

- Loftus describes her work at a very high level (e.g. memory is malleable), but studies are contrived and artificial
  - In actual cases, people can have v. strong memories, including about things that happened in adolescence. Don't get these effects.
    - Example: Loftus study on being lost in the mall. parent said it happened when they were very young. Strong suggestion. And used tricks of the trade.
    - Cf. study of false memory of an enema in adults: no false memories.
    - Can't generalize across content
- Content matters a lot more than Loftus would acknowledge
- Loftus studies are often with students and student siblings. Nothing is at stake, so people use a low criterion for what they call a memory
- Not saying there can't be false memories, but small minority of people (e.g. alien abduction)
- A small subset of people can have memory errors from media reports. Loftus has a study in which some people falsely reported seeing a cat who died in a newsreel.
  - But it's very different from thinking something happened to you
  - Not aware of studies showing false memories of sexual abuse from media reports
  - People can lie and make a false report
- If you look at certain satanic ritual abuse which can involve hypnosis and truth serum, can find some false reports which may be false memories.
- Generally it can be hard to tell the difference between true and false memories. Some have tried to see if true memories are more detailed
- If something involves the self and a taboo act (e.g. sexual abuse), people actually can have very accurate memories after many years. Less susceptible to false memories on those topics b/c strength of memory. There might be a subgroup of people who can have false memories, including for sexual abuse, but often under extreme conditions.
- Memory actually particularly good for events that happen in adolescence – adolescent “bump.” People retain memory of high school/college better. Could be b/c of early sexual experiences, or other life events
- GG's research focuses on the memory of real victims and how well they can remember. Look at errors (which are usually about peripheral events, and people with trauma often have better memory).
- Loftus specializes in creating false memories out of nothing. GG: this is not nearly as prevalent as she proposes
- Some of Loftus's early studies were about peripheral details, but people are usually focused on central actions. Loftus finds people are more suggestible about peripheral details than for central information (e.g. details relevant to body integrity)
  - Loftus calls this “discrepancy detection”: if you have a strong memory and realize someone is trying to mislead you, tend not to be suggestible

- In studies, have people rate centrality. Fair amount of consistency, but there can also be variability. E.g. if someone is shot wearing a sweater you gave them, the shooting is central, the sweater may be central for you
- There can be age differences in memory for preschoolers, but for something happening to the self, even preschoolers resist suggestion. For adolescents, memories will be like an adult's: very strong
  - Scholars like Loftus sometimes take studies involving preschoolers and apply them generally
  - Self-schema is pretty well developed by pre-school
- Individuals who are reporting abuse back when they were adolescents: generally reliable, strong memories. Based on many years of research in her lab and in other labs.
  - GG has done federally funded studies. E.g. followed 200 victims in sexual abuse cases through the courts in Denver in the 1980s (4-17 yo). Tried to screen out false reports at the outset. Followed up when they were older adolescents and young adults
  - GG did study of ppl removed from home in child abuse cases (4-17 yo), evaluated at a residential center. Followed up 20 years later.
  - Perpetrators increasingly record assaults, so have a very valid study of victims (8-15 or 16), can look at memory later. There's a study in Sweden of 3-adolescents
- Some of Loftus' studies use a life events scale. Some people go from "did not happen" to something on the low end of the scale. Trivial difference treated as big deal.