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## Responses to Monaural Startle Probes During Emotional Imagery

The human startle reflex elicited by an acoustic startle probe and measured from electromyographic (EMG) recording of the orbicularis oculi (“blink”) muscle has been used as an indicator of emotional processing and attention. Previous studies in which subjects imagined themselves participating in an emotional situation indicate that startle responses are potentiated during personally engaging pleasant and unpleasant situations, and this covaries with reported arousal. Furthermore, studies using startle probes presented monaurally to either the left or right ear suggest that emotional processing is lateralized in the central nervous system. To extent prior research, we used verbally narrated imagery scripts and presented monaural startle probes during the imagination period. We hypothesize that the startle response during imagery of highly arousing pleasant and unpleasant situations will be potentiated in relation to low arousal or neutral situations. Results, implications, and suggestions for future research will be discussed.

Poster Number:      Session:

