

Re: Why physicists should pay attention to the mind

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- *From:* rof@xxxxxxxxxxxxx
 - *Date:* Tue, 31 May 2005 22:21:56 +0000 (UTC)
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Ralph Hartley <hartley@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> writes:

>I don't have time to reply to your whole post right now (and it would be
>off topic). In this post I will restrict my comments to one point,
>relating to the interpretation of Quantum Mechanics.

>rof@xxxxxxxxxxxxx wrote:

- >> Second, I want to set the stage by caricaturing a "debate" in
- >> philosophy, namely the debate between ontologists and epistemologists.
- >> In physics, there is a corresponding debate between people
- >> who call themselves realists and those who don't.
- >>
- >> Ontologist: I'm examining the things that exist. Really really exist.
- >> Like the world. That really really exists. It's really real.
- >>
- >> Epistemologist: We need to pay attention to the way in which we
- >> acquire knowledge, and to the status of that knowledge.
- >..
- >> 2. The vast majority of physicists are ontologists.

>I don't think so.

>The reason physicists don't like to talk about interpretations of
>quantum mechanics is that they are epistemologists.

>Physicists, almost universally, are committed to a *particular* way of
>acquiring knowledge. Build theories, test with experiment, repeat, try
>the simple ones first. Some might even claim that's the *only* way to
>acquire knowledge, but even if it isn't, it's their way.

Perhaps you are saying that there's a silent majority of physicists
who would not disagree with the statement "The wavefunction describes
the actual state of the system, rather than the experimenter's
knowledge about it."

Maybe; we would need to do a poll to find that out. Perhaps it's
been done already?

R.

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- *Follow-Ups:*
 - ◆ *Re: Why physicists should pay attention to the mind*
 - ◇ *From:* Ralph Hartley
 - ◆ *Re: Why physicists should pay attention to the mind*
 - ◇ *From:* Hendrik van Hees
 - Prev by Date: *Re: Why physicists should pay attention to the mind*
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