

**I Saw The Whole Thing, But I Can't Remember What I Saw:
A Model of Individual Differences in Eyewitness Ability**

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Eyewitness Process

- See event
- Process event
- Remember event
- Recall event



Previous Research Problems

- No real theory
- Use of single event
- Method of recall
 - oral v. written
 - free recall v. prompted recall v. multiple choice



Good eyewitnesses have the tendency to:

- Be aware of external activity
- Notice detail
- Distinguish among people
- Remember events
- Verbalize events



Our Study

- 157 students took the TEA
- Witnessed two separate events, weeks apart
- Wrote free-recall accounts followed by multiple choice
- Researchers correlated TEA scores with eyewitness accuracy accounts



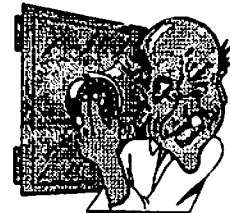
Test of Eyewitness Ability (TEA)

- 27 items
- Five factors
 - General awareness
 - Tendency to notice
 - Ability to distinguish
 - Memory for events
 - Tendency to verbalize
- Coefficient alpha of .81



Results

- Correlation of .27 between accuracy scores for the two events
- Best predictions were for free recall rather than multiple-choice
- SAT-V predicted but not SAT-Q



Test of Eyewitness Ability (TEA)

General Awareness

- I usually pay more attention to my thoughts than to what goes on around me (R)
- I get lost or disoriented easily (R)
- I am almost always aware of what goes on around me
- I am good at noticing what goes on around me
- I often don't realize it when people are talking to me (R)

Tendency to Notice

- I usually notice how people dress
- I usually notice when friends do something a little different with their hair
- When at a restaurant or social event, I look around often to see who is there and what they are doing
- If I meet a stranger, I can tell if they have dyed their hair
- I will usually notice if a person's shoes don't match their outfit
- I am good at describing what people look like after I have met them
- When I describe people, I use lots of little details
- If friends rearrange their furniture or get something new, I will notice

Memory

- I remember events better than most people do
- I have a good memory for conversations
- I am good at remembering exact lines or scenes from movies I have seen
- I can recognize people weeks after I have met them, even if I only spoke to them for a short period of time
- I am good at remembering people's names
- I am good at remembering phone numbers
- I easily recognize a place, even if I have been there only once

Ability to Distinguish

- To me, most people look alike (R)
- When at a restaurant, I have trouble remembering or recognizing my server (R)
- When watching a TV show, I often get the actors confused (R)
- People just seem to look so much alike (R)

Verbal Ability

- I can tell a story with the best of them
- I enjoy telling stories about things that have happened to me
- I am good at remembering and telling jokes

Questions are answered on a 5 point scale with 1=disagree and 5=agree

Correlation Between Sex, TEA, Cognitive Ability, and Eyewitness Accuracy

	Event 1		Event 2		Event 1 + 2	
	FR	MC	FR	MC	FR	MC
Sex	.19*	.01	.39*	.10	.38*	.07
TEA	.25*	.18*	.12	.06	.22*	.17*
SAT						
Verbal	.27*	.11	.13	.01	.24*	.09
Quantitative	.06	-.05	-.10	-.11	-.03	-.11

FR = free-recall
 MC = multiple-choice