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The short and the tall of it: The role of viewer height in recognising faces viewed from above and below.

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Abstract

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The short and the tall of it: The role of viewer height in recognising faces viewed from above and below.

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The pattern of generalisation across different views of faces is dependent on the angle and the axis of rotation of those views. For views of faces rotated in pitch (i.e., above and below a frontal full-face view) our previous research shows that generalisation is poorer for views from above than for views from below (Favelle, Palmisano & Maloney, 2007; Favelle, Palmisano & Avery, 2011). To what extent does viewer height account for viewpoint effects in pitch rotated views of faces? In this study we investigate the role of experience in viewpoint dependent face recognition by correlating viewer height (as an objective measure of exposure to particular views) with face matching performance across rotations in pitch; the rationale being that short people have greater exposure to views from below and tall people to views from above. Results show some group differences based on height and the sex of the face to be matched that may indicate a role for experience with views in face recognition.