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# A laboratory task for induction of mood states

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### Abstract

One hundred female college students were administered the Harvard Group Scale of Hypnotic Susceptibility, Form A, to provide a measure of primary suggestibility. In a 2nd hr, each S was randomly assigned to one of five individual treatments of 20 Ss each. One group read and concentrated upon 60 self-referent statements intended to be elating: a second group read 60 statements intended to be depressing. A third group read 60 statements which were neither self-referent nor pertaining to mood. This group controlled for the effects of reading and experimental participation per se. Fourth and fifth groups received demand characteristics control treatments designed to produce simulated elation and simulated depression, respectively.

Two measures of pre-treatment mood level were obtained from each S at the beginning of each individual treatment. Following treatment, as criteria for elation and depression, seven behavioral task measures were obtained. Four of these distinguished significantly among the treatment groups. The comparative performance of Ss in the three control

groups indicated that the obtained mood changes could not be attributed to artifactual effects. Moreover, post-experimental questionnaire data strongly supported the conclusion that Elation and Depression treatments had indeed respectively induced elation and depression.



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† This study is based upon a Dissertation (Velten, 1967) submitted to the University of Southern California in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the PhD degree. Dr. L. Douglas DeNike served as Dissertation committee chairman and rendered invaluable service during the preparation of this article.

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