

sense of being stared at

Sense of Being Stared At: Exploring the Mysterious Human Experience

sense of being stared at is something most people have experienced at some point in their lives. That sudden, prickly feeling that someone's gaze is fixed on you, even when you can't see anyone looking directly your way, can be both unnerving and fascinating. But what exactly is behind this phenomenon? Is it a paranormal ability, a psychological quirk, or simply a coincidence? In this article, we'll delve into the intriguing world of the sense of being stared at, uncovering scientific explanations, cultural interpretations, and practical insights that might just change how you perceive this common yet mysterious experience.

The Psychology Behind the Sense of Being Stared At

When you get that eerie feeling that eyes are on you, your brain is actually engaging in a complex process of perception and prediction. Psychologists and neuroscientists have long studied this phenomenon to understand how humans interpret subtle social cues.

How Our Brains Detect Gaze

Humans are wired to be highly sensitive to eye contact and gaze direction. This sensitivity is evolutionary; detecting when someone is looking at us could mean the difference between safety and danger. Our brains have specialized areas, like the superior temporal sulcus, that process eye gaze and facial expressions within milliseconds. This rapid processing allows us to quickly infer others' intentions and emotions.

Sometimes, this system is so finely tuned that it picks up on indirect signals, like peripheral vision or subtle changes in light and shadow, which might subconsciously register as "being watched." Even if you don't consciously notice someone's eyes, your brain might be processing tiny visual or auditory cues that trigger the sense of being stared at.

The Role of Attention and Expectation

Another factor influencing this sensation is our own state of mind. If you are already feeling self-conscious or anxious, you might be more likely to interpret ambiguous stimuli—like a glance from across the room—as a direct stare. This is closely tied to the psychological concept of hypervigilance, where your attention is heightened to detect potential threats.

Interestingly, studies have shown that people often guess when they are being looked at slightly better than chance, suggesting that there might be some subconscious awareness at play. However, this ability is far from perfect and can be influenced by context, mood, and personality traits.

Cultural and Paranormal Perspectives on Being Stared At

The sense of being stared at has captured human imagination for centuries, with many cultures attributing mystical or supernatural explanations to the experience.

Folklore and Superstition

In various traditions, feeling watched is sometimes seen as a warning or a sign of unseen forces. For example, some cultures believe in the “evil eye,” a malevolent gaze that can cause harm or misfortune. The belief that being stared at can influence events or health has persisted through history, often linked to magical thinking or spiritual beliefs.

Similarly, many ghost stories and paranormal accounts involve people sensing an unseen presence watching them. This has led some to speculate that the sense of being stared at might be a form of psychic phenomenon or extrasensory perception (ESP).

Scientific Skepticism vs. Paranormal Claims

While paranormal interpretations are popular in media and folklore, scientific consensus remains cautious. The majority of researchers argue that the sense of being stared at can be explained by natural cognitive processes rather than supernatural forces. Experiments designed to test this ability under controlled conditions often yield mixed results, emphasizing the role of chance and psychological factors.

That said, the mystery remains compelling, and many people continue to share personal stories of uncanny experiences that defy easy explanation. Whether you lean toward science or the supernatural, the sense of being stared at remains an intriguing human experience that bridges both worlds.

Practical Tips for Understanding and Managing the Feeling

Whether you find the sense of being stared at unsettling or simply curious, there are ways to better understand and cope with this sensation.

Become More Mindful of Your Environment

Since subtle visual and auditory cues often trigger the feeling, paying attention to your surroundings can help demystify it. Notice if there are reflective surfaces, shadows, or background noises that might be contributing to the sensation. Improving situational awareness can reduce anxiety and

sharpen your perception of actual gaze versus imagined stare.

Manage Social Anxiety

If the sense of being stared at frequently causes discomfort, it might be linked to social anxiety or self-consciousness. Techniques such as deep breathing, grounding exercises, or cognitive-behavioral strategies can help regulate your emotional response and reduce hypervigilance.

