GAME SHOW WITH NON-INTERPERSONAL SUBLIMINAL PROMPT

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A game show, and especially a reality television game show is contemplated in which one or more contestants are subjected to a non-interpersonal subliminal prompt without his and/or her knowledge, while selected other contestants and/or the audience is informed about the prompt. The contestants then engage in an activity according to a game rule of the game show, and the performance of the contestants is rated to determine a winner or other ranking.
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FIELD OF THE INVENTION

[0001] The field of the invention is game shows, and especially reality game shows using non-interpersonal subliminal prompts.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

[0002] Numerous stage hypnosis shows have been enjoyed by a relatively large audience for several decades. Such shows typically involve voluntary interaction with a hypnotherapist to prepare a show participant for a behavior that the participant would otherwise unlikely be willing to perform. For example, stage hypnotists such as P. Powers, A. Duval, Ormond McGill, Paul McKenna, and others have prompted volunteers to forget how to swim, to engage in socially questionable behavior, etc.

[0003] Such preparation typically requires personal interaction with the hypnotherapist and effectiveness is often affected by the level of attention given to the hypnotherapist, stage fright, etc. Moreover, as such behavior modification is due to a personal interaction, participants may also feel fake cooperation. For example, participants who volunteer as subjects for stage hypnotism are often self-selecting, willing to lose their inhibitions, and enjoy being the center of attention, whether or not they are actually in a state of hypnosis. Therefore, it could be reasonably argued that the same results could be obtained under the influence of nothing more than a few glasses of alcoholic drinks, or monetary incentive.

[0004] Other manners of behavior modification less prone to the drawbacks as discussed above include those in which a person’s action is influenced to a certain degree using various signals that are perceptible and/or imperceptible to the player. For example, Kubby at disclose in U.S. Pat. App. No. 2005/0130747 a video game system that includes a micromechanical dispensing device to complement and/or enhance the video gaming experience in a manner not always recognized by the player. In such games, the micromechanical device dispenses a fluid (e.g., perfume or other particular scent) into the players atmosphere in response to a game situation to thereby provide a more intense engagement and/or elicit a specific reaction from the player. While such systems may provide a somewhat more desirable game experience, various disadvantages remain. Among other things, a player must obtain, install, and maintain various fluids over an extended period of time. Moreover, the player is aware of the presence of the micromechanical device, the player will likely give the operation of the system more attention than the effect and is thereby detracted from the game.

[0005] In other known game systems and devices, a subliminal stimulus is delivered to a player as described in JP 2003135767. Here, the game device displays only briefly and consciously imperceptively a winning screen to the player to thereby induce continued gaming as that image is thought to build an expectation of winning soon. However, while such subliminal stimuli tend to increase game revenue to at least some degree, public acceptance for such gaming devices is generally low as such subliminal stimuli may be deemed deceptive.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

[0006] Therefore, while there are numerous methods of entertainment with various forms of subliminal and non-subliminal messages are known in the art, all or almost all of them suffer from one or more consequences. Thus, there is still a need to provide new methods for such entertainment.

[0007] The present invention is directed to (e.g., reality) game shows and methods associated with such game shows, wherein a first or plurality of first contestants is subjected to a subliminal stimulus, while a second, or plurality of second contestants is informed about the subliminal stimulus and will interact with the first or plurality of first contestants.

[0008] Therefore, in one aspect of the inventive subject matter, a method of entertaining may include a step of enlisting one or more first and second participants for an interactive game show. In a further step, the one or more first participants are—without his or her knowledge—subjected to a non-interpersonal subliminal prompt. In yet another step, the audience and/or the second participant(s) are informed that the first participant received the subliminal prompt. In still another step, the first and second participants are prompted to engage in an activity according to a game rule of the game show, and in a further step, performance of the first and/or second participant is observed to establish a winner, ranking, or other reward (e.g., financial, travel, personal, etc.).

