Department of Psychology, Georgia Southern University, P. O. Box 8041, Statesboro, GA 30460-8041

Eyewitness Identification, Confessions and DNA

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Textbook: Cutler, B. & Penrod, S. (1995). Mistaken Identification: The Eyewitness, Psychology,

and the Law. Cambridge University Press.

Dwyer, J., Neufeld, P., & Scheck, B. (2000). Actual Innocence: Five Days to Execution

and Other Dispatches from the Wrongly Convicted. Doubleday

Purpose of the Course:

• This course will examine the issue of eyewitness identification, confession evidence, and the use of DNA evidence in conjunction with eyewitness identification and confessions. The purpose of the course is to show how the social sciences can be a factor in the legal system as it relates to these specific issues.

General Issues for the Course:

- This course is a seminar. By seminar it means that all of us are participants in discussing and learning the material. It will be my expectation that all students will take an active part in discussing this material. The instructor reserves the right to include a subjective evaluation of a student's level of participation and the quality of their participation in the final grade determination.
- At most class meetings at least one student will be responsible for leading the discussion of some readings that are on reserve in the library and/or are available over the Internet. All students are expected to have read the material and be ready to answer questions on the articles. A student's ability to answer these questions will be a factor in their final grade.
- For many of the issues which we will discuss there are no "right" and "wrong" answers. Therefore, I would ask (require) that we are all open in sharing our thoughts about the issues and that we respect each other's opinions.
- I expect everyone to be on-time to each class. Attendance will be taken and become a part of the final grade determination. Each day that you are in class you will earn two points. Each day you are not in class you will not earn the two points and you will lose two points. Attendance is defined as being in class when we begin and staying though the entire class period.
- Since this is a course within the "Senior Seminar" genre there must be major paper as a requirement. The form of this paper will be as an amicus brief on a case that I will give to you. You will be divided into groups of 4 students and it is expected that the brief will be a product of everyone's thinking and work. In order to satisfactory write the brief you will need to analyze the case and then

cite the relevant research that bears upon the psychological and legal issues involved. This will require you to search the literature and cite the relevant literature beyond that which is covered in the course. It will be expected that you cite the research, explain the research design, explain the results and show how the results bear on the issue before the court. You can see how the American Psychological Association wrote a brief by examining the article "In the Supreme Court of the United States Price Waterhouse v. Ann B. Hopkins" (American Psychologist, 1991, 1061-1070). You can also find the briefs that have been filed for Supreme Court cases at http://supreme.findlaw.com/supreme_court/resources.html. While most briefs are written according to a legal style (as per the Price Waterhouse brief) I will allow you to write the brief using APA format. Each person in the groups will be required to attest via an affidavit as to the fact that the brief is truly the work of the entire group. One grade will be assigned to each group member based upon an evaluation of the brief. Assuming enough time, each group will present their brief to the rest of the class during the last two class meetings. The brief will be turned in prior to presenting it to the class.

- There is a webpage that has some interesting material. It is the personal web page of Dr. Gary Wells who is well known in the eyewitness identification area. The URL is http://psych-server.iastate.edu/faculty/gwells/homepage.htm.
- Summary of grading: 34 points possible for attendance; 100 points available for brief, and 50 points available for class participation. Grades will be assigned according to the following: 93-100% A; 90-92% A-; 88-89% B+; 83-87% B; 80-82% B-; 78-79% C+; 73-77% C; 70-72% C-; 65-69% D; below 65% F.

Daily Schedule for Psyc 497 - May, 2000

Date	Topic	Reading
		C&P = Cutler and Penrod; SND = Scheck, Neufeld & Dwyer
May 8	Introduction	videos
May 9	Errors in Eyewitness Identification	C&P 3-16; Loftus (1974); Loftus and Ketcham chapter; Munsterberg chapter (pp 37-69). Sinatra.
May 10		
May 11	Expert Witness	C&P 19-26 and 51-52; Gatekeepers chapter (Chapter 3) from Faigman; Kassin, Ellsworth, & Smith (1989); Gibeaut (1999)
May 15		Taiginan, Rassin, Ensworth, & Sinth (1989), Glocaut (1999)
May 16	Science	C&P 55-78; SND (Preface and Chapter 1, 5 and 7)
May 17	Witness Factors	C&P 79-96; SND (Chapter 2)
May 18	Perpetrator, Event, and Post Event Factors	C&P 97-112; United States v. Norword; SND (Chapter 10)
May 22	Procedures	C&P 113-135; SND (Chapters 3 and 12)
May 23	Safeguards: Attorney	C&P 139-168; SND (Chapters 8 and 9)
May 24	Safeguards: Jury	C&P 171-209; State v. Cromedy; SND (Chapter 11)
May 25	Safeguards: Lineups	Eyewitness Evidence: A Guide for Law Enforcement. Department of Justice; Wells, et al (in press)
May 29		Kassin & Sukel (1997); Kassin (1997); Vessel (1998); Napier & Adams (1998); SND (Chapter 4 and 6)
May 30	Police Confessions	` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` ` `
May 31		Leo & Ofske (1998).
June 1		SND (Chapter 13)
June 2		

More assignments may be made as we go through the course.

Readings for Eyewitness Identification, Confession and DNA

Eyewitness Evidence: A Guide for Law Enforcement. Department of Justice. http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/178240.pdf

Faigman, D. L. (1999). Legal Alchemy: The use and misuse of science in the law. New York: Freeman.

Gibeaut, J. (1999). Yes, I'm sure that's him. <u>ABA journal</u>. http://www.abanet.org/journal/oct99/10TRACE.HTML

Kassin, S. (1997). The psychology of confession evidence. American Psychologist, 52, 221-233.

Kassin, S. M. & Sukel, H. (1997). Coerced confessions and the jury: An experimental test of the "Harmless Error" rule. <u>Law and Human Behavior</u>, 21, 27-46.

Kassin, S. M., Ellsworth, P., & Smith, V. L. (1989). The "General Acceptance" of psychological research on eyewitness testimony: A survey of the experts. <u>American Psychologist</u>, 44, 1089-1098.

Leo, R. & Ofske, R. (1998). The consequences of false confessions: Deprivations of liberty and miscarriages of justice in the age of psychological interrogation. <u>Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology</u>, 88, 429-496.

Loftus, E. (1974). Incredible eyewitness. Psychology Today, 116-119.

Loftus, E. and Ketcham, K. (1991). Witness for the Defense. New York: St. Martins.

Munsterberg, H. (1908). On the witness stand. New York: Doubleday.

Napier, M. & Adams, S. (1998). Magic words to obtain confessions. <u>FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, 67, 11-15.</u> (http://www.fbi.gov/library/leb/1998/oct98leb.pdf)

Sinatra, A. (2000). It's him --- or it it? http://abcnews.go.com/sections/us/dailynews/eyewitness_testimony.html

State v. Cromedy found at http://lawlibrary.rutgers.edu/courts/supreme/a-166-97.opn.html

United States v. Norwood. United States District Court, District of New Jersey, 12996. 939 F.Supp. 1132.

Vessel, D. (1998). Conducting successful interrogations. <u>FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, 67</u>, 1-6. (http://www.fbi.gov/library/leb/1998/oct98leb.pdf)

Wells, G., Lindsay, R., Turtle, J., Malpass, R., Fisher, R., & Fulero, S. (in press) From the lab to the police station: A successful application of eyewitness research. Prepublication reprint. http://psych-server.iastate.edu/faculty/gwells/americanpsychologisthtml.htm