Improving the Mind with a Hop, Skip, and a Jump

Jing Chen

Christopher A. Kurby
Part 1: What changes?
"Oh, getting old isn’t so bad, except for maybe a little forgetfulness."
• Memory complaints are common among older adults (Galvin, 2005).

• Memory complaints is a major issue that are reported by those entering medical clinics for help (Galvin, 2005).
Age and Episodic Memory

Memory for map directions

Memory for stories that were just read

Memory for lists of words

Memory for pairs of words
Why are there declines in memory with age?

- Reduced processing speed (Salthouse, 1996)
  - How quickly you can solve a problem, or make simple judgments.

- Older functioning

- ****
Resnick et al., 2003
Different regions show different among of age-related changes
Resnick et al., 2003 – Loss of gray matters
Raz, et al., 2005
A 5-year study of healthy older adults (mean age 63.79)

Brain regions that reduce in volume with age.

- Learning
- Thinking
- Memory
Implicit Memory - Semantic Priming

- Target word: Nurse
  - Unrelated: Butter
  - Related: Doctor

Data from Hutchison et al (2008)
Positive

Age = CI ± .28

Number of images recalled

- Young
- Middle
- Old

Categories:
- Positive
- Negative
- Neutral
Stereotypes and Aging

Hess et al, 2003 JoG
Can we improve memory, thinking, and even the brain itself?