

TASTING THE UNIVERSE

By Maureen Seaberg

Story Angles

Headline: Marilyn Monroe a Synesthete?

Sub-Headline: Biographer Mailer, Niece, Thought So

Paragraph: In the new synesthesia book Tasting the Universe, author Maureen Seaberg uncovers a glamorous example of someone who shared her trait. The author believes that Marilyn Monroe had the unique brain gift of blended senses due to a closer examination of Norman Mailer's biography of the tragic star and an interview with Ms. Monroe's surviving niece about it.

Headline: People Can Lose or Gain Synesthesia?

Sub-Headline: Two Prominent Examples: Author Douglas Coupland; Philosopher David Chalmers

Paragraph: Doug Coupland sneezed out a tumor and suddenly the world went technicolor; David Chalmers woke one day at age 20 and discovered he no longer had colored music. Both men, modern geniuses, think life is better with synesthesia than without and are the rare examples of people who know life both ways.

Headline: Synesthesia: Mystic State of Consciousness?

Sub-Headline: Monks, Meditators and Synesthetes Report an Altered State

Paragraph: Dr. Roger Walsh published a paper in 1995 about whether synesthesia can be acquired and concluded that through meditation, one can experience it. A top Tibetan lama reports that the ancestors of Tibetans, the "humans of the North" of legend, could all see sound. And even the Bible says that as Moses ascended Mt. Sinai to retrieve the tablets, "All the people saw the voices." Why does synesthesia seem tied to mystic experience?
