



**CALIFORNIA STATE SCIENCE FAIR
2008 PROJECT SUMMARY**

Name(s) Sarah R. Aiello	Project Number J0601
Project Title Subliminal Messaging: Did You See That?	
<p style="text-align: center;">Abstract</p> <p>Objectives/Goals In my experiment, I tested my hypothesis that a subliminal message would not be successfully entered into the conscious mind of a viewer unless the viewer had access to the image from past experiences. A subliminal message is any message that is delivered below the "threshold of perception". The threshold of perception or awareness is interpreted as consciousness. I believe that if a person does not have conscious access to a subliminal image or word, then they will access the closest image within their consciousness. Even if the participant believes that they are consciously aware of a subliminal image, this may not be the case.</p> <p>Methods/Materials I produced a five minute film. Within the film, there were 10 reference points (the numbers 1 through 10) and a subliminal message was placed into the film at 4 locations. The subliminal message appeared for a longer time each time it was shown. The subliminal message was a picture of a street with the word 'SOTP' written on it. The word was intentionally misspelled. Participants viewed the film and were asked to record each time they noticed the "subliminal" message (they identified this by writing the number that followed the message frame). The participants were also asked to record when they could first clearly identify the message (and again they documented the time by writing the number that followed the frame).</p> <p>Results There were 76 participants that viewed the film. Most of the participants stated they saw the "hidden message" each time it was displayed, but out of 76 test subjects, 54 of them (71%) identified the word as "STOP", which was incorrect. Only 22.4% of the subjects were actually able to correctly identify the true image, "SOTP".</p> <p>Conclusions/Discussion According to my results, if a person does not have previous access to an image, a "subliminal" message may not be correctly interpreted by the person's conscious mind, even if the test subject believes he or she is consciously aware of the image.</p>	
Summary Statement I created a self-produced film in an attempt to demonstrate that an image hidden within the production might not be accurately identified, if its message was not familiar to the viewer.	
Help Received I wrote the script and filmed the message and number frame sequences, but I must thank my father for filming the parts of my film in which I starred.	