

MYSTERIOUS COMMUNICATION: THE SECRET LANGUAGE OF CHEMOSIGNALS

In this presentation, I shall give an overview of the results of a series of studies that investigate the communicative potential of an underexplored modality for the transmission and distribution of emotional states: human odors and olfactory communication. Generally, communication research relies on the usual suspects for carrying a message: auditory (e.g., speech, prosody), symbolic, visual (e.g., gestures, reading) modalities. Human olfaction has never been considered as a medium of communication, however, as it turns out, olfaction is a powerful transmitter of emotional information. The presentation will cover studies that involve the olfactory transmission of disgust, fear, and happiness, as well as the relative contribution of olfactory versus audiovisual modalities. I shall conclude with a study investigating the relative strength of male versus female odors in transmission of emotions (fear) as well as the sensitivity of male and female recipients. The implications of a communicative medium that escapes conscious access as well as defying linguistic representation will be discussed.

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SALA DE ATOS

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