

The University of Hong Kong
Department of Psychology

Departmental Seminar

***The Effects of Subliminal Affective Stimuli on Conscious
Mood and Behaviour***

Date: February 17, 2015 (Tuesday)

Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Venue: Room 813, 8/F, The Jockey Club Tower, Centennial Campus, HKU

Speaker: Ms. Esther Helen Yesudas
Department of Psychology
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Previous research has demonstrated that subliminal affective stimuli elicit affect-congruent behaviour, yet fail to report consistently whether they also elicit conscious mood changes. Elucidating the relationship between subliminal affective stimuli and conscious behaviour and mood is highly relevant for mood disorders, such as depression. Research suggests that mood-congruency effects can trigger or prolong depressed episodes. To investigate the impact of subliminally-presented stimuli on conscious mood and behaviour, a behavioural study employing high intensity affective stimuli (happy, sad and fearful images to be chosen from the International Affective Picture System) will be presented to healthy participants under subliminal viewing conditions. Pre- and post-experiment moods of the participants will be captured by the scores on the Self-Assessment Manikin and the Emotional Assessment Scale. It is hypothesized that there will be a mood-congruent effect of subliminal affective stimuli on behaviour and conscious mood. Depending on the findings of the first experiment, neuroimaging and neurophysiological studies will be planned to examine the mechanisms underpinning the relationship between subliminal stimuli and mood as well as the relevance of subliminal material for clinical mood disorders. The findings of these studies may provide novel targets for intervention that can be applied preventatively prior to the development of a conscious mood change.