by date, I had avoided the looming peril but only in retrospect did I realise that it was this peril the dream was warning me about. Reciting this dream to a friend one day he looked at me in astonishment and replied that he knew someone in a very similiar situation to that I was in at the time of the dream and they had a very similiar dream which they had interpreted in the same manner as myself. They also changed their life. Spooky, glad it only happened once otherwise I would have to take this dreaming stuff more seriously.

> > *However, conceptualizing the "mechanisms"*

> > *underlying them is much more interesting – and pertinent. Vivid visual*

> > *imagery, totally internally-generated. High emotional content, totally*

> > *internal. The feeling to the externally-unconscious "I" that it is*

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> > *fully-conscious within the dream, experiencing the dream experiences,*
> > *and experiencing high-emotional affect due to the dream experiences.*
> > *All this totally internal. That's what's remarkable. Isn't it.*
> > =====
> [...]
>
> *It's just as remarkable as visual imagery etc "externally" generated.*
> *Because of course there's really no difference. IMO, all visual imagery*
> *is internally generated. The only difference between the "internally"*
> *and "externally" generated VI is the originating stimulus. That's why*
> *it's so hard to study VI – we have on the one hand the external visual*
> *environment, on the other the responses in the VC and other parts of the*
> *brain (including the speech centers when the subject reports on what's*
> *een, etc.) When dreaming, almost all the same parts of the brain are*
> *active as when awake. Now _that's_ interesting – it suggests (to me*
> *anyhow) that the "experience of seeing" in the waking state is as much a*
> *product of the internal processes of the brain as when we dream. Since*
> *in REM sleep the eyes move, and muscular contractions are potentiated*
> *and inhibited (otherwise you'd actually flap your arms while "flying"*
> *etc), there is also feedback between the VC and other parts of the*
> *brains. Now _that's_ interesting, too, since it suggests that seeing as*
> *a behaviour is far more complex than "processinmg visual inputs from the*
> *retina". It also suggests that the VC uses the feedback as much as it*
> *uses the retinal inputs. Etc. IOW, if the VC gets input from other parts*
> *of the brain, it responds as usual. It can't differentiate between*
> *signals originating as responses to some external stimulus and those*
> *originating from some internal process. The "I" can sometimes tell the*
> *difference, but exactly how it does this is not clear.*

Recently read:

What Memory is For. Glenberg, A.M.(1997). Behavioral and Brain Sciences
20(1): 1–55

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Berkowitz and Trocolli (1990) and Berkowitz, Jo, and Trocolli (1993) illustrate the influence of the body on affect judgements. In one experiments, subjects were asked to judge the personality of a fictitious person described in neutral terms. Half the subjects listend to the description while holding a pen between their teeth without using their lips. This activity forces the face into a pattern similiar to that produced by smiling. The other subjects listened to the description while biting down hard on a towel. This activity forces the face into a pattern similiar to that produced by frowning. The subjects who were smiling rated the person described more positive than the subjects who were frowning. It is unlikely that this effect arose due to demand characteristics of the expeirment for the following reason. The effect was obtained only when the subjects were distrated from their activities; when they were asked to focus ont he activities, the subjects seemed to compensate for the forced smile (frown) and rate the description more negatively (postively). What can acount for this finding? Experienced emotion is embodied. When the body is manipulated

into a state that is highly correlated with an emotion, the body constrains other cognitive (that is embodied) processing.

2.3.2

Montello and Presson (1993) asked subjects to memorize the locations of objects in a room. The subjects were then blindfolded and asked to point to the objects. Pointing was fast and accurate. Half the subjects were then asked to imagine rotating 90 degrees and to point to the objects again. That is, if an object was originally directed in front of the subject and the subject imagined rotating 90 degrees clockwise, the correct response would be to point to a location towards the subject's left. In this condition, the subjects were slow and inaccurate. The other subjects, while blindfolded, were asked to actually rotate 90 degrees and to point to the objects. These subjects were just about as fast and accurate as when pointing originally. Thus, mentally keeping track of the locations of objects, a task that many cognitive psychologists as being cognitive and divorced from the body, is in fact strongly affected by literal body movements.

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Thus, in imagining pendular motion, discharges to the eye muscles follow the appropriate frequency, in imagining bicep curls there are discharges in the biceps, and in imagining the taste of favorite food there is an increase in saliva flow.

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For the time being I'm calling this "sensory logic" and I think it throws some light on why we tolerate the physical absurdities we encounter in dreams. The absurdities experienced in the dreaming state are not alarming nor do they cause us to become fascinated by the same. Sounds like psychosis? This brings me back to the report I read about the inhibition of external sounds during auditory hallucinations. What we deem to be real may be a matter of contrast and reinforcement by our senses. In psychosis the loss of stimulation from external sources might be a significant factor. I think Hobson travels down this road and it does remind me of those sensory deprivation experiments.

In relation to the pendulum experiment, if it were possible to inhibit the ocular muscles I wonder if we could still imagine a pendulum swinging. Any ideas? In relation to the room visualisation, I wonder how a person would go if they were sitting in a chair and the chair was rotated 90 degrees by the experimenter. The subject would feel the change in orientation, but would that be sufficient or is the muscular action and subsequent feedback necessary to achieve the good results?