

## New study: Sexy images can cause temporary blindness

by Petra Newman

Guffaw as we might . . . but recent studies done by Dr. David Zald from the Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee along with DR. Marvin Chun and colleagues from Yale University in Connecticut have proven that sexy images can cause temporary blindness.

Research suggests that when shown erotic or gory images, the brain fails to process images seen immediately afterward. This phenomenon is known as "emotion-induced blindness."

Dr. Zald experimented by showing hundreds of images to volunteers, asking them to pick specific images from a rapid moving sequence. Images of scenery, landscapes and buildings of varying architectural designs, were interspersed with violent and or provocative sex scenes.

Researchers found that the closer these emotional charges occurred prior to the target image, the more frequently the volunteers failed to spot the targeted image. This is also described as short-vision blackout.

Dr. Zald was quoted to say, "We think there is essentially a bottleneck for information processing and if certain types of stimulus capture attention, it can jam up the bottleneck so subsequent information can't get through. It appears to happen involuntarily. The stimulus captures attention and once allocated to that particular stimulus, no other stimuli can get through for several tenths of a second." He believes that the primitive part of the brain known as the amygdale, evaluates sensory input according to its emotional relevance, which in turn has an autonomic role influencing heart rate and sweating.

These studies have great implications as to how we live our day to day life. It has been suggested that emotionally charged billboards at busy road intersections could be a potential hazard to drivers, perhaps causing accidents.

The popular country song "The Girl on the Billboard" sung by Del Reeves suggests this to be true. In the second verse it says, "I slow my Jimmy down to twenty, that's how many wrecks I see there every day caused by the girl wearing nothing but a smile and a towel in the picture on the billboard in the field in the big old highway."

If sexy images cause potential havoc on the roadways, is it possible it could also cause chaos in the skies? Perhaps the art work of Alberto Vargas's pinup girls in WW11 wasn't just to boost the morale of US airmen.

Known as "Nose Art," paintings of "Betty Boop/ Pistol Packin' Mama" and Betty Grable, adorned the nose of bombers and fighter planes. The half naked Vargas' girls ended up flying missions over Hitler's Europe, firmly ensconced on the nose of B-17, B-24 and many other bombers and fighters. One can only wonder what the German fighter pilots thought as they roared through the formation of scantily clad women. Perhaps the curves of the Vargas' girls helped win the war by temporarily blinding the German pilots, giving the Americans that split second to make their move.

All joking aside; if you feel you're in danger, just put blinders on when you leave the house.

Source; NewScientist.com <http://www.newscientist.com/article.ns?id=dn7845&print=true>  
Remembering World War Two Airmen,  
<http://untoldvalor.blogspot.com/2007/07/alberto-varga-he-kept-airmen-motivated.html>

The Girl on the Billboard, by Del Reeves

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