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| LQ & PED research – low validity | Lab experiments (such as Loftus and Palmer's/ Gabbert's) lack ecological validity and mundane realism because the situation of watching a video of a crime is artificial and not the same as witnessing a crime in real life. For example, in real world EWT, individuals search their memory with greater effort and it is more stressful as their testimony may lead to a conviction.<br>This means that the finding that misleading information distorts EWT may not be applicable to real life crimes and may not actually distort their memory. |
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## Negative effects of anxiety on EWT

### Johnson & Scott

#### Procedure

- Ppts invited to lab and told to wait in reception, then exposed to one of two conditions:
  - 1) No weapon/ low anxiety – ppts overheard a casual conversation in lab. A confederate then left lab, holding a pen with greasy hands
  - 2) Weapon/ high anxiety – ppts overheard a heated argument and sound of breaking glass. A confederate walked out of the lab holding a bloodied paper knife
- Both groups were then shown 50 photos and asked to identify the confederate (told they might not be in).

#### Findings:

- Those in low anxiety condition correctly identified the confederate 49% of the time
- Those in high anxiety condition correctly identified the confederate 33% of the time
- The high anxiety had lower correct identifications

#### Conclusion:

- Ppts exposed to the knife condition had higher levels of anxiety and were more likely to focus their attention on the weapon and not the face of the target = WEAPON FOCUS EFFECT
- Therefore, the anxiety associated with seeing a knife reduced the accuracy of eyewitness testimony.

#### Explanation:

- TUNNEL THEORY – attention narrowed to focus on a weapon as it is a source of danger (tunnel vision).

| AO3                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
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| Findings may not be due to anxiety | Limitation: This is because the study may be testing surprise rather than anxiety. Pickel conducted an experiment which involved the handheld item being scissors, a handgun, a wallet or a raw chicken in a hairdressers. EWT was poorest in conditions where the item was unusual for the context (chicken & gun). Weapon focus effect may be due to surprise rather than anxiety and so there is limited support for the damaging effects of anxiety on EWT. | C/A: Valentine & Mesout (2009) show evidence of the negative effects of anxiety – carried out a real-life study at London Dungeon. Objective measures, like heart rates to measure anxiety, were used to divide ppts into high and low anxiety. The findings showed that anxiety clearly disrupted the ppts' ability to recall details about the actor in the London Dungeon (17% correctly identified in high anxiety vs 75% in low anxiety) |

## Positive effect of anxiety on EWT

### Yuille & Cutshall

#### Procedure

- Interviewed 13/21 witnesses to a real-life shooting in Vancouver 4-5 months after incident and compared them to original police interviews made at the time of shooting.
- Witnesses were also asked to rate how stressed they had felt at the time out of 7.