Metamorphopsia

Kerry Donnelly
VA WNY Healthcare System, University of
Buffalo (SUNY) Behavioral Health Careline
(116B), Buffalo, NY, USA

Synonyms

[“Alice in Wonderland” syndrome](#)

Definition

General term for a range of visual perceptual disorders in which the apparent shape, size, outline, color, number, movement, or other physical characteristics of visual objects are distorted.

Current Knowledge

Distortions of visual perception can be elementary or complex. Examples of the former might include perceiving objects as smaller (micropsia) or larger (macropsia) than they actually are, seeing them as inverted, losing their color (achromatopsia), or seeing stationary objects as if they were in motion.

More complex illusions include seeing objects as smaller and fading into the distance or becoming larger as they approach the observer, there may be a visual multiplication of the object (*polyopia*) or a persistence of the image in its absence (*palinopsia*), or spatial displacement of an object. This disorder may result from a variety of conditions, including epilepsy, migraines, toxic or metabolic disorders, vascular or neoplastic lesions, usually involving the occipital lobe or associated cortices, such as parietal-occipital or temporal-occipital area. More rarely, lesions of the brainstem may be associated with these phenomena. In addition to lesions of the brain, this condition can also result from diseases of the retina.

Cross-References

- ▶ [Achromatopsia](#)
- ▶ [Palinopsia](#)

References and Readings

- Hecaen, H., & Albert, M. L. (1978). *Human neuropsychology, chap. 4. Disorders of visual perception* (pp. 128–247). New York: Wiley.