**Accuracy of eyewitness testimony: Anxiety TOPIC 8**

Key study: Johnson and Scott

Field exp, independent groups

PP's placed in a waiting room

Condition 1 = there is an argument next door and a man comes out holding a greasy pen

Condition 2 = there is an argument conversation next door and a man comes out holding a bloody paperknife.

pp' had to identify the man out of 50 photos

C1 = 49% recall

C2 = 33% recall

The weapon-focus effect.- weapon distracts attention because of the anxiety it creates, so reduces accuracy of identification.

Loftus showed anxiety does focus on central features of a crime e.g. weapon-eye movements monitored- weapon caused attention to be drawn away from face.

Christianson and Hubinette (1993)

Questioned 58 witnesses of a real life armed robbery in Sweden. The witnesses were either victims (bank teller) or bystanders (customer/employee) interviews conducted 4-15 months after robberies

All witnesses showed generally good memories for details of the robbery itself (better than 75% accurate recall)

Those who were the most anxious had the best recall.

Christianson did a meta analysis and concluded that memory for negative emotional events is better than neutral events.

Deffenbacher (1983) reviewed 21 studies of the effects of anxiety on eyewitness testimony.- META ANALYSIS- LARGE SAMPLE/POP VID- only effec chosen to be shown. 10 studies linked high arousal to increased accuracy, and 11 showed the opposite. Deffenbacher then proposed the Yerkes Dodson Effect to show that moderate anxiety can increase eyewitness accuracy, and that accuracy will be reduced if anxiety is too extreme.