


[Psychology / Psychiatry News](#)
[Useful Links](#)

## Right-handed And Left-handed People Do Not See The Same Bright Side Of Things, According To Several Studies

 Main Category: [Psychology / Psychiatry](#)  
 Also Included In: [Clinical Trials / Drug Trials](#)  
 Article Date: 29 Jan 2010 - 3:00 PST

 7  
 tweets  
 retweet

[email to a friend](#) [printer friendly](#) [view / write opinions](#)

Despite the almost universal association of the *right with life, right, positive and good things*, and the *left with death, inadequacy, negative and bad things*, recent researches show that left-handed people hold the opposite association. Thus, left-handers become a critical case in which conceptual associations, result of a sensory-motor experience, and those that rely on linguistic and cultural uses, are contradictory. A sensory-motor experience in itself is capable of creating abstract conceptual associations.

Ads by Google

**University of Virginia**  
 Sensory and Systems  
 Neuroscience, Learning and  
 Memory; PhD Program  
[www.virginia.edu/psychobiology/](http://www.virginia.edu/psychobiology/)

Current Article Ratings:

**Patient / Public:**  3.67 (3 votes)  
**Health Professional:**  2 (1 votes)  
 Article Opinions: [1 posts](#)

 Find other articles on: "[University of Granada](#)"

These are the conclusions derived from various studies compiled by professor Julio Santiago de Torres, from the Department of Experimental Psychology and Behavioural Physiology at the University of Granada, who has conducted a bibliographic review on the subject, published in *Ciencia Cognitiva: Revista Electrónica de Divulgación*.

One of the latest works on this subject was undertaken by researcher Daniel Casasanto (Stanford University), who found out that left-handers tend to associate the *left with nice and good things* and the right with *ugly and bad things*, which goes against the enormous power of cultural context in which they live and the language they use.

### Good things and bad things

In one of his experiments, Casasanto presented participants a diagram that depicts a character who was planning a trip to the zoo, and who loves zebras and thinks they are good, but dislikes pandas and thinks they are bad. The participant had to draw a zebra in the box that best represented good things and a panda in the box that best represented bad things.

Most of right-handed people located good things in the box on the right while left-handers placed them in the box on the left. Interestingly, only 14% of participants thought that his election had to do with what his dominant hand was.

Then, to see whether the left or right location could affect rating dimensions on abstract personality, he asked another group of participants to rate pairs of objects depicted in another drawing, indicating which of the two seemed more intelligent, more honest, more attractive and happier. And in a final experiment, participants were asked to assess which candidate would they chose for a job, or what product would they buy in a store.

In all tasks, right-handers tended to evaluate the object on the right better, while left-handers favoured the one on the left. Therefore, UGR professor says, "these results demonstrate that perceptuomotor experiences, in this case the greater ease and fluidity of interaction with one or another side of space, are sufficient to generate stable associations between specific dimensions, such as space, and concepts of a high degree of abstraction, such as kindness, intelligence or honesty."

These data provide one of the first clear demonstrations that sensory-motor experience can exert a powerful influence on the conceptualization of even our most abstract ideas.

### A wrong world

As professor Santiago explains, "a left-handed person has often the feeling of having been born in a wrong world. From scissors to computer keyboards designs, everything is projected for right-handers. The fact that left-handed people are able to adapt quite well to these manual controls that are contrary to their nature, indicates a first interesting fact that it is often overlooked: undoubtedly, there is a difference in motor ability between the dominant and the non-dominant hand, but it is far from being a great difference."

In fact, the researcher points out, "speed and accuracy differences between the right and the left hand that are usually found, do not go beyond 10%. In addition, the left hand can be trained to high levels of implementation, as in the case of musicians or typists. In contrast with the intensive use of the right hand that characterizes an average right-handed person in over 90% of the tasks.

Julio Santiago recalls in his article that association between *right* and *left* with the symbolic systems of the world cultures "is deep, and reaches almost every aspect of life. Thus, *right* and *left* are respectively associated with dispositive and common people. Male and female, sacred and profane, good and evil. Eventually, these partnerships contribute aspects of life as varied as the position in which dead are buried, distribution of space in homes and churches, positions in which men and women sit at the table or in the temple and the hand chosen for saluting, swearing, eating or bathing."

Moreover, Santiago points out, "even vocabulary is also full of similar facts such as, for example, the word "siniestro", which derives from *sinister*, "izquierda" in Latin.

