

106/04 - "The effect of pre-sensory emotional primes on ESP performance, subject mood, and the Mere Exposure Effect"

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Abstract: Two studies were carried out to test the general prediction from First Sight Theory that psi processes continuously contribute unconsciously to the formation of all experience and behavior. The expression of preferences was chosen to demonstrate these effects, as well as the effects of subliminal stimuli. Positively-toned pictures were exposed subliminally and used as ESP targets in order to influence subsequent preferences, as in a typical study of the Mere Exposure Effect. In both studies the mood of the percipient was manipulated and assessed, and several stable characteristics of personality and interest that were previously found to affect extrasensory and subliminal effects were measured. In the first study pre-exposed pictures were not preferred overall compared to ones not pre-exposed. Extrasensory influence was predicted successfully by several variables, particularly with participants in a positive mood. Several predictor variables were correlated with each other, so multiple regression was used to determine that Openness to Fantasy, Tolerance for Merger and Vulnerability (negative) were independently significant predictors. Subliminal influence was predicted by Need for Cognition and Unconscious Orientation. These relationships were tested again in the second study and the predictions of ESP influence were confirmed but the predictions of subliminal influence were not. Prediction of extrasensory effects was again strongest with persons in positive moods. It is concluded that extrasensory influences do contribute unconsciously to preference experiences in ways that are consistent with findings of previous research and the expectations of theory. A model is suggested in which experience is influenced contextually by both extrasensory and subliminal information in a continual way, but that these influences are moderated by an individual's emotional state and then moderated again by characteristic patterns of interests, needs and goals. These studies are part of a program of research intended to elucidate how extrasensory perception functions unconsciously and continuously in everyday life. A report on study one was presented to the Parapsychology Association in August, 2009.

Keywords: extrasensory, subliminal, first sight, openness, preference