

Department of Psychology

Melissa Rodriguez

Mentor: Lisa Son

Remembering to Forget

Typically, memory addresses how organisms remember, store, and retains information. However, this paper addresses forgetting. We used the *directed forgetting* paradigm to test various processes and components of how individuals forget information. Individuals are presented with items to study, and then directed to forget the information. Then, they are given new information to learn. To their surprise, individuals are eventually tested on all of the information, including those that they had been told to forget. In this experiment, we had people learn a list of word pairs. Then they were told that it was a practice list and they should forget the pairs, and told to learn a new list of word pairs. Following study, we also asked whether people were accurate at judging how well they would forget already learned information. Finally, in order to examine what influences people's judgments of forgetting, we varied the length of the study list that they had to remember. The results showed that by making judgments of forgetting, people were remembering the information, thus making it harder to forget. In addition, we found that a longer second list led to more forgetting of the first list. That is, in order to forget information, one should be distracted.