

ONLINE CO-WITNESS DISCUSSIONS CAN LEAD TO MEMORY CONFORMITY

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INTRODUCTION

Co-witness discussions

- Crimes can have multiple co-witnesses with somewhat different memories
- Co-witnesses can introduce misinfo via discussion (*Gabbert et al., 2003*)

Co-witness conformity

- Memory distortion via discussed misinformation
- MORI paradigm (*Mori, 2003*):
 - Participant pairs watch subtly different versions of stimuli, believe they are seeing the same thing
 - Participants then discuss stimuli, naturally introducing misinfo, then take individual memory tests
- Robust evidence for co-witness conformity (*Ito et al., 2019*)

Viability of MORI paradigm in virtual/online environments?

- Recent research: MORI effects replicated online w/ text chat (*Cadavid & Luna, 2021; Rasor, 2021*)
- Present study: Preliminary examination of video-based online MORI
 - Potential for ecologically valid alternative to in-person procedure?

METHOD

Previous student sample: $N = 18$ (Age $M = 19.4$, $SD = 1.5$)

Prolific sample (*data collection ongoing*): $N = 10$ (Age $M = 27.8$, $SD = 9.6$)

Stimuli: Narrated slideshow of a woman stealing objects and performing various actions on a university campus (*Rasor, 2021*)