Practice Eye Contact and Social Interaction

Engaging more confidently in social situations can also diminish the mysteriousness of this experience. By practicing eye contact and becoming comfortable with being looked at, you train your brain to interpret gaze cues more accurately and reduce misinterpretations.

Scientific Studies and Experiments on the Phenomenon

Researchers have conducted various studies to investigate the sense of being stared at, often using controlled laboratory settings to test participants' ability to detect gaze without direct visual input.

The Classic Gaze Detection Experiments

One famous approach involves having participants guess whether someone is looking at them from behind a screen or from a hidden vantage point. While results tend to hover around chance levels, some studies report slightly above-average accuracy, suggesting that humans might possess a subtle, subconscious sensitivity to gaze.

Neurological Insights

Brain imaging techniques such as functional MRI (fMRI) have shown that certain areas of the brain light up when people think they are being watched, even if they are not. This indicates that the sensation involves both perceptual and emotional processing centers, blending sensory input with personal feelings like vulnerability or alertness.

Why Does the Sense of Being Stared At Matter?

Beyond curiosity, understanding this phenomenon has broader implications for social communication, mental health, and even technology.

Enhancing Social Awareness

Recognizing how we detect and interpret gaze can improve empathy and interpersonal connection. Since eye contact plays a crucial role in communication, refining our awareness can help navigate social situations more smoothly.

Applications in Virtual Reality and AI

In emerging fields like virtual reality and artificial intelligence, simulating realistic eye gaze is essential for creating immersive and believable experiences. Understanding the human sensitivity to being stared at guides developers in crafting avatars and robots that interact naturally with people.

Supporting Mental Health

For individuals with social anxiety or paranoia, the sense of being stared at can be distressing. Better knowledge of this sensation can inform therapeutic approaches, helping people manage their perceptions and reduce unnecessary fear.

Everyday encounters with the sense of being stared at remind us of the complex interplay between perception, emotion, and social connection. Whether you chalk it up to brain wiring, a paranormal whisper, or a simple trick of the senses, it remains one of those subtle experiences that enrich the tapestry of human awareness. So next time you get that prickling feeling, take a moment to pause, observe, and appreciate the fascinating workings of your mind.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the 'sense of being stared at' phenomenon?

The 'sense of being stared at' refers to the feeling or intuition that someone is looking directly at you, even when you cannot see them. It is a common human experience, often described as a type of sixth sense.

Is there scientific evidence supporting the sense of being stared at?

Scientific studies on the sense of being stared at have yielded mixed results. Some experiments suggest people can detect staring at rates slightly above chance, while others find no significant evidence, indicating the phenomenon may be influenced by psychological factors.

What psychological explanations exist for the sense of being

stared at?

Psychologists suggest that the sense of being stared at may result from heightened awareness, pattern recognition, or confirmation bias, where people remember instances when their intuition was correct and forget when it was not.

Can the sense of being stared at be linked to evolutionary advantages?

Some theories propose that detecting when others are staring could have offered evolutionary benefits by alerting individuals to potential threats or social attention, thereby improving survival and social interactions.

Are certain people more likely to experience the sense of being stared at?

Research indicates that some individuals may be more sensitive or receptive to subtle cues, such as eye contact or peripheral vision, making them more likely to experience the sense of being stared at.

How does the sense of being stared at relate to paranormal beliefs?

The sensation is often cited in paranormal contexts as evidence of extrasensory perception (ESP) or telepathy, although mainstream science attributes it to psychological or sensory processing rather than supernatural causes.

Can technology or virtual environments influence the sense of being stared at?

In virtual reality or digital interactions, users may experience a similar sensation due to avatar gaze or environmental cues, demonstrating how social and sensory cues can trigger this phenomenon even in artificial settings.

How can one test or study the sense of being stared at experimentally?

Experiments typically involve participants guessing when someone is looking at them from behind or through a one-way mirror, measuring accuracy against chance to assess if the sense of being stared at exceeds random guessing.