[0009] In especially preferred aspects, the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt is a pheromone, and most preferably a mammalian steroid pheromone. Therefore, in at least some embodiments the pheromone is (typically topically) applied to first participant(s), or the first participant(s) is exposed to an atmosphere that includes the pheromone, wherein such application or exposure may be performed by or mediated by the second participant(s). Regardless of the manner of application or exposure, it is contemplated that the first participant(s) may receive a second and distinct non-interpersonal subliminal prompt, which may, for example, be of visual nature.

[0010] In still further contemplated aspects, the first participant(s) forms a team with at least one other participant. Therefore, contemplated team members may include competing and/or cooperating members. Preferred other participants are most typically not selected among the first participants. Furthermore, it is generally preferred that the first and second participants are of opposing gender.

[0011] With respect to contemplated game rules, it is typically preferred that the game rules include a determination of a rank for the first and second participants based on the performance, which may also include feedback from the audience to establish the rank. Particularly suitable activities in such game shows are interviews, sales attempts, physical exercise, interpersonal ranking, and/or dating activities. Therefore, where the activity is an interview, the step of observing performance may include computing of at least one of a subjective sympathy index, a subjective persuasion index, and a subjective confidence index. Where the activity is a sales attempt, the step of observing performance may include computing of at least one of a subjective persuasion index, a negotiated price, and a sales volume. Similarly, where the activity is physical exercise, the step of observing
Performance may comprise computing of at least one of endurance and strength. Where the activity is interpersonal ranking, the step of observing performance may include computing of at least one of a subjective sympathy index, a subjective leadership index, and a subjective confidence index, and where the activity is dating, contemplated steps of observing performance may include computing of at least one of a subjective sympathy index, synchronized behavior, subjective body language index, length of eye contact, and bodily contact.

Detailed Description

The inventor generally contemplates use of a non-personal subliminal prompt in a game in which at least one player is not aware of the delivery of the prompt, which may be delivered to that player and/or any other participant. Typically, the audience and/or other players are aware of the delivery of the prompt to that player. The players will then perform various tasks according to a game rule, and a ranking and/or winner is then established, which may also include input from the audience.

The term “game show” as used herein refers to a form of entertainment in which one or more players perform activities according to a game rule, wherein the players’ activities may be moderated and/or observed by a moderator and/or an audience. Therefore, a game show may be performed in a home among a plurality of players (i.e., contestants), or more typically on a stage, or in a studio with an audience. In still further contemplated game shows, a single participant may interact with a plurality of other participants, which may be randomly selected or selected according to one or more criteria. Therefore, contemplated game shows include those in which one player (optionally as member of a team) engages in a game activity with one or more other players or participants, wherein the other players or participants may or may not be informed about their partaking in the game. Therefore, exemplary game shows will be similar to currently known game shows (e.g., The Bachelor, The Apprentice, Survivor, etc.), and/or similar to other known team or competitive games.

Moreover, contemplated game shows may be continuous and be completed within a period of less than an hour to several hours, or discontinuous where the activities of the players are performed and/or observed over several days, typically for a limited period throughout any given day. The term “interactive game show” as used herein refers to a game show in which at least two of the players interact as competitors or as team players that support each other. Furthermore, the term “reality television game show” as used herein refers to a televised game show that is at least in part unscripted and documents actual events over scripted action, and that features ordinary people rather than professional actors.

As still further used herein, the term “non-interpersonal subliminal prompt” refers to a subliminal prompt that is delivered in a manner other than a verbal message from one person to the contestant that receives the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt. For example, a visual subliminal prompt that is delivered to the person by a monitor or TV screen, or a chemical subliminal prompt delivered via exposure of the person to the chemical is considered a non-interpersonal subliminal prompt as defined above. In contrast, a subliminal verbal prompt that is delivered by a hypnotist to the person will not fall within the scope of the definition as provided above. Furthermore, the term “subliminal” as used herein refers to a signal or message that is designed to pass below the normal limits of perception. For example, a subliminal signal might be inaudible to the conscious mind but audible to the unconscious mind, or might be an image that is briefly displayed and consciously not perceived while it is unconsciously perceived. Similarly, a pheromone (and especially a mammalian pheromone) that is delivered to a person is considered to act as a subliminal signal as the conscious mind fails to recognize that signal.

