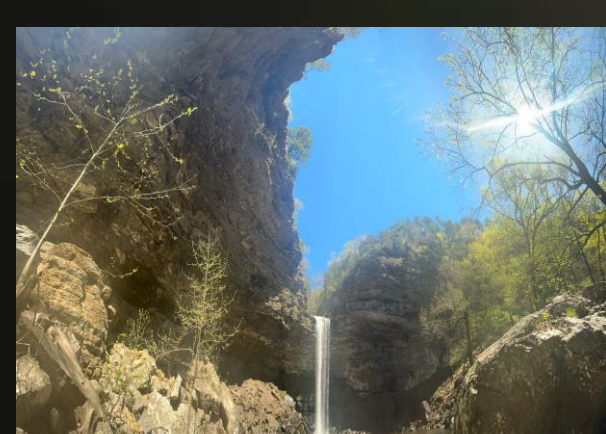


The solar eclipse as an analogy for dissociation

Ashley Paillet

Purpose

- The purpose of this argument is to illuminate the connection of community involvement, shared experiences, and novel events with the feeling of unrealness/disconnection from the world around you. In that vein, it is the hope that this will be a relatable analogy for battling your way out of dissociation.



Methods/Definitions

- The present argument was crafted introspectively to equate the qualitative unreal feeling of the solar eclipse analogously to the biological disconnect of dissociation.
- When the sun blinks out during a total solar eclipse, it's like stepping outside of time and space. You fall into a place where you can now see that you are part of the world, not disconnected from it. Conversely, yet related in a nonmaterial sense, to disassociate is to feel "disconnected from yourself and the world around you."
- In this argument, dissociation refers to the derealization subset, specifically. Derealization is feeling biologically "disconnected from the outside world".

Analogy

- The moments of totality, when the sun disappears "randomly" for everyone, feel like the moments of dissociation when it feels like the world is no longer part of you. However, this shared solar phenomenon is part of you, you are part of it, and everything is connected.



Conclusion

- Without the ability to endure the catalytic eclipse, stratospheric ballooning research trip, it wouldn't have been possible to come to this realization.
- Without the presence of the members of the research team, it would've been a different experience altogether.
- Student ballooning teams foster an accepting, innovative community that advances such awareness.

Discussion

- What was the overall impact on your life after the eclipse trip?
- Would you do something like this again even if you didn't know how it would turn out?