

# Inattentional Blindness and Stereotype Threat in Older Adults



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## Brief Outline

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- Background and key terms
- Methods
- Hypothesis
- Practical Implications
- Questions

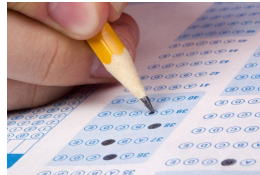


## Background information

### Stereotype threat

When faced with a negative stereotype about their group, people are more likely to perform worse on the evaluated task (Steele, 1997).

- African American student's verbal problem solving abilities (Steele & Aronson 1995)



### Inattentional Blindness

When fixating on another task, event, or object, you can miss clearly visible, obvious things.

- The classic gorilla experiment (Simon & Chabris, 1999)
- Clown on a unicycle (Hyman, 2011)



*Stereotype Threat and the Cognitive Performance of Older Adults - Barber and Liu*

*Gorillas in our midst: sustained inattention blindness for dynamic events - Simons and Chabris*



## Background information

### Older Adults

- Main thing that the lab studies, in the name: Cognitive Aging and Memory Lab (CAMLab)
- Misinformation in OA, eyewitness testimony (Thomas, et al, 2020)
  - Caution++

### Cognitive Declines

- conceptual reasoning
- memory
- attention
- processing speed

*Extensive literature out there*



**Specific areas of interest:** Specifically: Metamemory Across the Lifespan, Eyewitness Memory, Retrieval Enhanced Suggestibility, Memory Accuracy

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# Methodology

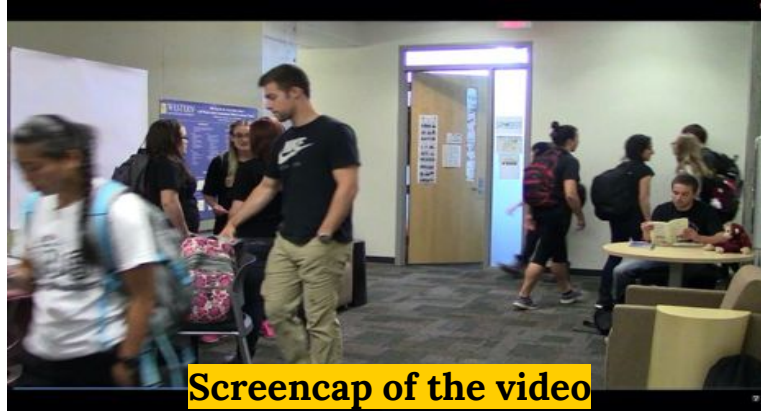
What am I actually doing in the lab?



## Methodology

### Manipulations

- Stereotype threat/lift
- Count or no count



Instructions

Watch  
video

Unusual?  
Questions

ID and  
Lineup

Description  
Questions



## Participants - 2x2 design

	Stereotype THREAT	Stereotype LIFT
No count	<p>“It is a common belief that memory and attention <u>decline</u> with age...”</p> <p>“You will now watch a short video. Watch carefully.”</p>	<p>“It is known that attention can actually <u>improve</u> with age...”</p> <p>“You will now watch a short video. Watch carefully.”</p>
Count	<p>“It is a common belief that memory and attention <u>decline</u> with age...”</p> <p>“You will now watch a short video. Watch carefully and please <u>count the white t-shirts...</u>”</p>	<p>“It is known that attention can actually <u>improve</u> with age...”</p> <p>“You will now watch a short video. Watch carefully and please <u>count the white t-shirts...</u>”</p>

*Afterwards, I will ask you several questions about what you saw in the video*



## Post-video questions

### Initial Questions

- Did you see anything unusual in the video?
- Did you notice the theft?
- Any idea of what the thief looked like?

### Identification

- Participants will be asked to pick the thief from a lineup
- Lineup of similar looking people

### Description Questions

- Color of backpack.
- Type of toy in video.
- Poster color.
- Bystander activity.
- Type of balloons.
- Logo on perpetrator's t-shirt.
- etc...





### ***Current updates:***

- Participant recruitment
- ePrime program

?

## **Hypothesis**

Of the participants tasked to count white t-shirts, those who experience the **ST instructions will perform better** at identifying the theft and culprit than the participants who experienced the SL instructions



## Real world implications

### Eye witness testimonies

- How should police take age into consideration when interviewing witnesses?
- How *reliable* are the testimonies of older adults when they're not looking out for crimes?

### Stereotypes and ST

- Implicit biases and stereotypes in eyewitness testimony
- What are the effects of *reducing* negative stereotypes?

### Older Adult Memory

- Society and their negative stereotypes of older adults memories
- Ways to reduce cognitive decline



# Thanks!

*Any **questions** ?*