Additional Resources

The Intriguing Phenomenon of the Sense of Being Stared At

sense of being stared at is a curious and widely reported human experience that has fascinated psychologists, neuroscientists, and parapsychologists alike. Often described as an uncanny feeling

that someone's gaze is upon you even when no one is visibly looking, this sensation transcends cultures and historical periods, prompting questions about its origins, validity, and underlying mechanisms. While anecdotal evidence abounds, scientific inquiry into the sense of being stared at reveals a complex interplay between perceptual psychology, evolutionary biology, and social cognition.

Understanding the Sense of Being Stared At

The sense of being stared at is frequently characterized by an intuitive awareness or sudden alertness that one is under someone's gaze without direct visual confirmation. This phenomenon is sometimes colloquially referred to as "the gaze detection effect" or "eye contact intuition." It is important to differentiate this experience from paranoia or hallucinations, as it is often fleeting, context-dependent, and generally regarded as benign.

Research into this phenomenon typically explores whether humans possess a subconscious ability to detect when they are being observed. Experimental studies have sought to validate this by testing participants' ability to discern when another person is looking at them from behind or at a distance, often under controlled conditions.

Scientific Investigations and Experimental Evidence

One landmark study published in the journal *Perception* in 2009 investigated whether individuals could detect being stared at more accurately than chance. In the study, participants were seated opposite an experimenter who either looked directly at them or away. Results indicated a slight but statistically significant above-chance ability to sense direct gaze. However, replication attempts have yielded mixed results, suggesting that while there may be a subtle perceptual sensitivity, it is not infallible.

Neuroscientific research sheds light on specialized brain regions that process eye gaze cues. The superior temporal sulcus (STS), for example, is known to be involved in detecting gaze direction and interpreting social signals. This neural circuitry likely evolved to facilitate social interaction and threat detection, underscoring why humans might have heightened sensitivity to being watched.

Psychological and Evolutionary Perspectives

From an evolutionary standpoint, the ability to sense when one is being watched would confer significant survival advantages. Being alert to potential threats, such as predators or hostile conspecifics, would enhance an individual's chances of avoiding harm. This has led some scientists to hypothesize that the sense of being stared at is an adaptive trait, embedded in the human sensory and cognitive systems.

Psychologically, the phenomenon may also be linked to heightened self-awareness and social anxiety. Individuals who are socially attuned or prone to rumination may report stronger sensations of being observed. Furthermore, natural human tendencies to scan environments for social cues and monitor others' attention contribute to this experience.

Mechanisms Behind the Phenomenon

Visual and Non-Visual Cues

One plausible explanation for the sense of being stared at involves subtle visual or auditory cues that humans unconsciously pick up on. These may include peripheral vision detecting slight movements, changes in lighting, or sounds such as breathing or footsteps that indicate someone's presence. Even when the observer is not directly visible, these signals can prime the brain to anticipate observation.

Subconscious Processing of Eye Gaze

Eye gaze is a powerful nonverbal communication tool. The human brain processes gaze direction extremely rapidly and often outside conscious awareness. This rapid processing can trigger instinctual responses, such as alertness or discomfort, when someone is looking in one's direction. The subliminal nature of this processing might explain why people sometimes report feeling stared at without overt evidence.

Role of Attention and Expectation

Cognitive factors like attention and expectation also play a major role. If an individual is already expecting to be watched, they may be more sensitive to environmental cues that confirm this belief. Conversely, in situations of heightened vigilance, such as unfamiliar or threatening environments, the sense of being stared at may be amplified.

Comparisons With Related Phenomena

The sense of being stared at shares similarities with other perceptual experiences that involve heightened awareness or intuition. For example:

- **Peripheral Vision Awareness:** Humans can detect motion or presence in their peripheral vision even without direct focus, which can contribute to sensing another's gaze.
- **Social Intuition:** The ability to "read" social cues, including body language and facial expressions, may enhance sensitivity to being observed.
- **Déjà Vu and Intuition:** Like other subtle cognitive phenomena, the sensation may be linked to subconscious processing that surfaces as a conscious feeling.

However, the sense of being stared at differs in that it specifically pertains to gaze detection, a

fundamental aspect of human social interaction.

