

The co-witness misinformation effect: memory blends or memory compliance?

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For 30 years hundreds of researchers have shown participants videos and slide-sequences of events, presented the participants with misleading information, and found that this misinformation distorted their memories. The purpose of this study was to establish whether those misled participants are reporting a memory blend of the two sources of information or whether they are simply complying with the post-event information. A total of 92 participants were shown one of two versions of six different videos, which included some subtle differences. After having watched each video individually, participants were paired with someone who had seen the other version and they discussed the clips together. They then individually answered questions about the videos, and their responses showed that some of the distorted memories were blends of the original information and the post-event information. The implications of these findings are discussed.

Memory. 2008 May;16(4):436-42. Skagerberg EM, Wright DB. Psychology Department, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK. elins@sussex.ac.uk
