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# The Berenstain Bears, Nelson Mandela, and how we may have slipped Into an alternate time-stream.

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## *The Berenstain Bears*

When reminiscing of ones childhood, especially when growing up in the 80's, memories of popular hit television shows like Sesame Street, The Smurfs, and Garfield come to mind. In a world without internet or iPhones, when kids weren't out kicking a ball or attending school, they were often found indoors with their Television sets on watching one of the many popularized children shows of the 80's. When I look back on those days, one of MY favorites both in book and TV form, were the Berenstain Bears. Or wait... was it the berenSTEIN Bears?

The "Berenstain" Bears first appeared in 1962 in the form of a childrens book written and illustrated by Stan and Jan Berenstain. The Big Honey Hunt tells a story of a family of grizzlies, primarily "Papa Bear" and "Small Bear" and the adventure they have while trying to gather wild honey from the forest. Despite the plea of Mama Bear to simply purchase the honey from the local market, the two stubbornly venture out to the woods to collect it themselves. In the end the task proves to be too dangerous and the duo give in and take a trip to the store.

After having great success with the novel, the Berenstain Bears soon turned into a series that spawned literally hundreds of books over several decades, and even a popular Saturday morning cartoon on CBS.

The "Berenstain" bears were a huge hit and became a staple of the lives of many children and families, and continue to live on to this day.

Yet, some say that there's something strange about the Berenstain Bears. Something that's come up for years, especially online, but never really explained. Something that doesn't make sense.

To many, the "Berenstain" bears were never "Berenstain", but BerenSTEIN. Yet, when you look at related merchandise dating all the way back to the beginning, everything says BerenSTAIN. While most would dismiss this as simply an error of memory, there are several who claim this isn't the case – that something else is at work. Something incredible.

According to author and paranormal researcher Fiona Broome, it all relates to the phenomenon of parallel realities. Her theory, which is outlined on her website [themandelaeffect.com](http://themandelaeffect.com), is that we exist in a world of parallel universes that each have their own histories and timelines. Occasionally, individuals from these universes "slide" into an alternate timestream creating a changed reality. One of those changed realities, as explained by Broome, is the death of Nelson Mandela.

Although most of us recall Mandela's passing in 2013, Broome and her followers suggest otherwise. In fact, she and the many posters

on her website claim that they have distinct memories of Mandela dying in prison in the 1980's. They even go as far as describing detailed accounts of media coverage, news reports, on-air broadcasts of his funeral, and more.

Sound crazy? To some, yes. To her many active followers and believers, not at all.

One user writes: "I, too, remember news report stating that Nelson Mandela died — and that was in the 1980s! I distinctly remember the television channel 5 news broadcast in Boston where the TV news broadcaster, Natalie Jacobson, stated that he died. It was the main story during the 6:00 p.m. news that day. Then I was stunned, startled and confused years later when I heard another news report stating that Nelson Mandela "just died." I actually had a sickening feeling when I heard the news report the second time because it was so unsettling to me. Because how can you remember something that is completely inconsistent with the facts that are presented at a later time?

"I was relieved when I heard that other people also remember a news report from many years earlier stating that he had died (in prison). Then I knew I wasn't losing my mind. But this phenomenon just fascinates me. I wish someone could explain how this "dual timeline" really works. My conclusion is that there must be parallel universes."

Another comments: "I also remember reading the newspaper and all the whoopola about Nelson Mandela dying on TV. I remember the banners at his funeral. I am an adult and take such history seriously. When he was released from prison I was flabbergasted. Art bell also bought this up on one of his shows and if he hadn't I still would have been thinking I was goofy. this happened folks."

Those are just two of the literally hundreds of responses, many claiming to have similar shared memories.

So that leads to the question, is any of this scientifically, or at least theoretically possible? Could Nelson Mandela actually have died in the 1980's? Could the Berenstain Bears, as also suggested by Broom's website, actually have been the Berenstain Bears?

After reading the many responses on themandelaeffect.com, I became intrigued by not only the concept of the theory, but the passion behind it. So I decided to do further research.

While theories exist which support the idea of parallel universes, particularly the Many-Worlds Interpretation, I remained unsure. As a journalist with little knowledge of quantum physics, I soon discovered that it would be wise to reach out to the professionals.

Andrew S. Friedman, a National Science Foundation Science Postdoctoral Fellow at Massachusetts institute of Technology (MIT) and Visiting Research Scientist at the MIT Center for Theoretical Physics, breaks down the Many-Worlds theory.

"In certain interpretations of quantum mechanics, such as the Many Worlds Interpretation of Hugh Everett and Bryce DeWitt, the equations of the theory are taken to mean that whenever a quantum event occurs, the universe (or the observer) splits and branches into two parallel timelines.

"In most views, these timelines no longer interact, which is why they could be considered parallel.

"Needless to say, your theory would have to describe alternative timelines which are not parallel, and somehow interact with one another in order to make any sense of the fantastical claims of the Mandela story."

He believes there's a more logical explanation.

"I think the basic reason people are attracted to these things is this. Humans want to feel connected to something larger than themselves. Something powerful and otherworldly that makes us feel special. Often, this motivates a belief in the supernatural." he writes.

"Personally, I think the examples you mentioned tell us more about human psychology, the fallibility of human memory, and the intense desire to believe in fantastical ideas.

"In my view, these things have nothing to do with parallel timelines as discussed in physics, and instead present evidence for the amazing range of ways humans can be fooled by themselves or others."

Fred Alan Wolf, an American theoretical physicist and National Book Award Winning author of Taking the Quantum Leap agrees.

"I doubt that this had anything to do with parallel universes. It would be stretch to attempt to put these recalls in terms of quantum physics.

"More than likely it has to do with how our brains work when attempting to retrieve memories. Often we simply garble time lines, placing events we learned later into a "feeling" or a recall that we had this memory occurring in the past.

"When people recall such events they are often embellished or made "larger" than they were when they were first put into memory, say be a reading about the event (Mandela's death, e.g.) this year.

"More interesting would be why we tend to do this time line garbling. I have speculated about this myself."

So maybe there is a more logical explanation for these memories.

While science probably doesn't support the concept of the Mandela Effect, and chances are that these discrepancies can be explained away as simple memory errors, it never hurts to entertain an idea – no matter how far fetched it may seem. After all, science is a continually evolving and changing process; one where things that were once seen as supernatural are now considered fact.

In the end, supporters of the Mandela Effect remain firm in their beliefs, and really, why shouldn't they? Who knows, maybe they're onto something.

Besides, as far as I remember it, it WAS the Berenstain Bears.