CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2013 PROJECT SUMMARY

Name(s)

Lina Yagan

Project Number

33757

Project Title

Subliminal Messages: Do They Really Work?

Abstract

Objectives/Goals

With this experiment, I plan on further proving the danger of subliminal messaging. I also intend to raise people#s awareness of the abnormally extreme lengths advertising companies are going through to appeal to a client.

If subliminal messaging can alter a person#s mentality, it should be restricted severely. Otherwise, congressmen or private companies can use subliminal messages on TV shows to sway votes one way or the other. Even worse, the military can muffle outcries against war.

Methods/Materials

This experiment will be done in an empty, quiet room since the subjects must not be distracted. The Ipod will have a song recorded with an entrenched undertone that states #Orange colored M&Ms taste better than the other colors# using http://www.talkbackwards.com/. The 20 boys and 20 girls will be divided into 2 groups of 10 boys and 10 girls each. The 1st group (control group) will not be given the recording. The 2nd group will listen to the recording with the embedded message. This particular group will listen to the song for a total of 5 times, the average number of times advertising companies place sexual references into a single song. Moreover, it may take several times for the subconscious to recognize obscure subtexts. Then, each participant will be given 20 pieces of M&Ms each. The 20 M&Ms will consist of 5 orange, 5 yellow, 5 green, and 5 blue pieces. The participants will be asked to choose 5 out of the 20 pieces given to them.

Results

The members of the 2nd group who were subjected to subliminal messages that promoted the orange colored chocolates tended to choose the orange M&Ms as opposed to the 1st group who did not receive the surreptitious music.

Conclusions/Discussion

The capabilities of subliminal messages have not been proven to a significant extent. While they have been able to demonstrate they can prime an individual#s responses and stimulate mild emotional activity on certain people, the consensus among scientists and psychologists is that subliminal messages do not produce a strong, enduring effect on an individual#s behavior. Nonetheless, they do influence a person to some degree which is what I have established with this experiment.

Summary Statement

This project evaluates the effect of subliminal messages on a person's decisions

Help Received

Neighbor helped me with printing

Preliminary