



DEBRIEFING FORM

Project Title: Attention and Interactions

Supervisor: Dr. Dana Hayward (dana.hayward@ualberta.ca)

Thank you for your participation in our study. Your time and commitment to psychological research at the University of Alberta is greatly appreciated. The goal of this study was not to look at attention and online gaming, but was to investigate social rejection and how it impacts attention. Our methodology was based on a previous study by Capellini et al. (2019) that investigated social rejection's impact on attention.

To investigate the relationship between social rejection and attention we asked you to cyberball, which previous research has used to promote feelings of inclusion or exclusion. In this study we created two versions of the cyberball game, one with human agents and one with non-human agents (geometric patterns called fractals), to investigate whether people can also feel rejection from a non-human agent, or whether rejection is felt only when being rejected by humans or human-like agents. Half of the participants were in the inclusion condition, and half in the exclusion conditions. Afterwards, we assessed both social and nonsocial attention to see if rejection only affects social attention. To assess social attention, we asked you to complete a gaze-cueing task, and to measure nonsocial attention we asked you to complete an arrow cueing task. All participants completed the same cueing tasks (i.e., gaze and arrow) regardless of which cyberball condition (human versus non-human agent) they were in. Participants were asked to measure their heart rate and rate their mood before and after the cyberball task. This was done to ensure we had a physiological and self report measure to demonstrate that the cyberball manipulation worked. Additionally, we asked you to fill out a series of questionnaires that asked about aspects of individual's socialness and personality. We included these measures because these constructs have been shown to be related to attention.

Before you began the study, we were not able to provide you with all of these details up front. Doing so could have spoiled the study because some participants might have altered their responses based on their expectations. Accordingly, the study required some deception about some of the materials. It is important that you be assured that any distress that you might have experienced is taken seriously, and that if completing any of the materials has raised any personal issues, you are encouraged to follow up with student counselling services, provided below:

Peer Support Centre:

<https://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/psc/>

Clinical and Counselling Services:

<https://www.ualberta.ca/current-students/counselling/index.html>

If you have any further questions about this research, please do not hesitate to contact the PI, Dr. Dana Hayward, at dana.hayward@ualberta.ca. If you would like to withdraw your data from the study after testing is completed you may do any time up until 7 days after your testing session was completed. This can be done by contacting the PI. If you have any questions about research participation, contact our Research Participation Coordinator at (780) 492-5689, or rescrcd@ualberta.ca.

For further reading on similar issues you may want to consult this interesting article:



Capellini, R., Riva, P., Ricciardelli, P., & Sacchi, S. (2019). Turning away from averted gazes: The effect of social exclusion on gaze cueing. *Frontiers in psychology, 10*, 1000. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01000>

Thank you very much for participating. Without the help of volunteers like you, we could not answer many important scientific questions in psychology. We have one last request: **Please don't tell other people about what we asked you to do in this study, as it is very important that they approach the study as you originally did, i.e., without expectations and without full awareness of our objectives.** This is important because it is the only way we can obtain objective and valid information.

Yours truly,
Dr. Dana Hayward
Assistant Professor