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The time course of covert visual attention shift

Shih S.(1), & Sperling G.(2)

(1) University of Southampton, UK; (2)

University of California, Irvine, USA

When subjects fixate the center of a rapid stream of 3x3 letter arrays, a sudden tonal cue instructs them to quickly shift attention to, and report three letters from one of the three rows. The trajectory of attention is inferred from the spatial and temporal locations of the reported letters. Independent of display rate and the spatial distance of attentional shifts, subjects report letters from arrays occurring 200-300 msec after cue onset. Contingency analysis shows that all three reported letters tend to come from the same array, indicating a quantal type of attention shift that is simultaneous at all locations.