

## Victoria Z. Lawson Selected Publication Abstracts

Dysart, J. E., **Lawson, V. Z.**, & Rainey, A. (2012). Blind lineup administration as a prophylactic against the postidentification feedback effect. *Law and Human Behavior*, 36, 312-129. doi:10.1037/h0093921

Confidence and other testimony-relevant judgments may be distorted when witnesses are given confirming postidentification feedback, and double-blind procedures-wherein the lineup administrator does not know the identity of the suspect-are a commonly proposed, but untested, remedy for this effect. In the current study, mock witnesses viewed a staged crime video followed by a target-present or target-absent lineup where the administrator was or was not presumed to know the identity of the suspect. After making an identification decision, witnesses were or were not given realistic, but nonidentification-specific, feedback, and then confidence and other judgments were assessed. A significant interaction was found between blind condition and feedback such that feedback inflated confidence and other judgments in presumed nonblind conditions only; feedback had no effect on participants in presumed blind conditions. As predicted by the selective cue integration framework-a theoretical model suggested to explain the interaction between presumed blind administration and feedback-this interaction was significant only for inaccurate participants. These results suggest that blind administration may serve as a prophylactic against the negative effects of postidentification feedback. In addition, the effectiveness of our subtle feedback in influencing judgments suggests that lineup administrators should take care not to provide any feedback to eyewitnesses.

Kassin, S. M., Kukucka, J., **Lawson, V. Z.**, & DeCarlo, J. (2014). Does video recording alter the behavior of police during interrogation?: A mock crime-and-investigation study. *Law and Human Behavior*, 38, 73-83. doi:10.1037/lhb0000047

A field study conducted in a midsized city police department examined whether video recording alters the process of interrogation. Sixty-one investigators inspected a staged crime scene and interrogated a male mock suspect in sessions that were surreptitiously recorded. By random assignment, half the suspects had committed the mock crime; the other half were innocent. Half the police participants were informed that the sessions were being recorded; half were not. Coding of the interrogations revealed the use of several common tactics designed to get suspects to confess. Importantly, police in the camera-informed condition were less likely than those in the -uninformed condition to use minimization tactics and marginally less likely to use maximization tactics. They were also perceived by suspects—who were all uninformed of the camera manipulation—as trying less hard to elicit a confession. Unanticipated results indicated that camera-informed police were better able to discriminate between guilty and innocent suspects in their judgments and behavior. The results as a whole indicate that video recording can affect the process of interrogation—notably, by inhibiting the use of certain tactics. It remains to be seen whether these findings generalize to longer and

more consequential sessions and whether the camera-induced differences found are to be judged as favorable or unfavorable.

Kutateladze, B. L., **Lawson, V. Z.**, & Andiloro, N. R. (2015). Does evidence really matter? An exploratory analysis of the role of evidence in plea bargaining in felony drug cases. *Law and Human Behavior*, 36(5), 431-442. doi:10.1037/lhb0000142

The majority of cases in the United States are disposed of through plea bargaining; however, this important discretionary point has received relatively little attention from researchers compared with trial and jury proceedings, and other discretionary points such as arrest and sentencing. Additionally, although evidence is considered an important factor in determining case outcomes, its influence on prosecutors' decisions regarding plea offers is less clear. In this study, we examined the potential impact of evidentiary factors, as well as other legal and extralegal factors, on two plea bargaining decisions, plea-to-a-lesser-charge offers and sentence offers, using data on felony drug cases processed by the New York County District Attorney's office. We found that prosecutors made more punitive charge offers when they had audio/video evidence, eyewitness identification(s), prerecorded buy money used by an undercover officer in a buy-and-bust operation, or had recovered currency. Of all evidence factors analyzed, only the recovery of currency predicted sentence offers. By contrast, three other factors—defendants' detention status, the presence of multiple plea offers, and prior prison sentence—had a much greater impact on charge and sentence offers. Although additional research is needed, it is possible that evidence has a greater impact at the initial stages of a case, particularly on the decision about whether to accept a case for prosecution, than it does on subsequent prosecutorial decisions.