In one preferred aspect of the inventive subject matter, a game show is a reality television (TV) game show in which a first contestant is exposed to a mammalian pheromone and in which a plurality of other contestants are informed about the first person’s exposure. A moderator of the game show will then pose a challenge to all contestants according to a game rule. The contestants will then compete against each other and performance is rated on the basis of various objective and/or subjective criteria, wherein the audience may provide live feedback to the moderator to thereby establish a ranking and/or a winner (e.g., winning a price, a travel, or even “winning a heart”).

While not limiting to the inventive subject matter, it is generally preferred that the game show is performed such that a relatively large audience (e.g., greater than 100 people) can observe at least part of the contest. Therefore, the game show will typically be performed on a stage, in a studio, and/or in a locale where at least a camera and microphone can be placed to thereby provide the audience and/or moderator with the performance of the contestants. Most preferably, and especially where the contestants are in different locations, the actions of the contestants are visually and/or acoustically recorded to allow replay before the audience. Thus, the audience may receive a live feed from the performance recording, and/or the recording may be preserved and/or edited to allow broadcasting to an even larger audience (e.g., via syndicated stations, satellite/cable TV, etc.). Further advantages of performance recording include presence of various contestants in locations remote relative to each other, simultaneous broadcast of otherwise non-synchronous events, replay according to a programming schedule, etc. Consequently, contemplated shows may be live or recorded, in a continuous or discontinuous fashion.

However, in less preferred aspects, suitable game shows may also be played in an at home or office environment using several players as participants. In such and other contemplated formats, the game show may be executed without a moderator and/or even without an audience. Therefore, one or more of the contestants may also act as a moderator. Similarly, the audience in such configurations may be the players themselves. Furthermore, and especially where the game show is discontinuous, the contestants may play the game according to a predetermined schedule in which performance is observed and/or reported via the Internet.
With respect to the first contestant it is generally preferred that the first contestant is exposed to the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt at least during part of the time in which the audience observes the first contestant. However, and depending on the particular nature of the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt, the first contestant may also be pre-exposed for a period sufficient to elicit the desired/anticipated effect. Of course it should be appreciated that the game according to the inventive subject matter may also involve more than one contestant that is exposed to the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt. For example, and especially where the contestants form a team, multiple contestants are contemplated to receive/have received the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt. It is further especially preferred (but not necessarily so) that the first contestant will receive and/or be exposed to the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt without his or her knowledge (albeit with his or her consent of receiving one or more non-interpersonal subliminal prompts). However, in alternative aspects, the contestant may also be informed about administration of the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt. Typically, such information will be conveyed to the first contestant by indicating to the contestant that he or she has received the prompt, and/or by informing the contestant about the nature of the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt he or she has received or was exposed to.

It is further generally preferred that the contestant or contestants that has not received or was not exposed to the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt will be informed, but not the exposure of the first contestant to the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt. However, and especially where the audience was informed about the first contestant’s exposure, it is contemplated that the non-exposed contestant may also not be informed. For example, where the first and second contestants are competing against each other, information about dispensation of the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt need not be shared with the non-exposed contestant. Most typically, but not necessarily, the first (prompted) and second (non-prompted, optionally prompted) participant are of opposing gender.

