

Conceptual Masking: Is concept the key, or does layout play a role?

The onset of a new, *meaningful* scene captures attention; thus disrupting picture memory during RSVP (*conceptual masking*). Does the new *concept* alone cause masking, or might the new layout contribute? Observers viewed target scenes interspersed with to-be-ignored scenes that changed in terms of gist, layout, both, or neither. When both changed, target memory suffered more than when gist alone changed (Exp 1). Similarly, when gist *always* repeated, changes in layout impaired memory more than when layout was preserved (Exp 2). Novel layout draws attention, but an abstract representation of repeated layout mitigates the impact of a novel gist.