Implications and Applications

Understanding this phenomenon has practical implications in diverse fields ranging from security to psychological therapy. For instance, in surveillance and security settings, recognizing the natural human sensitivity to being watched can inform how cameras or guards are positioned to maximize deterrence.

In clinical psychology, awareness of the sense of being stared at may aid in diagnosing or treating social anxiety disorders. Some individuals experience exaggerated sensations of being watched, leading to distress or avoidance behaviors. Therapeutic interventions can incorporate strategies to modulate attention and reduce hypervigilance.

Additionally, the phenomenon has inspired technological innovations. Eye-tracking technology and virtual reality systems are designed to simulate or monitor gaze interactions, enhancing user experience and social presence in digital environments.

Pros and Cons of the Sensory Sensitivity

- **Pros:**

- Enhances social awareness and communication.
- Supports threat detection and personal safety.
- Facilitates nonverbal bonding and trust.

- **Cons:**

- May contribute to anxiety or paranoia in sensitive individuals.
- Can lead to false alarms or misinterpretations.
- Potentially exploited in manipulative social situations.

Controversies and Skepticism

Despite intriguing findings, the sense of being stared at remains controversial within the scientific community. Skeptics argue that confirmation bias, coincidence, and selective memory explain most anecdotal reports. The difficulty in replicating positive experimental outcomes underscores the challenges in isolating genuine perceptual abilities from psychological artifacts.

Moreover, paranormal interpretations that attribute the phenomenon to extrasensory perception lack empirical support. Most mainstream research favors explanations grounded in cognitive and sensory processing.

The Cultural Dimension

Cultural attitudes toward the sense of being stared at vary. In some societies, being watched is considered a spiritual or mystical experience, often linked to beliefs about the soul or psychic abilities. In others, it is interpreted through a psychological lens emphasizing social dynamics.

Folklore and literature frequently depict the discomfort or power associated with the gaze, reflecting the deep-rooted significance of eye contact in human culture. Such narratives reinforce the universal relevance of the phenomenon, even as scientific explanations evolve.

The sense of being stared at remains a captivating subject that bridges science, psychology, and human experience. Its study continues to illuminate the intricate ways humans perceive and respond to social signals, revealing the nuanced interplay between mind, body, and environment.

[Sense Of Being Stared At](#)

sense of being stared at: The Sense of Being Stared At Rupert Sheldrake, 2013-06-22

Explores Rupert Sheldrake's more than 25 years of research into telepathy, staring and intention, precognition, and animal premonitions • Shows that unexplained human abilities--such as the sense of being stared at and phone telepathy--are not paranormal but normal, part of our biological nature • Draws on more than 5,000 case histories, 4,000 questionnaire responses, and the results of experiments carried out with more than 20,000 people • Reveals that our minds and intentions extend beyond our brains into the world around us and even into the future Nearly everyone has experienced the feeling of being watched or had their stare result in a glance in their direction. The phenomenon has been cited throughout history in nearly every culture, along with other commonplace "paranormal" occurrences such as premonitions and telepathy. In this newly updated edition, Sheldrake shares his more than 25 years of research into telepathy, the power of staring, remote viewing, precognition, and animal premonitions. Drawing on more than 5,000 case histories, 4,000 questionnaire responses, and the results of experiments on staring, thought transference, phone telepathy, and other phenomena carried out with more than 20,000 people as well as reports and data from dozens of independent research teams, Sheldrake shows that these unexplained human abilities--such as the sense of being stared at--are not paranormal but normal, part of our biological nature. He reveals that telepathy depends on social bonds and traces its evolution from the connections between members of animal groups such as flocks, schools, and packs. Sheldrake

shows that our minds and intentions extend beyond our brains into our surroundings with invisible connections that link us to each other, to the world around us, and even to the future.