Particularly preferred non-interpersonal subliminal prompts include chemical and/or visual subliminal prompts, which may act upon the first (exposed) contestant, or which may be conveyed to another person via the first contestant. Among other contemplated chemical non-interpersonal subliminal prompts, scented and non-scented chemicals are especially suitable, wherein the subliminal prompt may be applied to the first contestant and/or wherein the first contestant may be exposed to the subliminal prompt. For example, especially preferred chemical subliminal prompts include various pheromones, and particularly mammalian pheromones associated with alarm response (see e.g., Physiol. Behav. 2001 January; 72(1-2):45-50, mating behavior (see e.g., Physiol Behav. 2004 Nov. 15; 83(2):177-87, or Science 1977 Apr. 29; 196(4289):545-6), transgender attraction (e.g., J. Sex. Res. 2004 November; 41(4):372-80), dominance behavior (see e.g., J Steroid Biochem Mol Biol. 1991 October; 39(4B):601-14, mood alteration (see e.g., U.S. Pat. App. No. 2003/0049726 and U.S. Pat. No. 6,432,938), immune status (e.g., Nat Immunol. 2003 November;4(11):1043-5), and strength and/or endurance (e.g., Physiol. Genomics 13; 270-276, 2004). Therefore, preferred pheromones will include various mammalian pheromones, especially mammalian steroid pheromones, and most preferably those having an androst-16-en structure (e.g., 5α-androst-16-en-3-1one (androstosterone), 5α-androst-16-en-3β-ol (androstenol), and/or 5α-androst-16-en-3β-ol (epi-androstentone)). Further contemplated chemical subliminal prompts include various odorants that may resemble a specific scent or that elicit an association with an event or location that is strongly associated with that scent. For example, contemplated odorants may include body scents/odors, food scents, floral scents, animal scents, tobacco scents, coffee scents, or other scents typically associated with a particular season or location (e.g., roast turkey scent, log-cabin or pine wood scent, bakery scents, etc.).

Depending on the particular nature of the chemical subliminal prompt, it should be appreciated that the manner in which the first contestant is provided with the chemical subliminal prompt may vary considerably. For example, where it is desired that the chemical subliminal prompt will elicit a particular response in the first contestant, it is contemplated that the first contestant may be exposed to the chemical subliminal prompt through his environment. Most typically, such exposure may be realized by enriching the atmosphere around the contestant with the chemical prompt. For example, it is contemplated that the contestant is placed in an environment (e.g., cubicle, room, etc.) that is enriched with the chemical subliminal prompt. Similarly, the contestant may be provided with a clothing item (e.g., T-shirt), decorative item (e.g., necklace), or personal care item (e.g., after shave) from which the chemical prompt emanates. On the other hand, where it is desired that the chemical subliminal prompt will elicit a particular response from another person that is in contact with the first contestant, it is generally contemplated that the chemical subliminal prompt is applied to the first contestant that exposes the other person with the subliminal prompt (e.g., using after shave, scented clothing item, etc.). Thus, it should be recognized that the pheromone or other chemical prompt may be applied in various manners. Where the chemical prompt is perceptible at a threshold concentration or amount, it is typically preferred (but not necessarily so) that the prompt is applied to the first contestant below the threshold concentration or amount.

With regard to particularly preferred compositions of chemical subliminal prompts and their formulation, reference is made to our copending U.S. patent application with the Ser. No. 11/211,227, which was filed Aug. 24, 2005, and which is incorporated by reference herein. Thus, and among other compositions and methods, it is contemplated that the chemical subliminal prompt may be provided in a solvent or solvent mixture at a concentration of between 1 ng/ml and 100 mg/ml (and even higher), wherein the solvent may further comprise odorants and various other components (e.g., preservative, stabilizer/antioxidant, dye, detergents, etc.) Similarly, suitable chemical subliminal prompt formulations may also be solid or semi-solid (e.g., formulated as cream, lipstick, etc.). Consequently, application of the chemical subliminal prompt is typically topical to an item of manufacture or even to the body of the first contestant. However, in further alternative aspects, the chemical subliminal prompt may also be diffused from a solid phase.

Where the subliminal prompt is delivered as a visual subliminal prompt, it should be recognized that numerous manners of such visual subliminal prompts are known in the art. For example, contemplated visual sub-
liminal prompts may be provided as figure-ground reversal, typically involving the division of visual and auditory perceptions, which are the figure (subject and foreground), and the ground (background supportive to figure and the environment in which figure exists), as embedding in which one image is typically worked into or around another as to make a primary image stand out while a secondary image is consciously ignored and unconsciously remembered. Further exemplary visual subliminal prompts include double entendre in which the subliminal prompt is conveyed as a second meaning, which is often a taboo in culture yet widely known. In other contemplated manners of conveying a visual subliminal prompt, tachistoscopic displays are employed in which many images are flashed by the first contestant at high speed. As most viewers cannot consciously view the imagery before the next one appears, most or all of them are absorbed into subconscious the memory. Tachistoscopy is often combined with backward masking or metacontrast in which quick cuts are consciously visible, but in which one quick cut is obscured by the emotion or meaning of a subsequent quick cut. Similarly, metacontrast is often used to install a wide range of emotions into a participant. Here, a quick cut followed by a diversion can put a person into an emotional state without the person being aware of such state. Still further contemplated subliminal prompts include low-intensity light and low-volume sound prompts, in which the subliminal message is typically conveyed using background lighting and/or sound. Thus, it should be appreciated that depending on the particular type of prompting, the prompting may be as quick as a few seconds, or may last over a relatively long (typically pre-game) period (e.g., between several hours to several days, and even several weeks).