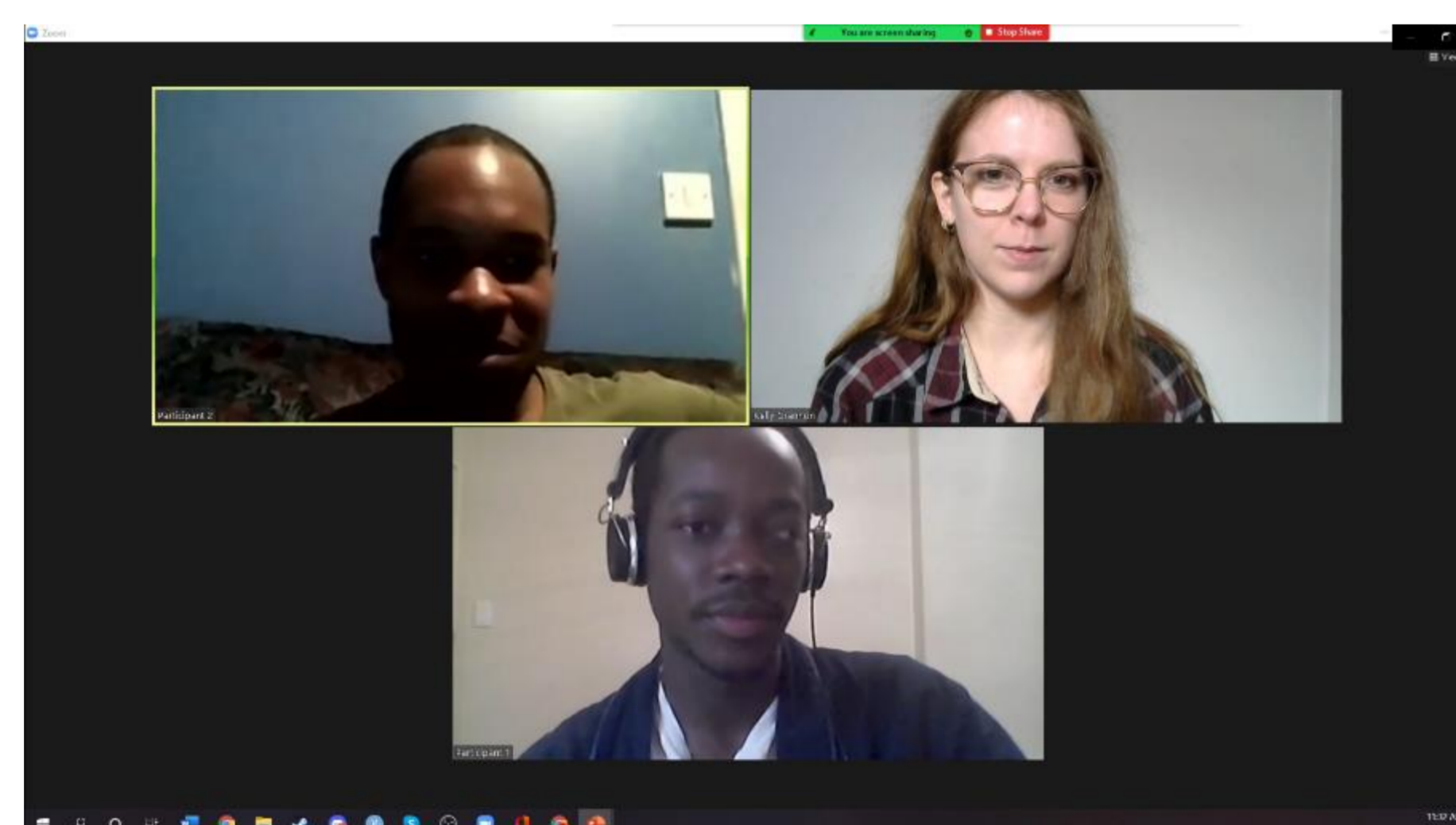
Participant 1 Slideshow



Participant 2 Slideshow



Collaborative Discussion:
11 **same** details
5 **different** details



Individual Memory Questionnaire:
10 discussed
10 non-discussed

What colour are the lockers that the woman tries to break into?

- Brown
- Green
- Grey
- Purple
- Black

What colour are the lockers that the woman tries to break into?

What does the woman take from the desk in the office?

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Item types (Determined by discussion):