sense of being stared at: *Randi's Prize* Robert McLuhan, 2010 James 'The Amazing' Randi is a stage magician who says he has a million dollars for anyone who can convince him they have psychic powers. No one has even come close to winning, proof, say sceptical scientists, that there is no such thing as 'the paranormal'. But are they right? In this illuminating and often provocative analysis, Robert McLuhan examines the influence of Randi and other debunking sceptics in shaping scientific opinion about such things as telepathy, psychics, ghosts and near-death experiences. He points out that scientific researchers who investigate these things at first hand overwhelmingly consider them to be genuinely anomalous. But this has shocking implications, for science, for society and for even perhaps for ourselves as individuals. Hence the sceptics' insistence that they should rather be attributed to fraud, imagination and wishful thinking. However, this extraordinary and little understood aspect of consciousness has much to tell us about the human situation, McLuhan suggests. And at a time when militants are polarising the debate about religion, its mystical, spiritual element offers an optimistic and enlightened way forward. Randi's Prize is aimed at anyone interested in spirituality or those curious to know the truth about paranormal claims. It's an intelligent and readable analysis of scientific research into the paranormal which, uniquely, also closely examines the arguments of well-known sceptics.

sense of being stared at: *Dark Cognition* David Vernon, 2020-10-01 *Winner of the Parapsychological Association Book Award 2021* Outlining the scientific evidence behind psi research, *Dark Cognition* expertly reveals that such anomalous phenomena clearly exist, highlighting that the prevailing view of consciousness, purely as a phenomenon of the brain, fails to account for the empirical findings. David Vernon provides essential coverage of information and evidence for a variety of anomalous psi phenomena, calling for a paradigm shift in how we view consciousness: from seeing it as something solely reliant on the brain to something that is enigmatic, fundamental and all pervasive. The book examines the nature of psi research showing that, despite claims to the contrary, it is clearly a scientific endeavour. It explores evidence from telepathy and scopaesthesia, clairvoyance and remote viewing, precognition, psychokinesis, fields of consciousness, energy healing, out of body experiences, near-death experiences and post death phenomena, showing that not only do these phenomena exist, but that they have significant implications for our understanding of consciousness. Featuring discussion on scientific research methods, reflections on the fields of dark cognition and end-of-chapter questions that encourage critical thinking, this book is an essential text for those interested in parapsychology, consciousness and cognitive psychology.

sense of being stared at: *First Sight* James C. Carpenter, 2012-03-23 Often seen as supernatural, unpredictable, illusory and possibly dangerous, ESP, telepathy, clairvoyance and other parapsychological activities are actually happening all the time and help us make sense of everyday experiences. *First Sight* provides a new way of understanding such experiences and describes a way of thinking about the unconscious mind that makes it clear that these abilities are not rare and anomalous, but instead are used by all of us all the time, unconsciously and efficiently. Drawing upon a broad array of studies in contemporary psychology, the author integrates a new model for understanding these unusual abilities with the best research in psychology on problems as diverse as memory, perception, personality, creativity and fear. In doing so, he illustrates how the field of parapsychology, which, historically, has been riddled with confusion, skepticism and false claims, can move from the edges of science to its center, where it will offer fascinating new knowledge about unmapped aspects of our nature. The author demonstrates that the new model accounts for accumulated findings very well, and explains previous mysteries, resolves apparent contradictions, and offers clear directions for further study. *First Sight* also ventures beyond the laboratory to explain such things as why apparent paranormal experiences are so rare, why they need not be feared, and how they can be more intentionally accessed. Further study of this theory is likely to lead to a "technology" of parapsychological processes while drastically revising our conception of

the science of the mind toward a new science more humane and more replete with possibility than we have imagined in the past.

sense of being stared at: The Universe--solved! Jim Elvidge, 2007

sense of being stared at: *Science and the Self* Ian James Kidd, Liz McKinnell, 2015-08-27 Mary Midgley is one of the most important moral philosophers working today. Over the last thirty years, her writings have informed debates concerning animals, the environment and evolutionary theory. The invited essays in this volume offer critical reflections upon Midgley's work and further developments of her ideas. The contributors include many of the leading commentators on her work, including distinguished figures from the disciplines of philosophy, biology, and ethology. The range of topics includes the moral status of animals, the concept of wickedness, science and mythology, Midgley's relationship to modern moral philosophy, and her relationship with Iris Murdoch. It also includes the first full bibliography of Midgley's writings. The volume is the first major study of its kind and brings together contributions from the many disciplines which Midgley's work has influenced. It provides a clear account of the themes and significance of her work and its implications for ongoing debates about our understanding of our place within the world.

