

BRIEF SUMMARY

Koutstaal, W. (1998). Memory for picture frames. *Empirical Studies of the Arts*, 16, 47–57.

Examined whether the frame in which a picture appears becomes incorporated with the mental representation or memory for the picture. In 5 experiments with 18 Ss each, participants were shown several colored drawings, each set in a unique frame, and then later were given an unexpected memory test for the drawings and frames. Participants who initially performed a task that focused their attention on the drawings alone (rating the pleasingness or visual complexity of the drawings) were unable to correctly identify the frames as same or different at above chance levels. In contrast, participants who initially performed a task that focused attention on the drawings in relation to the frames (rating the suitability of the frames for the drawings, or the darkness of the drawings compared to the frames) showed significantly greater than chance frame identifications. It is concluded that relational or interactive encoding of a picture and its frame is critical for memory of picture frames.
