

UVU Awareness of Memory Malleability

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Subject

- Numerous studies have shown how malleable human memory can be
- Jurors hold eye witness testimony in high regard
- Eye witness testimony is often the cause of individuals being incarcerated and one of the main causes of false imprisonment

Are the students at UVU aware of Memory Malleability?



Definitions

- **Memory Malleability:** The ability for memories to be altered
- **Public Awareness:** Are they aware or familiar with memory malleability?



Literature Review

- Loftus and Pickrell “The Formation of False Memories”
 - Showed that false memories could be created and be indistinguishable from real memories.
- Kersten and Earl’s “Feelings of Familiarity and False Memory for Specific Associations Resulting from Mugshot Exposure”
 - This study identified that people can be influenced by viewing a photo of an unrelated person in correlation with an event and connecting the unrelated person to the event.



Literature Review Cont.

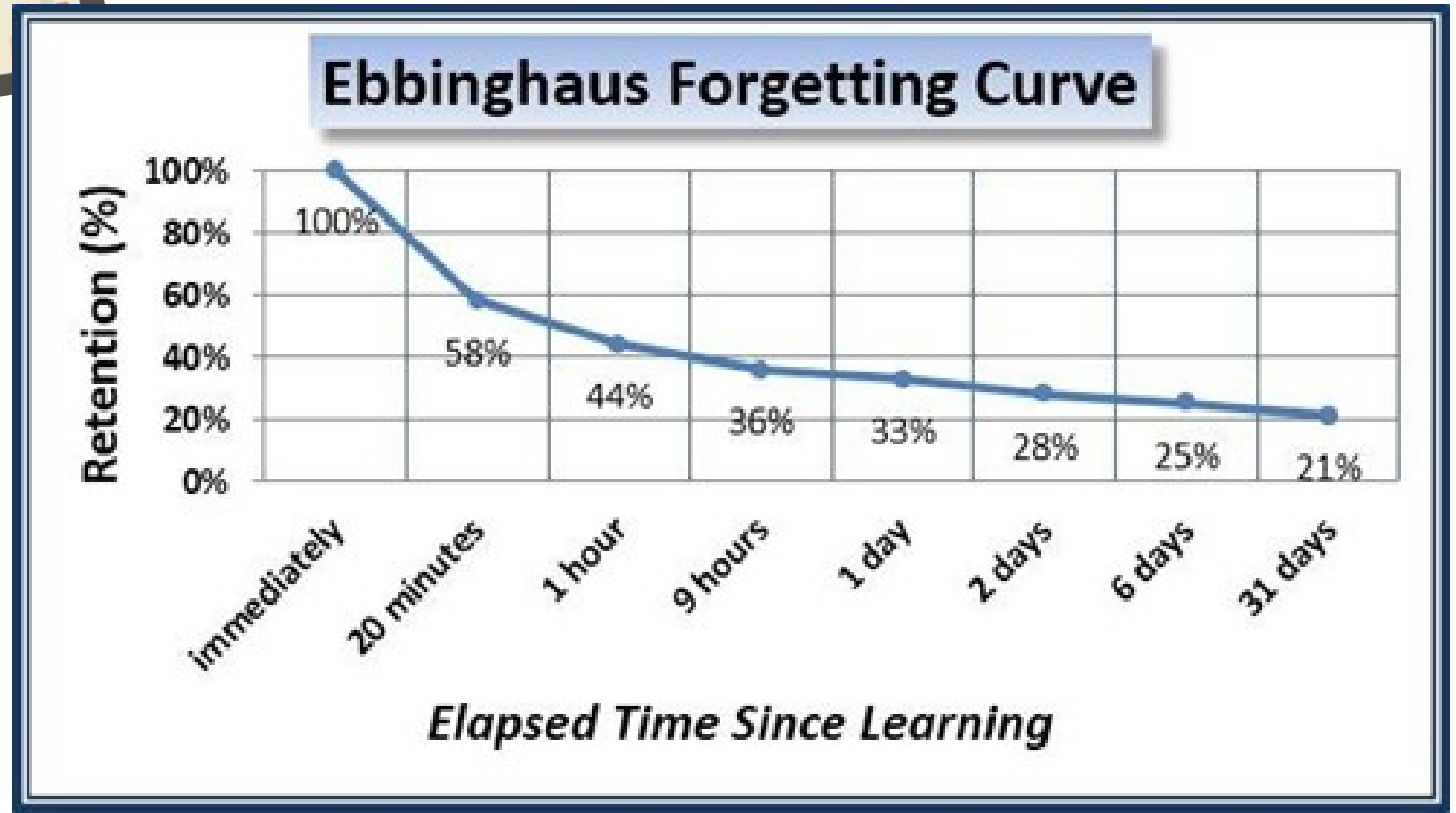
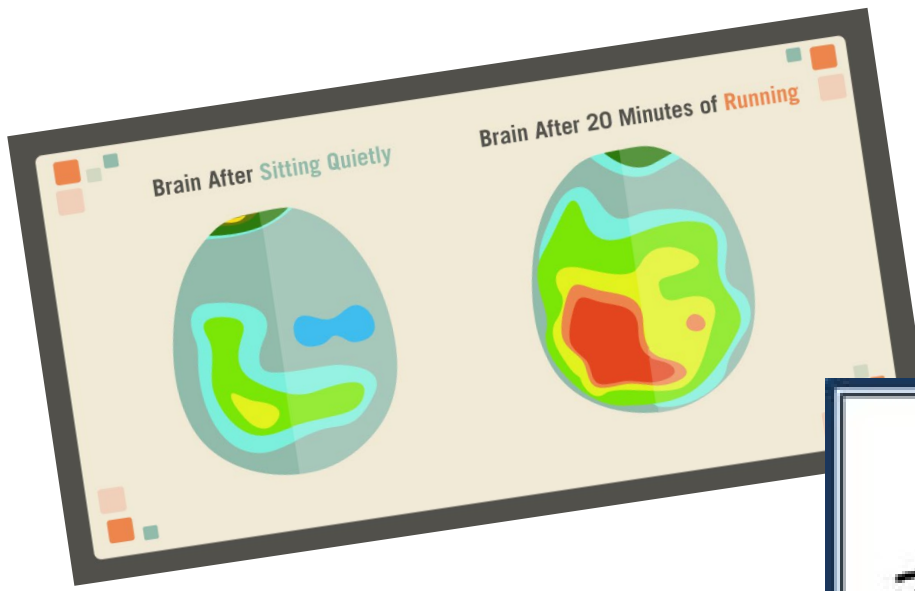
- C.A. Morgan “Misinformation can influence memory for recently experienced, highly stressful events”
 - This study demonstrated that even trained special forces agents can have their memory altered within minutes and hours of an event happening.
- Innocence Project “Identifying the Culprit: Assessing Eyewitness Identification”
 - Of 250 cases exonerated by DNA evidence, 75% of the time they were convicted due to witness misidentification.



Study Design

- Tool: 25 question survey
 - This survey included a 12 question quiz to test the knowledge of those who answered Yes to question 1: Are you aware of memory malleability or that memories can be altered?
 - Those who scored 9/12, or 75% for the purpose of this study were deemed aware of memory malleability
- Sample: 500 random UVU students
- Confidence Level: 95% Confidence Interval: 1.22
- Responses 10
- 2 incomplete responses removed from data for a more true result





<https://www.inkling.com/blog/2015/08/why-google-changed-the-forgetting-curve/>

Conclusion

Out of the 500 surveys administered there were only 10 responses. Out of those 10 responses only 3 were aware of Memory Malleability. We have concluded that Memory Malleability awareness needs to increase.

Benjamin Franklin said that “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” The more we can educate on Memory Malleability we can decrease matters like witness misidentification, false memories, and the influence of an eye witness on a jury.