**Lawson, V. Z.**, & Dysart, J. E. (2015). Searching for suspects: Mugshot files and showups (street identifications). In T. Valentine, & J. Davis (Eds.), *Forensic facial identification: Theory and practice of identification from eyewitnesses, composites and CCTV* (pp. 71-92). Chichester: Wiley Blackwell. doi:10.1002/9781118469538.ch4

In the immediate aftermath of a crime, law enforcement may not have evidence to suggest a particular suspect; thus, eyewitnesses may be used for the process of finding suspects. While the creation of facial composites may form part of this process, the eyewitness may also be asked to search photographs of prior offenders (i.e., a mugshot search) or they may be presented with potential suspects singly in a showup either live (termed a "street identification" in the UK) or in a single photograph. While a vast amount of research has been conducted on how decisions are made in lineups and what factors influence lineup identification decisions, there is comparatively little research on either mugshots or showups as standalone procedures. This chapter reviews the research to date and suggests avenues for future research.

**Lawson, V. Z., & Dysart, J. E. (2014).** The showup identification procedure: An exploration of systematic biases. *Legal and Criminological Psychology, 19*, 54-68. doi:10.1111/j.2044-8333.2012.02057.x

**Purpose.** Showups are common, yet little research has investigated the biasing factors that may influence showup identifications. We investigated the effects of cross-race conditions and clothing bias on showup identification decisions. Additionally, we explored identification decisions made in a subsequent lineup dependent on race, clothing, and showup-target-presence.

**Methods.** Participants watched a mock crime and were presented with a showup in which suspect race, target-presence, and the clothing worn by the suspect were varied. Following a delay, participants viewed a target-present or -absent lineup and were asked to make a second identification decision.

**Results.** Presentation of the suspect in the clothing worn by the perpetrator increased choosing rates in both own-race and other-race conditions. Despite this, differential patterns of decision response latencies indicated that eyewitnesses may use clothing information differently when making own-race compared to other-race identification decisions. No evidence for an own-race bias in showup identifications was found; however, other-race lineup identifications were less accurate than own-race lineup identifications. Further, participants in own-race and other-race conditions differed in the extent to which they were affected by multiple identification procedures. Viewing an own-race innocent suspect in a showup increased subsequent false lineup identifications, while choosing the innocent suspect from the showup was necessary to increase false lineup identifications in other-race conditions.

**Conclusions.** Different situational factors may affect the identification accuracy of eyewitnesses in own-race and other-race conditions for both showup and lineup procedures. Particular caution is advised when showups are clothing-biased and multiple identification procedures are used.

**Lawson, V. Z., & Strange, D. (2015).** News as (hazardous) entertainment: Exaggerated reporting leads to more memory distortion for news stories. *Psychology of Popular Media Culture, 4*(2), 188-198. doi:10.1037/ppm0000015

The media is influential in shaping people's knowledge and beliefs about the world; however, reporters may take liberties with the facts to support a particular view or to create an entertaining story, resulting in biased or even falsified reports. We examined whether news reports with exaggerated details from newspapers and/or television are more likely to lead to memory distortion and whether a warning regarding the media's potential for exaggeration can reduce memory distortion and increase skepticism for the information contained in the reports. We found that despite being trusted less, more extreme reports were more likely to lead to memory distortion. Further, a warning had no impact on the degree to which memory was distorted or on perceptions of trustworthiness; thus, it is not clear how best to protect news consumers against the negative effects of exaggerated reporting on memory for current events.

West, M. L., **Lawson, V. Z.**, & Grose-Fifer, J. (2014). The effect of electrophysiological neuroscientific deception detection evidence on juror judgments in a criminal trial. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 36, 133-144. doi:10.1080/01973533.2014.881288

There are concerns that if neuroscientific deception detection evidence becomes admissible in court, jurors may weigh it inappropriately. We investigated whether mock jurors were influenced more by electrophysiological than behavioral evidence that a defendant in a criminal trial was lying. Participants' perceptions of evidence quality predicted verdict choice, and quality ratings were higher for neuroscientific than for behavioral evidence. However, both types of evidence increased guilty verdicts similarly, and the inclusion of neuroimages had no additional impact. These findings suggest that neuroscientific evidence may be processed differently than other types of deception evidence, but it is not necessarily more persuasive.