Convicting the Guilty, Protecting the Innocent: Double-Blind Sequential Lineup Identification Procedures

Nancy Steblay, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
Augsburg College
Identification in the lab

Simultaneous lineups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perp Present</th>
<th>Perp Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perpetrator 50%</td>
<td>Filler ID 51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filler ID 24%</td>
<td>No Choice 49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Choice 26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From 30 tests: Steblay, Dysart, Fulero, & Lindsay, 2001
Identification in the lab

Sequential lineups

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Perp Present</th>
<th>Perp Absent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perpetrator</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filler ID</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Choice</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Steblay, Dysart, Fulero, & Lindsay, 2001
Comparison of (traditional) simultaneous vs. sequential lineups

In lab:
• Sequential lineup produces a more cautious eyewitness (fewer identification attempts) -- more conservative test
• Fewer perpetrator identifications
• Fewer mistaken identifications
• Cost/Benefit: Likelihood of correct choice greater with Sequential vs. Simultaneous
From the lab to the field

• Lab: Allows recommendations based on
  – Established principles of memory
  – Rigorous controlled testing
  – Sorting of factors that do/do not affect memory
  – Range of stimuli and variations on procedure
  – Knowledge of “ground truth” (the perp)
• Field: Context of real practice -- but without knowledge of ground truth

• What can we learn?
  – Generalize? (Something we missed?)
  – Practical? Can it work?
  – Are refinements necessary? (➔ back to lab)
  – Future: How do simultaneous and sequential look side-by-side in the field? (but beware...)
Hennepin County Pilot Project

- Can the new techniques work in real field police investigations? (Yes)
- What does eyewitness performance look like under the new procedures?
- All Double-Blind Sequential (280 lineups)

- Eyewitness choices: Hennepin County
  - Suspect IDs 54 %
  - Filler selections 8 %
  - No Choice 38 %
Eyewitness performance over the repeated sequential lineup

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Laps</th>
<th>Suspect ID</th>
<th>Filler</th>
<th>No choice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4, 5, or 6</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More laps = more errors
Replicated in laboratory
What can be gained?

- Standardized scientifically-based procedure that works in field
- Eyewitness is required to depend on memory
- Lineup administrator conducts and reports an objective appraisal of the lineup interaction and results
- Confidence in the accuracy of eyewitness evidence
For additional information --

e-mail: steblay@augsburg.edu

Hennepin County data summary:
Cardozo Public Law, Policy, and Ethics Journal
www.augsburg.edu/psychology/faculty/steblay.html

Final report available (soon):
National Institute of Justice