sense of being stared at: Supersense Bruce Hood, 2009-06-01 Why is it that Tony Blair always wore the same pair of shoes when answering Prime Minister's Questions? That John McEnroe notoriously refused to step on the white lines of a tennis court between points? And that President-elect Barack Obama played a game of basketball the morning of his victory in the Iowa primary, and continued the tradition the day of every following primary? Superstitious habits are common. Do you ever cross your fingers, knock on wood, avoid walking under ladders, or step around black cats? Sentimental value often supersedes material worth. If someone offered to replace your childhood teddy bear or wedding ring with a brand new, exact replica, would you do it? How about £20 for trying on a jumper owned by Fred West? Where do such feelings come from and why do most of us have them? Humans are born with brains designed to make sense of the world and that need for an explanation can lead to beliefs that go beyond reason. To be true they would have to be supernatural. With scientific education we learn that such beliefs are irrational but at an intuitive level they can be resistant to reason or lie dormant in otherwise sensible adults. It now seems unlikely that any effort to get rid of supernatural beliefs or superstitious behaviours will be completely successful. This is not all bad news - such beliefs are a useful glue that binds us together as a society. Combining brilliant insight with witty example Hood weaves a page-turning account of our 'supersense' that navigates a path through brain science, child development, popular culture, mental illness and the paranormal. After reading SuperSense, you will realize why you are not as reasonable as you might like to think - and why that might be no bad thing.

sense of being stared at: *One Mind* Larry Dossey, MD, 2014-10-07 In *One Mind*, New York Times best-selling author Larry Dossey, M.D., proposes an inspiring view of consciousness that may reshape our destiny. Dossey's premise is that all individual minds are part of an infinite, collective dimension of consciousness he calls the One Mind. This state—which we can all access—explains phenomena as diverse as epiphanies, creative breakthroughs, premonitions of danger or disaster, near-death experiences, communication with other species and with the dead, reincarnation, the movement of herds, flocks, and schools, and remote healing. Dossey presents his theory in easily digestible, bite-sized vignettes. Through engaging stories, fascinating research, and brilliant insights from great thinkers throughout history, readers will explore the outer reaches of human consciousness, discover a new way to interpret the great mysteries of our experience, and learn how to develop the empathy necessary to engender more love, peace, and collective awareness. The result is a rich new understanding of what it means to be human and a renewed hope that we can successfully confront the challenges we face at this crossroads in human history. Even before publication *One Mind* drew praise from the finest minds of our time. It has been heralded as landmark, a brilliant synthesis, a magnum opus, a feast of ideas, compelling, gripping, and a major shift in our understanding of consciousness.

sense of being stared at: *Parapsychology* Etzel Cardeña, John Palmer, David

Marcusson-Clavertz, 2015-07-25 Many people have experienced such unusual phenomena as dreams that later seem to correspond with unforeseeable events, thinking of a long-lost friend just before he or she unexpectedly calls, or the ability to feel the presence of deceased loved ones. What many do not realize is that these types of experiences have been researched for more than a century by eminent scientists, including Nobel laureates. Most of these researchers have concluded that some of these phenomena do occur, although we are far from explaining them to everyone's satisfaction. This book is the first in almost 40 years to provide a comprehensive scientific overview of research in the field of parapsychology, explaining what we know and don't know about so-called psi phenomena, such as telepathy, precognition or psychokinesis. Contributors evaluate the evidence for these phenomena, accounting for factors such as selective memory, wish fulfillment and incorrect methods or analyses, in some cases offering psychological, physical and biological theories. Instructors considering this book for use in a course may request an examination copy here.

