of the stimuli are not consciously perceived because they are not highly meaningful. But in the cases now under discussion, it is not the size of the stimulus that is the basis for its capture of attention, so if these stimuli are in fact detected under conditions of inattention, the question is why.

5. This experiment was done by Ethan Newby at Berkeley.

6. In many of the experiments run at Berkeley, subjects were asked to provide a confidence rating for their reports of having seen something other than the distraction cross, which they did by assigning the number one, two, or three to their report, with three indicating virtual certainty and one indicating great uncertainty. The mean confidence rating for the false positive responses in the full attention condition was 2.33 whereas for the negative responses it was 1.61. Paradoxically this suggests that the subjects were surer about having seen something when there was nothing there than they were when something was there.

7. The remaining experiments investigating false positive responding were carried out by Teresa Hartmann at the New School for Social Research.

8. It is of some interest to note that although the number of subjects making false positive responses was nearly the same in each of the three conditions both in this and the previous experiment, these were not always the same subjects.

9. It perhaps should be noted that in our standard experiments subjects were almost invariably able to at least locate if not describe the critical stimulus on the critical divided attention trial and every subject was able to do both on the full attention control trial.


11. To repeat a point made earlier, if maintaining fixation or executing saccades between marked targets are considered tasks requiring attention which, at least in the case of saccades has been shown to be so (Kowler et al. 1995), then we have failed to establish that no attentional task is necessary to insure a state of inattention to some stimulus. However, it would appear to be virtually impossible to create conditions in which absolutely no mental activity is occurring in the observer, consequently requiring only that the subjects maintain fixation on a point directly in front of them may be the least demanding task possible.

12. The phenomenon of visual neglect has been extensively studied and this research has produced a substantial literature. The reader is referred to the following references for additional information: Bisiach 1993; Bisiach, Luzzatti, and Perani 1979; Rafal, 1994; Rafal and Robertson 1995; Rafal, in press.)

13. Farah (1990) refers to this as dorsal simultanagnosia. The underlying impairment in dorsal simultanagnosia appears to be a disorder of visual attention so severe that unattended objects are not seen at all (1990, 16).

14. If this is in fact the case, it should be possible to find evidence of negative priming, which is revealed by a subsequent increase in reaction time to a previously presented and ignored or in this case, repressed stimulus (see, for example, Tipper 1985).

15. Leibniz wrote, “Besides, there are hundreds of indicators leading us to conclude that at every moment there is in us an infinity of perceptions, unaccompanied by awareness or reflection” (1981, passage 53).

16. We are grateful to William Prinzmetal for leading us to this passage in Aristotle.
References


