

Improving the reliability of older eyewitnesses

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Many developed countries have an aging population. In the UK, between 1971 and 2005 the proportion of the population of adults aged 65 and over increased from 13% to 16% (National Statistics, 2006). Not only is the population in many countries aging but older adults are also remaining fit, active, and healthy for longer which in turn means they may be more likely to witness crime and be involved in the Criminal Justice System (Rothman, Dunlop, & Entzel, 2000). Additionally, older adults may also be victims of crime (Thornton et al. 2003). Thus far, much research has focused on the detrimental effect of age on eyewitness performance. Research presented in this talk will instead examine ways in which we can improve the performance of older witnesses in both an investigative interview situation and when viewing an identification line-up.