sense of being stared at: *The Psi Connection: A Personal Voyage of Discovery* David L. Brown, 2024-06-01 A few years ago the author of *The Psi Connection* had a disturbing experience while experimenting with self-hypnosis. He saw a vision of a past life in which it appeared he had lived as a farmer in the 1800s. He tried twice more and each time had a similar vision that seemed to be from the same time and place. Frightened by the implications, he strongly rejected the possibility that these experiences were real. As a journalist with a scientific background he could not accept the reality of this bizarre phenomenon and explained it to himself as having come from his unconscious mind, similar to dreams. But he still had doubts. Finally, when he began to talk about the subject he learned that others also had experienced visions of past lives. Launched on a voyage of discovery, he began to realize that many events in his life could not be explained by science or common sense, but only through the manifestation of paranormal powers. He continued to interview others who shared their experiences in such things as telepathy, psychokinesis, distance viewing, precognition, near death experiences and other uncanny events. He began to research the subject and learned that there is a large body of evidence to support the reality of paranormal powers. And, strikingly, he began to see other manifestations of his own mental powers. He became aware of the possibility that there are quantum connections between human minds and the universe itself. This is his story.

sense of being stared at: *The Believing Brain* Michael Shermer, 2011-05-24 "A wonderfully lucid, accessible, and wide-ranging account of the boundary between justified and unjustified belief." —Sam Harris, New York Times-bestselling author of *The Moral Landscape* and *The End of Faith* In this work synthesizing thirty years of research, psychologist, historian of science, and the world's best-known skeptic Michael Shermer upends the traditional thinking about how humans form beliefs about the world. Simply put, beliefs come first and explanations for beliefs follow. The brain, Shermer argues, is a belief engine. From sensory data flowing in through the senses, the brain naturally begins to look for and find patterns, and then infuses those patterns with meaning. Our brains connect the dots of our world into meaningful patterns that explain why things happen, and these patterns become beliefs. Once beliefs are formed the brain begins to look for and find confirmatory evidence in support of those beliefs, which accelerates the process of reinforcing them, and round and round the process goes in a positive-feedback loop of belief confirmation. Shermer outlines the numerous cognitive tools our brains engage to reinforce our beliefs as truths. Interlaced with his theory of belief, Shermer provides countless real-world examples of how this process operates, from politics, economics, and religion to conspiracy theories, the supernatural, and the paranormal. Ultimately, he demonstrates why science is the best tool ever devised to determine whether or not a belief matches reality. "A must read for everyone who wonders why religious and political beliefs are so rigid and polarized—or why the other side is always wrong, but somehow doesn't see it." —Dr. Leonard Mlodinow, physicist and author of *The Drunkard's Walk* and *The Grand Design* (with Stephen Hawking)

sense of being stared at: *Real Magic* Dean Radin PhD, 2018-04-10 The chief scientist at the Institute of Noetic Sciences (IONS) turns a critical eye toward such practices as telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition and psychokinesis. Are such powers really possible? Science says yes.

According to noted scientist and bestselling author of *The Conscious Universe*, Dean Radin, magic is a natural aspect of reality, and each of us can tap into this power with diligent practice. But wait, aren't things like ESP and telepathy just wishful thinking and flights of the imagination? Not according to the author, who worked on the US government's top secret psychic espionage program known as Stargate. Radin has spent the last forty years conducting controlled experiments that demonstrate that thoughts are things, that we can sense others' emotions and intentions from a distance, that intuition is more powerful than we thought, and that we can tap into the power of intention (think *The Secret*, only on a more realistic and scientific level). These dormant powers can help us to lead more interesting and fulfilling lives. Beginning with a brief history of magic over the centuries (what was called magic two thousand years ago is turning out to be scientific fact today), a review of the scientific evidence for magic, a series of simple but effective magical techniques (the key is mental focus, something elite athletes know a lot about), Radin then offers a vision of a scientifically-informed magic and explains why magic will play a key role in frontiers of science.

sense of being stared at: *The Urban Ethnography Reader* Mitchell Duneier, Philip Kasinitz, Alexandra Murphy, 2014-01-16 The *Urban Ethnography Reader* assembles the very best of American ethnographic writing, from classic works to contemporary research, and aims to present ethnography as social science, social history, and literature, rather than purely as a methodology. The selections capture the diversity, the historical development, and the continuing importance of the ethnographic approach to understanding American communities.

