Anger and Threat in the Cross-Race Effect

The Cross-Race Effect (CRE) is where people more accurately remember the faces of ingroup members than outgroup members, for example with White participants remembering White faces better than Black faces. Research has found that the CRE can be reversed (Ackerman et al., 2006) or reduced (Krumhuber & Manstead, 2011; Young & Hugenberg, 2012) when the White and Black faces have an angry expression, such that angry Black faces are remembered particularly well by White participants. This dissertation tests the original explanation for this phenomenon: that White participants are remembering angry Black faces better because they are seen as threatening, and therefore, as attention-worthy. A pilot study manipulated the emotion of the White and Black photos, at encoding and at test separately. Results are reported. A set of two studies is proposed, which will collect a White and a Black sample to look at how the CRE is influenced by target emotion and by White and Black participants' danger stereotypes of Blacks.