

Quantum Physics Axed Materialism. Many Hope the World Won't Know

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3 minutes



Quantum mechanics, which developed in the early 20th century, has been a serious blow to materialism.

There is no way to make sense of it if immaterial entities like information, observation, or the mind are not real. Theoretical physicist [Sabine Hossenfelder](#) struggles against the effects of this fact.

In a recent video, she asks, “Does Consciousness Influence Quantum Effects?” (November 19, 2022).

She asks, why did some physicists like [von Neumann](#) and [Wigner](#) think that consciousness is necessary to make sense of quantum mechanics, and can consciousness influence the outcome of a quantum experiment? (0:33)

Well, they had good reason. Any effort to exclude consciousness from reality fails.

A Hostile Witness

Hossenfelder, a hostile witness, kindly offers an example from the work of Irish physicist [John Bell](#) (1928–1990):

John Bell used the following example: “When the Queen dies in London, the Prince of Wales becomes instantaneously king.” No matter where he is. So why wasn’t the speed of light limit broken when the queen died? Because we can update our *knowledge about what happened elsewhere without causing any event elsewhere. And this is how Bohr thought about the collapse of the wave-function. You can update it instantaneously because it just describes what we know. Einstein wasn’t convinced, but Bohr won the argument. (2:14)

But isn’t it reasonable to ask, what does it mean to say that “the Queen” “dies”? On September 8 of this year, [Elizabeth II](#), head of state for the [Commonwealth](#), which includes many countries, including Canada, Jamaica, and Nigeria, died, as is the fate of all mortals.

The Nature of Consciousness

Now, here is a question that more directly concerns the nature of consciousness, a topic that has rattled the pioneer quantum physicists, if not Hossenfelder: Did goats or termites in any of those environments notice or care?

The big question is, *could those entities have cared?* No. They could not. It is not a question of their opinion. They can’t grasp the matter. Something is happening in human consciousness that is not happening in theirs.

Read the rest at [Mind Matters News](#), published by Discovery Institute’s Bradley Center for Natural and Artificial Intelligence.