
From: Deepak Chopra <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, July 17, 2016 12:26 PM
To: Jeff Epstein
Subject: Fw: My chapter on you

In case you are interested my feedback to Michael Shermer who was kind enough to share his chapter on me in his next book

xoxo

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From: Deepak Chopra
Sent: Friday, July 15, 2016 9:01 AM
To: Michael Shermer
Subject: Re: My chapter on you

Dear Michael,

Your chapter reads well and is certainly more than fair about me, given the general unfairness I've experienced from militant atheists and hard-boiled skeptics. Thanks for being so open-minded.

My only comments have to do with making a difficult subject more accessible to your readers.

1. I'd slow down at the passage about "redness" and spell out that the brain is dark but we see light' the brain is silent, but we hear' the brain contains no pictures, but we see full-blown three-dimensional images. Then open up how a neuron works, firing the same chemical signals as any other cell with small modifications. So how does a brain cell, born of the same strand of DNA as a stomach or liver cell think? It seems to me that a brain cell cannot think.

2. On a basic chemical level, the sugar in a sugar cube or the glucose in the bloodstream has no special properties; the molecules do not participate in mental activity until they enter the brain. You might want to point out this mystery and also note that material monists must show the exact point when molecules exhibit mind-like behavior.

3. Freeman Dyson, among other physicists, cites the mind-like behavior of subatomic particles as they "choose" and "decide" what state in the wave-particle duality to exist in. Here's a nice quote from Dyson:
"It would not be surprising that the origin and destiny of the energy in the universe cannot be completely understood in isolation from the phenomena of life and consciousness--It is conceivable---that life may have a larger role to play than we have imagined."

"Life may have succeeded against all odds in molding a universe to its purposes. And the design of the inanimate universe may not be as detached from the potentialities of life and intelligence as scientists of the 20th century have tended to suppose"

4. You say that choosing between materialist monism and consciousness monism isn't the point, but it is. Consciousness monism or "mind first" must show how mind turns into matter. Materialistic monism or "matter first" must do the opposite, demonstrating how matter can produce mind. Even though the "matter first" crowd are far ahead in scientific acceptance, in fact we see mind produce matter every time a synaptic gap is crossed by neurotransmitters or hormones are triggered by experience. A person who is phobic sees a spider and reacts violently at the level of stress hormones, elevated heart rate, elevated blood pressure, etc. This physical state is entirely produced by a mental interpretation that a harmless insect is cause for panic.

5. I'm not sure about how you introduce monism. There are famous Western monists among idealistic philosophers who are a) not materialists and b) not "Eastern". Since "monism" as a philosophical term is associated with Leibniz, you'll see that it refers to an indivisible "substance," which may seem materialistic, until you discover that one order of this substance is the soul.

"The basic order is three-tiered: (1) entelechies or created monads (§48), (2) souls or entelechies with perception and memory (§19), and (3) spirits or rational souls (§82)."

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monadology#The_metaphysics_of_The_Monadology)

Other Western monists who are definitely not materialistic include Spinoza, Hegel, Gerdano Bruno, and Schopenhauer.
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monism#Monistic_philosophers)

In fact, if you can find a materialistic m=nist in the West who ranks with these philosophers, please mention him by =ame while acknowledging the main idealistic tradition.

Thanks for letting me review this chapter-=it was very generous.

Love,
Deepak

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From: Michael Shermer [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 14, 2016 9:43:37 AM
To: Deepak Chopra
Subject: Re: My chapter on you

No rush at all. My manuscript is not due for many months.

Michael

Michael Shermer
Skeptic Magazine
Scientific American
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Altadena, CA 91001

[REDACTED]

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On Jul 14, 2016, at 6:39 AM, Deepak Chopra <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Thanks Michael;

I'm teaching a course but will address it ASAP

Do you have a deadline ?

Love and thanks;

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From: Michael Shermer <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Thursday, July 14, 2016 9:36:07 AM

To: Deepak Chopra

Subject: My chapter on you

Hi Deepak,

For my next book, Heavens on Earth, I have expanded that Scientific America= column into a full-length chapter. Could you do me a big favor and read it= and let me know if I have fairly represented your position and that of the Eastern Wisdom Traditions? Please feel free to turn on the track changes and change the wording of how you would say something, if you prefer. I used many sources: your emails, articles, blogs, talks, debates, books, etc. Or even my own words if I have misdescribed what you believe or that of the Eastern Wisdom Traditions.