

BRIEF SUMMARY

Koutstaal, W., & Schacter, D. L. (2001). Memory distortion and aging. In M. Naveh-Benjamin, M. Moscovitch, and H. L. Roediger, III (Eds.), *Perspectives on Human Memory and Cognitive Aging: Essays in Honour of Fergus Craik* (pp. 362–383). Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

[From the chapter] We [focus] on two streams of research investigating the memory performance of older and younger adults that were previously extensively explored by Fergus Craik with regard to errors of omission, but here are considered in relation to errors of commission. First, taking a cue from a paper by Jacoby and Craik (1979) in which they extended the 1972 levels-of-processing framework so as to emphasize not only the importance of "depth" but also "breadth" of processing and, especially, the role of "distinctiveness" in determining memory performance, we [consider] the possible role of a "distinctiveness heuristic" in guiding recognition judgments: A strategy whereby individuals come to expect to retrieve distinctive information regarding target items and use the failure to retrieve such information as evidence that items were not previously encountered, thus reducing the probability of mistakenly endorsing nonstudied lure items. [...] Second, we [consider] the effects of dual task performance or "divided attention" on errors of commission in older and younger adults. Reflecting on the outcomes of several experimental conditions that varied dual task demands at encoding and/or retrieval [...] we found it necessary to extend our considerations beyond the possible role of frontal factors in contributing to false recognition and source errors in older adults [...] In order to accommodate the full range of relevant findings, we [suggest] that it [is] also necessary to take into account the effects of aging on hippocampal and medial-temporal processes involved in binding the disparate elements of an episode into a coherent trace.