Misinfo: Participant exposed to incorrect info in discussion

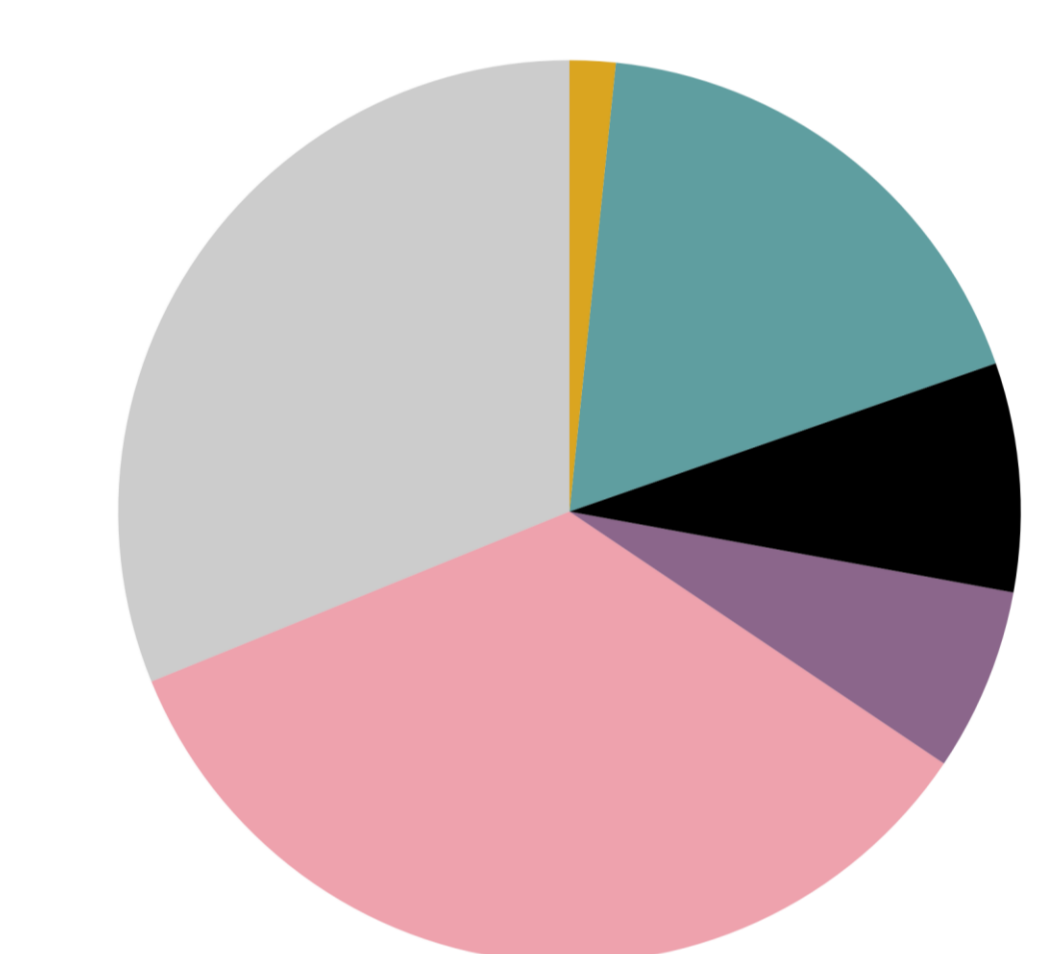
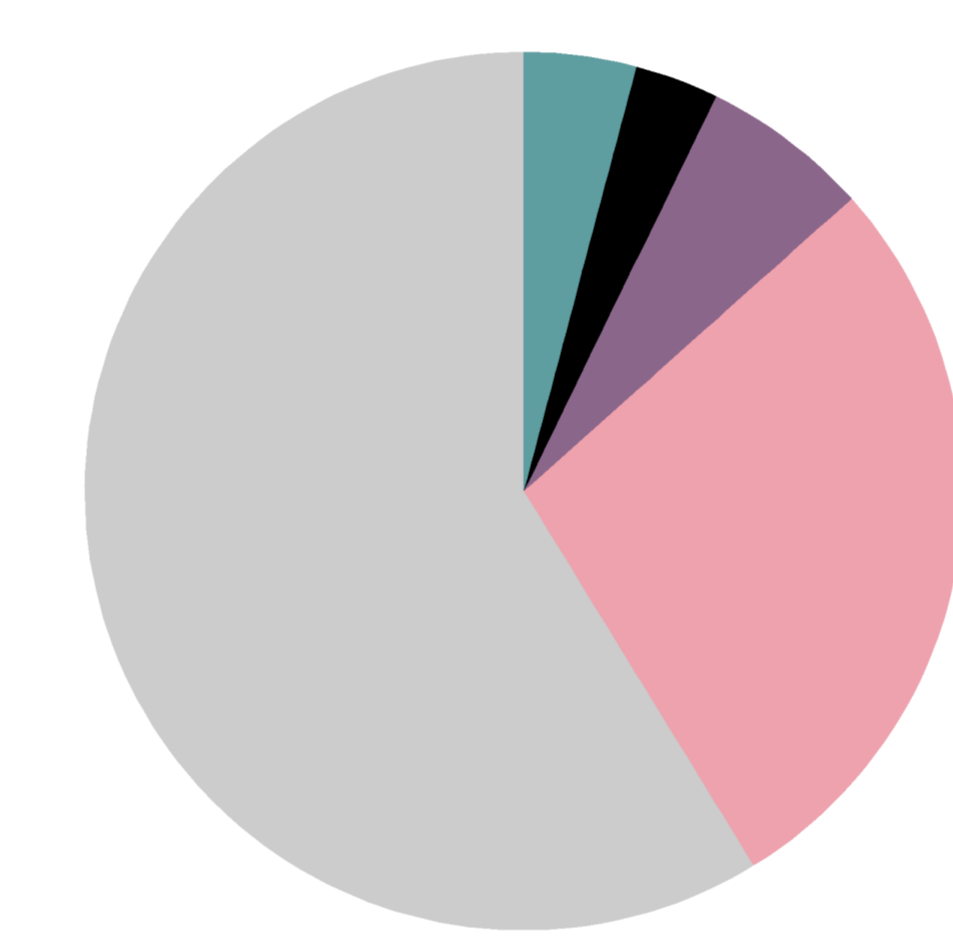
