

Doppleganger

“Everyone has a mirror image somewhere in the world”

- French Mathematician Marseille Rousseau, 1988 -

Other than the fact that French mathematician Marseille Rousseau doesn't appear to exist, it is an interesting concept that significantly predates 1988. You will find many references on the internet to Rousseau and his genetic mirror theory along with summaries of its supposed proof. However, all of it seems to be fabricated and may be related to the “Lost” TV show. No such person is known to exist nor does any book published in 1988 appear to contain anything remotely similar to a genetic mirror theory. Still the concept of Dopplegangers has been with us a very long time and there are many anecdotal references to their appearance.

Doppleganger (German for “double walker”) has commonly known to refer to a double of a person and generally has a bad connotation. It is said that if a person sees their own doppleganger that it is an omen of impending death. However, anecdotally, people have noted seeing their own dopplegangers without dying. So, one might consider the likelihood of a double existing without applying a deathly connection.

Of course there are a number of possible normal and paranormal explanations for dopplegangers. The normal explanations can still be interesting. The most likely is the mis-recognition of someone who really does bear a striking similarity to someone else. This sort of thing is pretty easy to see in regard to those who make a living by resembling and impersonating various celebrities and movie stars. There have also been quite a number of identical or fraternal twins who were separated at birth without the knowledge of one another.

Among the paranormal explanations there is the possibility of parallel dimensions, time travel, an out-of-body experience or ghostly/spiritual phenomena. Of course each of these would be exceptionally difficult to prove for a variety of reasons, but there are occasionally stories that would support some these options.

There are philosophies that say we have a number of “bodies” that exist on different planes and that these bodies have varying degrees of similarity and difference. Alternatively it is stated that there are aspects of ourselves which are to some degree imprisoned in this physical body. This idea goes at least as far back as the ancient Greeks. In Plato's dialogue “Phaedrus” (360 BC) he wrote, “we are imprisoned in the body, like an oyster in his shell.” He believed that our inner spirit body was a prisoner of our physical body and if released would be able to see things more clearly. He thought we would also then be able to commune with the dead.

It is also believed that such an astral body might be very similar to our physical body in appearance. Therefore, if our astral body were to separate from our physical body during an out of body experience people might actually see the astral body and mistake it for the physical person. This might explain cases where someone else sees the doppleganger.

A woman in her thirties reported that one evening as a young girl during a sleep-over with her

pre-teen friends she was interrupted by her young sister. The young sister appeared dressed in a man's oversized shirt with her hair freshly combed and said nothing. The girls shooed her out because they didn't want the younger girl crashing their party. Feeling guilty about this later the older sister went to the bedroom of the younger girl to tell her it would be alright to join them. However, the younger girl was sound asleep, obviously had been so for quite some time, in a regular nightgown, and with thoroughly mussed hair. When awakened the younger sister had no idea what was going on. Could her astral body have been crashing the party while she slept soundly?

If there are parallel dimensions with similar but not identical timelines and versions of ourselves, is it possible we occasionally get glimpses when these dimensions intersect temporarily? If so, might we get a rare glimpse of ourselves having a slightly different experience in the same place at the same time?

A young man in Montreal was walking toward his table at a restaurant when he noticed someone walking in the opposite direction. Immediately the stranger caught his attention as if he was someone familiar. The young man had the distinct impression he was looking at himself complete with the same face, very similar haircut, and nearly the same clothing. The young man's friends at the restaurant also noticed the similarity and were stunned. None of them approached the stranger but remained amazed by the encounter to this day. Did these people get a brief glimpse of a parallel universe? Which of us would be able to recognize our identical double if we saw him or her? Would we instead feel exactly the odd familiarity experienced by the young man?

Perhaps more than visualizations cross parallel universe boundaries. Many years ago someone brought me a hand written report because they had a question about it and it looked like something for which I would have been responsible. I looked at the document, agreed that it looked like it should be from me, noted that it seemed to be my handwriting, but was absolutely certain I did not write a word of it. I knew everyone who had worked on the project, knew none of them had handwriting that looked like mine, knew that the subject material was something with which I was familiar, and also knew I wasn't the author despite all appearances. Did my doppelganger from a parallel universe write a report that "leaked" into my universe through some unknown mechanism?

There may be some doppelgangers who are just ghostly imposters. In one such case the deceased mother of a young woman may have paid a visit to a baby sitter. In this case the woman and her deceased mother bore a striking resemblance to one another as can happen. One evening after the woman had left her children in the care of a baby sitter she returned early and told the sitter she could go home. The next morning the sitter received a rather irate call from the woman for having left the children alone. The sitter related how the woman had returned home and told her she could go home while the woman informed her that she had in fact done no such thing. Did the deceased grandmother relieve the baby sitter by pretending to be the younger woman so she could spend some time with the grand kids?

There is a school of thought that subscribes to the idea that everything in reality happens simultaneously and time is merely an illusion arising from our sequential perception of reality.

In this case the appearance of a doppelganger might be merely the breakdown in our perception of time, or some form of time travel. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, the 18th century German poet, spotted his doppelganger while riding on the road to Drusenheim. Riding toward him was his exact double, but wearing a gray suit trimmed in gold. Eight years later, von Goethe was again traveling on the same road, but in the opposite direction. He then realized he was wearing the very gray suit trimmed in gold that he had seen on his double eight years earlier. Somehow von Goethe had seen his future self or his future self had briefly traveled into the past without realizing it.

Whatever doppelgangers are, they can sure lead to confusion as illustrated by the following story posted by lshaffer of Canada at <http://www.yourghoststories.com/real-ghost-story.php?story=449>

“I was at a sleep over, doing what all teenagers do at sleep overs. I went home in the morning and my mother said to me ‘why did you sneak out last night?’. I told her that I didn't and I was at my friend's house where I said I was going to be. She then told me that she let me in the house that night and I went in my room and closed the door. My little brother even asked why I left that night after mom let me in. I told him that it wasn't me. He said ‘yes’ because he had seen me. This has bothered me ever since.”

Now if I could just get my doppelganger to write for me. Or maybe he just did.