[0026] In further contemplated aspects of the inventive subject matter, an additional prompt may be given to the at least one of the first and second contestants, wherein the subliminal prompts may be mutually enhancing or provide contradictory messages. For example, the first contestant may be exposed to a pheromone at a concentration effective to enhance exercise stamina and endurance, and may then be visually and subliminally prompted to perform a particular task at an especially elevated strength and/or endurance level. In another example, the first contestant may exude a pheromone at a concentration effective to enhance cross-gender attraction, and a second participant may be subliminally prompted towards a dating activity with the first (enhancing) or a second (contradictory) participant. Thus, one or more contestants may receive multiple enhancing and/or contradictory non-interpersonal subliminal prompts.

[0027] Once the first contestant has been subjected to the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt (and optionally, once at least one other party (e.g., audience, other contestants, mediator, etc.) was informed about the delivery of the prompt), the contestants then engage in one or more activities according to a game rule. Most typically, the contestants are prompted by the game mediator (typically show host), but other prompting mechanisms are also contemplated, including prompting from the audience, and remote prompting via telephone, Internet, and/or other media link.

[0028] Contemplated game rules will typically provide a game theme and comprise a step of establishing a rank for the at least first and second participants based on the performance. Game themes may vary considerably, and it should be recognized that a particular game theme is not limiting to the inventive subject matter presented herein. However, preferred game themes will typically include themes associated with social behavior, and especially dating behavior, physical performance, and/or mental performance. Further suitable game themes may include those related to professional activities (e.g., sales or counseling activities). Therefore, and among other suitable choices, contemplated game rules will include presentation of a task associated with the game theme to the contestants, and optional team formation among the contestants (which may or may not fall along the lines of contestants that received the subliminal stimulus). Such game rules may further include observing performance of the first and second participants, wherein the performance is then employed to establish a ranking and/or winner in the game. Where desirable, the game rule may further comprise a step of including feedback from the audience and/or moderator to establish the rank (which may supercede the ranking by observed performance). Contemplated game rules may also include a step of determination or guessing of at least one contestant as to the identity of the contestant that has received the subliminal prompt. It is further contemplated that game rules according to the inventive subject matter may also provide for reward and/or penalty points for contestants in response to particular activities.

[0029] In exemplary aspects of contemplated games, the game rules may require one or more activities for at least one of the participants. For example, contemplated activities may include simulated or real job interviews, or other interpersonal communication that attempts to identify suitability of the interviewee for a predetermined position and/or function. Similarly, interactions may also be performed as activities to establish an interpersonal ranking (e.g., to identify a team leader for a predetermined task, or to identify the most likable person, etc.), or even activities commonly related to dating behavior. Further contemplated activities include a real or simulated sales attempts for one or more items with variable desirability. Moreover, and especially where the subliminal stimulus is a chemical stimulus, contemplated activities also include physical exercise.

[0030] Depending on the particular game rule and activities, it should be recognized that the performance of the participants may be observed and evaluated in various objective and/or subjective manners. Most typically, performance is observed in a way that allows the audience to directly observe and/or hear the participant(s). However, in other aspects of the inventive subject matter, performance may also be reported by the mediator and/or another participant. For example, where the activity is a real or simulated job interview, performance may be observed and rated by computing a subjective or objective qualification index, a subjective sympathy index, subjective persuasion index, and/or a subjective confidence index. In another example, where the activity is a sales attempt, performance may be observed and/or rated by computing a subjective persuasion index, an objective negotiated price, and/or sales volume of one or more items. In a further example, the game activity is physical exercise. In such case, the performance may be observed and/or rated by computing endurance and/or strength. In yet another example, the activity is an interpersonal ranking. Consequently, observation and/or rating of performance may include computing of a subjective sym-
pathy index, a subjective leadership index, and a subjective confidence index. Similarly, where the activity is a dating related activity, observing and/or rating performance will include a step of computing a subjective sympathy index, synchronized behavior, subjective body language index, length of eye contact, and bodily contact.