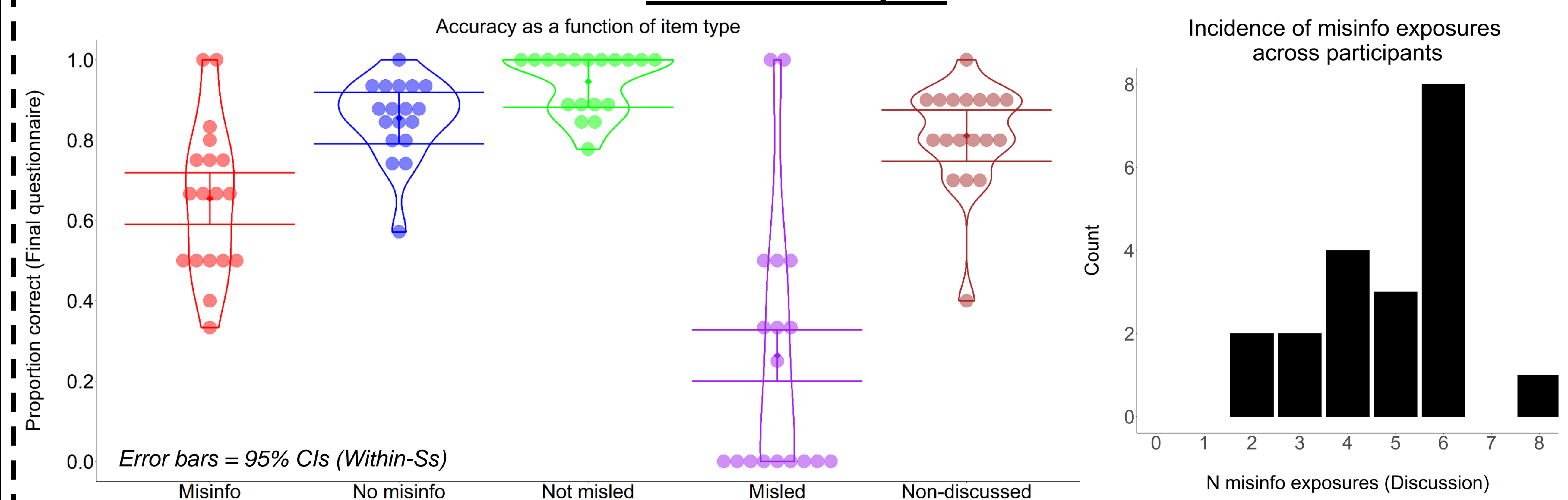
No misinfo: Participant not exposed to incorrect info in discussion