Source: University of Granada

Please rate this article: **Patient / Public:** or **Health Professional:**  
(Hover over the stars then click to rate)

**50 Hotels in Granada**  
Book your hotel in Granada online. Find your hotel on a city map!  
[www.Booking.com/Granada](http://www.Booking.com/Granada)

**Particle characterisation**  
xprd, sem, surface area, ft/ir density, and others  
[agenda1.co.uk](http://agenda1.co.uk)

**University of Virginia**  
Sensory and Systems Neuroscience, Learning and Memory; PhD Program  
[www.virginia.edu/psychobiology/](http://www.virginia.edu/psychobiology/)

Ads by Google

Any medical information published on this website is not intended as a substitute for informed medical advice and you should not take any action before consulting with a health care professional. For more information, please read our [terms and conditions](#).

**Contact Our News Editors**

For any corrections of factual information, or to contact the editors please use our [feedback form](#).

Please send any medical news or health news press releases to: [pressrelease@medicalnewstoday.com](mailto:pressrelease@medicalnewstoday.com)

[Back to top](#) [Back to front page](#) [List of All Medical Articles](#)

[Privacy Policy](#) [Terms and Conditions](#) © 2010 MediLexicon International Ltd

News Category Menu

Psychology / Psychiatry

Categories A-B >

Categories C-D >

Categories E-G >

Categories H-L >

Categories M-O >

Categories P-R >

Categories S-Z >

[View full category list](#)

News Options

[Personalized Homepage](#)

[Weekly Newsletters](#)

[Daily News Alerts](#)

What Is...

[Hemophilia](#)

[Opioid Induced Constipation](#)

[Pneumococcal Disease](#)

[ADHD](#)

[Anxiety](#)

[Asthma](#)

[Atrial Fibrillation](#)

[Autism](#)

[Cancer](#)

[Diabetes](#)

[Lung Cancer](#)

[Lupus](#)

[Medicare / Medicaid](#)

[Obesity and BMI](#)

[Pancreatic Cancer](#)

[Stem Cells](#)

[All 'What Is...' Articles](#)

Conditions Information

- [Abscess \(Dental\)](#)
- [Acid Reflux](#)
- [Acne](#)
- [ADHD](#)
- [Agoraphobia](#)
- [Alcoholism](#)
- [Alopecia Areata](#)
- [Alzheimer's Disease](#)
- [AMD / Macular Degeneratio](#)
- [Amnesia](#)

Health Professional Sites

[Ophthalmology](#)

[Urology](#)

Other Navigation Links

[About Us](#)

[News Licensing](#)

[Free Website Feeds](#)

[Free Tools & Content](#)

[Tell a Friend](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Help / FAQ](#)

[Article Submission](#)

[Links](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Clinical Trials](#)

**Computer Cognitive Tests**

Rapid & sensitive tests for clinical research trials.  
[www.cogstate.com](http://www.cogstate.com)

Ads by Google

**Haiti Appeal**



The severe earthquake that struck Haiti has inflicted damage and devastation on a massive scale. Please donate to the **Doctors Without Borders Haiti Appeal**.

[PLEASE DONATE HERE](#)


Latest News For Psychology / Psychiatry

- [Facial Expressions And The Way We Feel And Understand](#)  
01 Feb 2010
- [MSU Researcher Advocates New Way To Treat Autism](#)  
01 Feb 2010
- [Caring For The Carers Of Those With Mental Illness, Australia](#)  
31 Jan 2010

[View more news...](#)

Most Popular Articles For Psychology

These are the most read articles from this news category for the last 6 months:

-  [Long-Held Theory About Biological Clocks Overturned By U-M Discovery](#)  
**09 Oct 2009**  
University of Michigan mathematicians and their British colleagues say they have identified the signal that the brain sends to the rest of the body to control biological rhythms, a finding that overturns a long-held theory about our internal clock...
- [Retrovirus Linked To Chronic Fatigue Syndrome](#)  
09 Oct 2009
- [Targacept Presents Data From Highly Successful Phase 2b Trial Of TC-5214 As Augmentation Treatment For Major Depressive Disorder](#)  
16 Oct 2009
- [New Antipsychotic Drug Asenapine \(Saphris\) Helps Prevent Relapse In People With Schizophrenia; Phase III Data Presented At ECNP](#)  
18 Sep 2009
- [What Is Agoraphobia? What Causes Agoraphobia?](#)  
28 Aug 2009

Descubre tu nombre en élfico!  
GRATIS aquí

0,99 e/sms  
Ads by Google

Today's Featured Health Videos

**Avoiding Injury as a Video Game Athlete**



Video games now allow you