

Another mystery of our brains: 'Why are we not hallucinating all the time?'

It's a question they might have asked for different reasons in the '60s, but neuroscientists from Stanford University in the US are wondering why we aren't hallucinating all the time.

If we're wired anything like mice, they say, it should be quite easy to do.

Karl Deisseroth and colleagues found that they only needed to stimulate a surprisingly small number of nerve cells, or neurons, in the visual cortex of mice to induce an illusory image in their minds, leading them to behave in a particular way.

And that's worth knowing, they say, because it could help provide a better understanding of natural information processing in the brain, and of psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia.

...

"It's quite remarkable how few neurons you need to specifically stimulate in an animal to generate a perception," Deisseroth says.

...

"If just 20 or so can create a perception, then why are we not hallucinating all the time, due to spurious random activity? Our study shows that the mammalian cortex is somehow poised to be responsive to an amazingly low number of cells without causing spurious perceptions in response to noise."

Read full, original post: [Why don't we hallucinate more often?](#)