EWT: Evidence given in court or in police investigation-person who witnessed crime/accident. Memories laid down, fragile and subject to distortion. Misinformation-serious errors into eyewitnesses’ recall of the event. Loftus -people accept misleading information after event-absorbs into memory. Greater tendency to accept post information.

Loftus:
PP’s shown a road traffic accident exposed to post information-leading questions tested from there memory. Can change original memory.

Loftus&Palmer:
Showed pp’s a film of the events-car accident. PP’s divided into groups-control and experimental group. Control group asked questions consistent to what they’ve seen. Experimental group- asked misleading information. was a stop sign, no barn. 17%- experimental group saw a barn, only 3% in Control made errors. Concluded some PP’s absorbed misleading post event info into their memory.

Loftus- alter what they say due to demand characteristics. Offered reward to pp’s who correctly recollected details of car accident. cond.1-film,pedestrian being knocked over, car stopped at stop sign, other group-yield sign.2 days- asked questions, one included misleading info stop-yield, yield-stop. Used to slides PP’s to point out which was from the original film.4 groups- no reward,1$-correct awnser,5$ correct answer, 25$ scored most correct. In spite of reward 70% incorrect-original memory altered.

Loftus- car accident-asked questions-speed of car, used different verbs, "smashed", "bumped"-affected speed estimates. "smashed"-highest, "contacted"-lowest. week later-questioned-"smashed", said glass there was no glass.

List: elements, might occur in a shoplifting scenario. PP’s rate events how likely to occur. Compiled video-8 different incidents-including elements that scored high/low. Showed video to set of new PP’s – week later, recall the video

Found PP’s recalled high probability that hadn’t been included in video.

Tucker and Brewer: most people think: robbers are male, wear a disguise, dark clothes, demand money, getaway car, driver in getaway car-showed video of staged bank robbery, PP’s-better recall for elements that conformed to their schema.

Anxiety can affect witness recall:
Lab studies show impaired recall who have witnessed unpleasant situations. Loftus: "weapon effect". PP’s sat outside a lab-though they were hearing a genuine exchanges between people inside the lab. Cond.1- amicable discussion equipment failure, man came out with greasy hands holding a pen. Cond.2- hostile discussion, sound of breaking glass, overturned furniture, man came out holding a knife, cover- I lied. PP’s given 50 photos to identify man. Cond.1 more accurate in recognising the man than the violent scene. Anxiety elicited by weapon narrows the focus of attention and removed attention from the mans face.

Loftus: Ev would influence conviction

Poole & Lindsay:
Children 3-8 in a science demonstration, Parents read them a story, contained some elements from the demonstration& novel info. Children questioned-science demonstration, they included novel info into original memory.

Another phase-children had to think carefully where they got there info. (source monitoring) – older children revised demonstration-extracted post-event info. Younger children couldn’t do this. Children-poor at source monitoring.

Foster: Ev would influence conviction-less artificial PP’s watched video-bank robbery-had to pick out robbers from identity parade. group1-believe it’ll influence conviction, group2-believe it was a simulation. PP’s-more accurate in group.1

Improving accuracy:
Fisher et al: interviewed detectives-Florida-4 months. Witnesses bombarded with brief, direct, close ended questions. Sequence of questions out of sync with own mental representation of the event. Interrupted-broke concentration, short answers-encouraged-less detail.

Geiselman et al-cognitive interview technique-more effective.

4 principles:
Context reinstatement: recall the scene-thinking. feeling-proceeding events. Report everything: Every detail even if trivial. Recall form changed perspective: Describe in different viewpoints not your just your own. reverse order: report in several different temporal orders backward/forwards in time.

Enhances retrieval of memory, provides extra cues to jog witness memory for details. Fisher-ask open ended questions, pause after response, avoid interruption, Avoid judgement.

Fisher et al: effectiveness-cognitive interview in real life police settings-Miami. Trained detectives to use the new method, with genuine crime witnesses, significantly increased amount of information recalled. Kebbel-survey UK-widespread use of cognitive interview. Concern-incorrect recall generated, time to complete interview.