Not misled: Participant didn't select partner's incorrect info as final answer in discussion

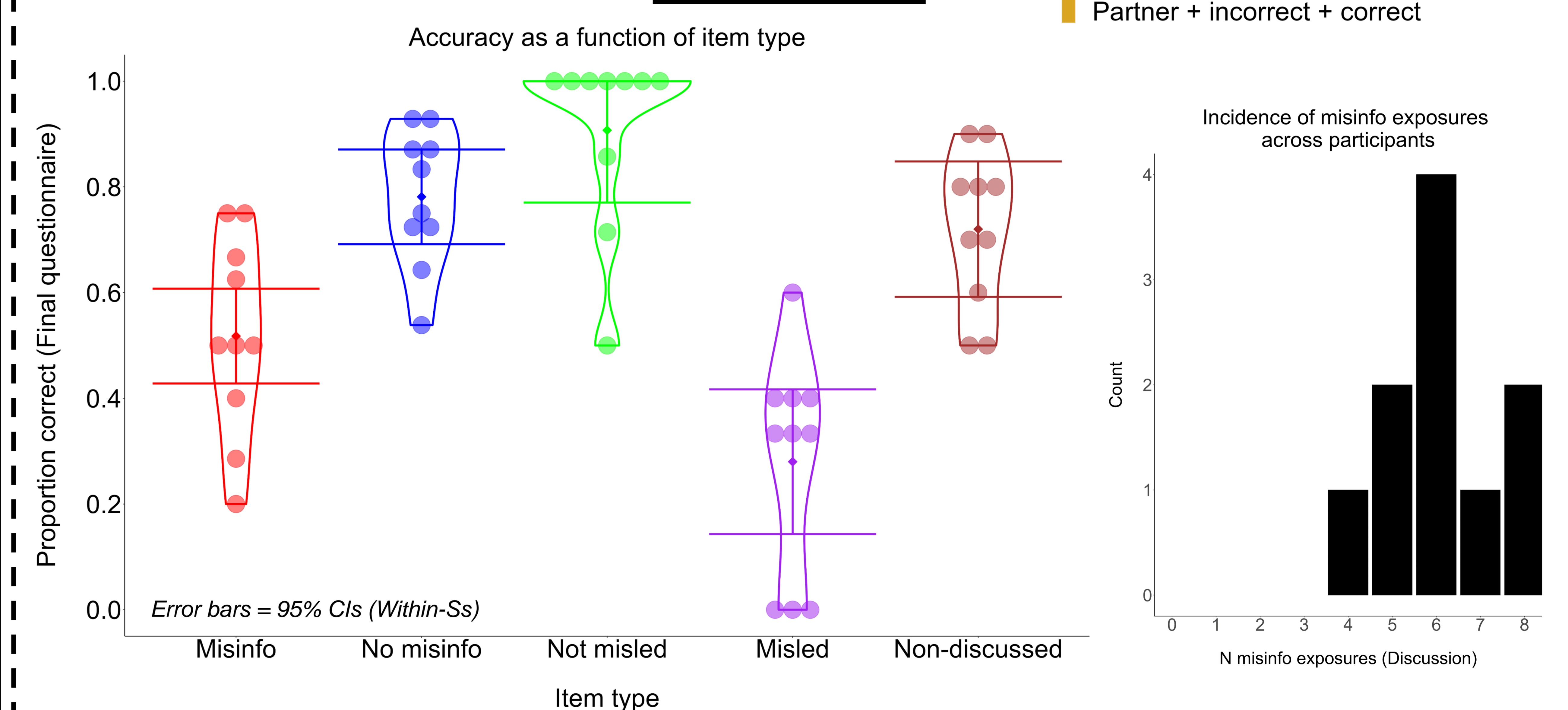
Misled: Participant exposed to incorrect info, selected it as final answer in discussion

Non-discussed: Item did not appear during discussion

Student sample:



Prolific sample



Discussion

- Partners readily exposed each other to misinfo (both witnessed & non-witnessed)
- Being exposed to & agreeing w/ partner's misinfo both = lower accuracy on final test
- But, exposure to misinfo does not necessarily = being misled
 - 41% of misinfo exposures led to Ps being misled (student sample)
 - 57% of misinfo exposures led to Ps being misled (Prolific sample)

Preliminary data suggest viability of online, video-based MORI procedure

--Cadavid, S., & Luna, K. (2021). Online co-witness discussions also lead to eyewitness memory distortion: The MORI-v technique. *Applied Cognitive Psychology, 35*(3), 621-631.

--Gabbert, F., Memon, A., & Allan, K. (2003). Memory conformity: Can eyewitnesses influence each others' memories for an event? *Applied Cognitive Psychology, 17*, 533-543.

--Ito, H., Barzykowski, K., Grzesik, M., Gülgöz, S., Gürdere, C., Janssen, S.M.J., Khor, J., Rowthorn, H., Wade, K.A., Luna, K., Albuquerque, P.B., Kumar, D., Singh, A.D., Ceconello, W.W., Cadavid, S., Laird, N.C., Baldassari, M.J., Lindsay, D.S., & Mori, K. (2019). Eyewitness memory distortion following co-witness discussion: A replication of Garry, French, Kinzett, and Mori (2008) in ten countries. *Journal of Applied Research in Memory and Cognition, 8*(1), 68-77.

--Mori, (2003). Surprisingly projecting different movies to two subsets of viewers. *Behavior Research Methods, Instruments & Computers, 35*(4), 599-604.

--Rasor, S. A. (2021). *Developing and testing new simulated crime stimuli for eyewitness memory research* [Unpublished Masters thesis]. University of Warwick.