

**P2149 The experience of 'unseen' beautiful faces biases aesthetic judgment but does not correlate with activity in medial orbito-frontal cortex (mOFC)**

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Are facial stimuli characterised as beautiful also perceived as being so even when presented covertly? 19 subjects viewed 100 facial stimuli which they characterised as ugly or beautiful. They subsequently viewed a sample of the same stimuli covertly, using continuous flash suppression, and classified the 'unseen' stimuli into the same two categories, using the 2-alternative-forced-choice method. Results showed that stimuli characterised as beautiful in the first experiment were more often classified as "beautiful" when presented covertly, compared to similarly presented "ugly" ones, although this was only true if the faces viewed belonged to the same race as the subjects. A parallel fMRI scanning experiment did not detect supra-threshold clusters in field A1 of mOFC when the beautiful stimuli were perceived "unconsciously", but mOFC was responsive during the conscious (seen) experience of beautiful faces, consistent with previous studies of aesthetic experiences.