[0031] Thus, specific embodiments and applications of game shows using non-interpersonal subliminal prompts have been disclosed. It should be apparent, however, to those skilled in the art that many more modifications besides those already described are possible without departing from the inventive concepts herein. The inventive subject matter, therefore, is not to be restricted except in the spirit of the appended claims. Moreover, in interpreting both the specification and the claims, all terms should be interpreted in the broadest possible manner consistent with the context. In particular, the terms "comprises" and "comprising" should be interpreted as referring to elements, components, or steps in a non-exclusive manner, indicating that the referenced elements, components, or steps may be present, or utilized, or combined with other elements, components, or steps that are not expressly referenced. Furthermore, where a definition or use of a term in a reference, which is incorporated by reference herein is inconsistent or contrary to the definition of that term provided herein, the definition of that term provided herein applies and the definition of that term in the reference does not apply.

What is claimed is:

1. A method of entertaining, comprising:
   - enlisting at least one first participant and at least one second participant for an interactive game show;
   - subjecting the at least one first participant to a non-interpersonal subliminal prompt that is optionally provided to the at least one first participant without knowledge;
   - informing at least one of an audience and the at least one second participant that the at least one first participant received the subliminal prompt;
   - prompting the at least first and second participants to engage in an activity according to a game rule of the game show; and
   - observing performance of the at least first and second participants to establish a winner.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt is a pheromone.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein the pheromone is a mammalian steroid pheromone.

4. The method of claim 2 wherein the step of subjecting the at least one first participant to the pheromone comprises applying the pheromone to the at least one first participant.

5. The method of claim 2 wherein the step of subjecting the at least one first participant to the pheromone comprises exposing the at least one first participant to the pheromone using the at least one second participant.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt is topically applied to the at least one first participant, or wherein the at least one first participant is exposed to an environment that contains the non-interpersonal subliminal prompt.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least one first participant forms a team with at least one other participant other than the at least one second participant.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the audience and the at least one second participant are informed that the at least one first participant received the subliminal prompt.

9. The method of claim 1 further comprising a step of subjecting the at least one first participant to an additional and distinct non-interpersonal subliminal prompt.

10. The method of claim 9 wherein the additional and distinct non-interpersonal subliminal prompt is a visual subliminal prompt.

11. The method of claim 1 wherein the at least first and second participants are of opposing gender.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein the game rule comprises a step of establishing a rank for the at least first and second participants based on the performance.

13. The method of claim 12 wherein the game rule further comprises a step of including feedback from the audience to establish the rank.

14. The method of claim 1 wherein the activity is selected from the group of consisting of an interview, a sales attempt, a physical exercise, an interpersonal ranking, and a date.

15. The method of claim 14 wherein the activity is the interview and wherein the step of observing performance comprises computing of at least one of a subjective sympathy index, subjective persuasion index, and a subjective confidence index.

16. The method of claim 14 wherein the activity is the sales attempt and wherein the step of observing performance comprises computing of at least one of a subjective persuasion index, a negotiated price, and a sales volume.

17. The method of claim 14 wherein the activity is physical exercise and wherein the step of observing performance comprises computing of at least one of endurance and strength.

18. The method of claim 14 wherein the activity is interpersonal ranking and wherein the step of observing performance comprises computing of at least one of a subjective sympathy index, subjective leadership index, and a subjective confidence index.

19. The method of claim 14 wherein the activity is the date and wherein the step of observing performance comprises computing of at least one of a subjective sympathy index, synchronized behavior, subjective body language index, length of eye contact, and bodily contact.

20. The method of claim 1 wherein the game show has a reality television show format.

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