

October 2009 - English

The International Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hypnosis
Volume 57, Number 4 - October 2009 - English

Affect and Hypnosis: On Paying Friendly Attention to Disturbing Thoughts DONALD L. NATHANSON

Abstract: The real mystery about hypnosis is the simplicity of induction and the ease with which a willing participant will accept and work within the trance state. Something so natural must involve neural systems that make trance a normal phenomenon. Presented is the language for emotion developed by Silvan Tomkins between 1960 and his death in 1991, brought into contemporary science by the author. Tomkins focused on the facial displays of affect, programmed reactions to specific patterns of stimulation. Each of these 9 innate mechanisms initiates a reaction pattern people experience as an emotion that brings its trigger into conscious awareness. How people think about or understand anything is controlled by the affect with which it has become linked. Cognitions locked to unpleasant emotions can become disturbingly resistant to change until trance work alters the affective environment of the participant.

Structural Aspects of Three Hypnotizability Scales: Smallest Space Analysis V. K. KUMAR AND FRANK FARLEY

Abstract: Smallest space analysis (SSA) was used to examine structural aspects of the Creative Imagination Scale (CIS), Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility, Form:A (HGSHS:A), and Stanford Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility, Form C (SHSS:C). Correlation matrices for each of the instruments came from published studies of other investigators. The SSA on the CIS suggested the presence of 1 facet, focus of processing, with 2 subsets of items: somato-sensory and imagination sensory. The combined 22-item matrix SSA showed that the CIS and HGSHS:A items regionalized separately. The item configuration suggested 1 facet, nature of suggestions including 3 subsets: direct motor items of the HGSHS:A, challenge-inhibition items of the HGSHS:A, and the cognitive items of the CIS. The SSA for the SHSS:C suggested 2 facets, each containing 2 elements each: processing focus of suggestions (cognitive-sensory and motor sensory) and nature of suggestions (direct and challenge-inhibition). A general mapping sentence is offered with possible implications.

Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Discussions of Animal Magnetism CARLOS S. ALVARADO

Abstract: The mesmerists explained the phenomena of what was later called hypnosis as the effects of a force called animal magnetism. Both psychologists' and physicians' writings generally create the impression that the magnetic movement disappeared after the mid-19th century. While the concept of animal magnetism declined significantly by the end of the 19th century, it did not disappear completely. Some examples include the work of Hector Durville, Henri Durville, Émile Magnin, and Edmund Shaftesbury. Detailed accounts of the work of Edmund Gurney and Albert de Rochas are presented. Similar to its earlier counterpart, the late mesmeric movement was associated with what today is known as parapsychological phenomena. This association, and the belief that the demise of magnetic theory represents scientific progress, has led many to emphasize a history that is incomplete.

Effects of a Hypnotically Altered State of Consciousness Intensification of Semantic Processing ISTVÁN SZENDI, ZOLTÁN AMBRUS KOVÁCS, GYÖRGY SZEKERES, GABRIELLA GALSI, KRISZTINA BODA, ISTVÁN BONCZ, AND ZOLTÁN JANKA

Abstract: In a study of the linguistic processes involved in hypnosis, 22 volunteer medical students performed semantic and phonologic fluency tasks and then associative priming tests with 2 delay-lengths in waking alert and hypnotic conditions as well. The participants performed better during semantic than phonological fluency tests in alert and also in hypnotic states, and this difference was significantly greater in hypnosis. The increased semantic performance in hypnosis was accompanied by a decrease of the rule-offending errors. Significant semantic priming effects were detected in both states of consciousness in direct and indirect relations as well as in the automatic, intralexical level, and also when the extralexical control processes were activated. Overall, the results appear to show that the hypnotically altered state of consciousness produces significantly better performance in semantic information processing than can be

elicited in alert waking conditions.

Effects of an Affect Bridge for Age Regression

CIARA CHRISTENSEN, ARREED BARABASZ, AND MARIANNE BARABASZ

Abstract: Tailored hypnotic inductions for age regression with an affect bridge to access meaning-laden events were tested. Emotional intensity, spontaneity, elaboration, and transitional-object measures were used to assess the genuineness of the topographic shift to primary process characteristic of hypnotic age regression. An affect bridge was used to access stressful events within the age range of 3 to 6 years. The Stanford Hypnotic Susceptibility Scale: Form C was administered to determine high hypnotizables-reals, ($n = 8$, scores 9–12) and low hypnotizables-simulators, ($n = 8$, scores 3 or less). The groups behaved differently on frequency of transitional objects, spontaneity, and intensity but not on elaboration. The hypnotizable-reals but not the simulators produced a plethora of primary process child-like affective responses that could not be produced by the role-playing simulators.

“Robbery by Hypnosis” in Italy: A Psycho-Criminological Analysis of the Phenomenon Based on 20 Years of Newspaper Articles (1988–2007)

CARLO ALFREDO CLERICI, LAURA VENERONI, ANGELO DE’MICHELI, AND ISABELLA MERZAGORA BETSOS

Abstract: Shocking news of robberies committed using hypnosis on bank cashiers, salespeople, or passersby have sporadically been reported by the media in countries around the world. The first reported episode in Italy dates back to the 1950s. Although the phenomenon has been reported in the papers more frequently in recent years, no objective analysis of it has been published in the scientific literature. This paper analyses 106 episodes recorded in Italy between 1988 and 2007, identified by a systematic review of the online and printed archives of Italian national and local dailies and of the database of the country’s principal press agency. When they are analyzed from a psychological and criminological standpoint, there is no evidence to support any real use of hypnotic methods in the episodes described.

A Meta-Analysis of Hypnosis in the Treatment of the Depressive Symptoms: A Brief Communication

MIAOZUN SHIH, YUAN-HAN, YANG, AND MALCOLM KOO

Abstract: The efficacy of hypnosis in the treatment of depressive symptoms was subjected to a meta-analysis. Studies were identified using 6 electronic databases including PubMed, Cochrane Library, PsiTri, PsychLit, Embase, Cochrane Depression, Anxiety and Neurosis Review Group (CCDAN), and Google Scholar. The keywords used were (1) hypnosis, (2) hypnotherapy, (3) mood disorder (4) depression, and (5) dysthymia. Six studies qualified and were analyzed using the Comprehensive Meta-Analysis software package. The combined effect size of hypnosis for depressive symptoms was 0.57. Hypnosis appeared to significantly improve symptoms of depression ($p < .001$). Hypnosis appears to be a viable nonpharmacologic intervention for depression. Suggestions for future research are discussed.