
General Discussion

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GENERAL DISCUSSION

T. W. ROBBINS (*Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Cambridge, Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3EB, U.K.*). In what ways is the marker hypothesis of Shallice & Burgess different and in what ways is it similar to the somatic marker hypothesis of Damasio?

T. SHALLICE (*Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, c/o Department of Psychology, University College London, Gower Street, London WC1N 3BT, U.K.*). Damasio's view of markers and ours can be contrasted on two dimensions. The first is the richness of type of representation carried directly by the marker. In our formulation markers

carry interrupt signals only; these are activated with appropriate triggering conditions and are linked to episodic representations which relate to what is to be carried out (see Burgess & Shallice 1996). This appears to be a much narrower formulation of what information markers carry than Damasio's. The second dimension relates to the degree of obligatoriness with which the representation is accessed. In our case as a signal for interrupting unrelated on-going activity the level of obligatoriness is high. Damasio's version again seems to be broader on this dimension too. However, the two positions are quite compatible.