Connecting psychosis-proneness, phenomenology, and abnormalities in the body representation:

The Rubber Hand Illusion

**BACKGROUND:**

- Abnormalities in the body representation and self experience are part of the phenomenology of psychosis and psychosis-proneness.

- The rubber hand illusion is a powerful illusion of body ownership that some individuals are susceptible to under specific conditions (see below).

- Schizophrenia patients show stronger susceptibility to this illusion, related to degree of positive symptoms.

**MAIN FINDING:**

> **Susceptibility to the rubber hand illusion can be predicted by individual differences in personality variables indexing positive psychosis-like characteristics.**

**-EMBODIMENT-**

Five Questions, rated -3 (strongly disagree) to +3 (strongly agree), including: "I felt as if the rubber hand were my hand," and "It felt as if the touch I felt was caused by the paintbrush touching the rubber hand."

**-AGENCY-**

Three Questions, rated -3 (strongly disagree) to +3 (strongly agree), e.g.: "It seemed as if I could move the rubber hand if I wanted."

Positive schizotypy predicted illusion strength during synchronous stimulation ($B = 0.28$, $p < 0.05$) even when controlling for illusion strength during asynchronous.

Referential thinking was the strongest predictor of illusion strength ($r = 0.46$). Controlling for WASI score, age, and gender did not impact these results.

**Participants** were 55 healthy individuals with no history of psychiatric illness (based on the MINI clinical interview).

Positive schizotypy composite Z-scores were calculated by averaging sample Z-scores from Lenzenweger’s Referential Thinking Scale, the Chapman Magical Ideation and Perceptual Aberration Scales and the Cognitive-Perceptual factor of Raine’s Schizotypal Personality Questionnaire.

Negative schizotypy composite Z-scores were calculated by averaging Z scores from the Chapman Revised Social Anhedonia Scale and the interpersonal factor of Raine’s Schizotypal Personality Questionnaire.

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