sense of being stared at: *Great Myths of the Brain* Christian Jarrett, 2014-09-02 *Great Myths of the Brain* introduces readers to the field of neuroscience by examining popular myths about the human brain. Explores commonly-held myths of the brain through the lens of scientific research, backing up claims with studies and other evidence from the literature Looks at enduring myths such as "Do we only use 10% of our brain?", "Pregnant women lose their mind", "Right-brained people are more creative" and many more. Delves into myths relating to specific brain disorders, including epilepsy, autism, dementia, and others Written engagingly and accessibly for students and lay readers alike, providing a unique introduction to the study of the brain Teaches readers how to spot neuro hype and neuro-nonsense claims in the media

sense of being stared at: *Advances in Parapsychological Research 10* Stanley Krippner, Adam J. Rock, Harris L. Friedman, 2021-03-12 This book consists of a collection of essays informing readers as to the contemporary status of selected cutting-edge issues in parapsychology (or psi research). Each chapter comprehensively reviews a controversial topic from a critical stance, and updates its status based on the latest theoretical and empirical considerations. Chapter authors are authoritative experts in their fields who have captured the complexity and importance of their topics. This is a resource for both the serious scholar and interested follower of psi research, containing in-depth analyses and discussions of topics that cannot be found elsewhere. Topics include cross-examinations of psychical investigations; a meta-analysis of anomalous information collected by mediums; an examination of the relationships between parapsychology, quantum theory and neuroscience; and a study of psychics' involvement in police investigations.

sense of being stared at: *Seven Experiments That Could Change the World* Rupert Sheldrake, 2002-07-01 Examines the realities of unexplained natural phenomenon and provides explanations that push the boundaries of science. • Looks at animal telepathy and the ability of pigeons to home. • Proves the point that big questions don't need big science. • Noted scientist Rupert Sheldrake is a former research fellow of the Royal Society. • New Edition with an Update on Results. How does your pet know when you are coming home? How do pigeons home? Can people really feel a phantom amputated arm? These questions and more form the basis of Sheldrake's look at the world of contemporary science as he puts some of the most cherished assumptions of established science to the test. What Sheldrake discovers is that certain scientific beliefs are so widely taken for granted that they are no longer regarded as theories but are seen as scientific common sense. In the true spirit of science, Sheldrake examines seven of these beliefs. Refusing to let intellectual dogmatism influence his search for the truth, Sheldrake presents simple experiments

that allow the curious and the skeptical to join in his journey of discovery. His experiments look at how scientific research is often biased against unexpected patterns that emerge and how a researcher's expectations can influence the results. He also examines the taboo of taking pets seriously and explores the question of human extrasensory perception. Perhaps most important, he questions the notion that science must be expensive in order to achieve important results, showing that inexpensive methods can indeed shake the very foundations of science as we know it. In this compelling and intelligent book, Sheldrake offers no preconceived wisdom or easy answers—just an open invitation to explore the unknown, create new science, and perhaps, even change the world.

sense of being stared at: A Thinking Person's Guide to Love H.R.H. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad, 2023-07-01 In this book, over 40 years in the making, the author surveys and sums up the world's understanding of love in all its aspects over the last 3000 years in order to show the stages of love and of falling in love and why, how, when and where they occur...

sense of being stared at: Advanced Vocabulary in Context with Key Donald Watson, 2010-03-25 This book enables advanced level students to practise vocabulary in natural contexts. It is suitable for use in the classroom, for homework, or for self-study. The book develops an awareness of collocation, and prepares for gap-filling sections in examinations such as Cambridge CAE and CPE, as well as providing a rich source of stimulating reading material. Key features include: 24 authentic texts from quality newspapers and magazines, on stimulating contemporary topics; texts gapped for completion with 40-50 words listed separately and preliminary exercises which review pages after each group of six units. The With Key version contains an answer key.

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