

6-2016

## The Impact of Restricting a Jury's Access to Visual Information about a Defendant

Krystia Grembocki  
*Lindenwood University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/psych\\_journals](https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/psych_journals)



Part of the [Psychology Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Grembocki, Krystia (2016) "The Impact of Restricting a Jury's Access to Visual Information about a Defendant," *Psychology Research Methods Journal*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 19 , Article 2.

Available at: [https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/psych\\_journals/vol1/iss19/2](https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/psych_journals/vol1/iss19/2)

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Psychology, Sociology, and Public Health Department at Digital Commons@Lindenwood University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Psychology Research Methods Journal by an authorized editor of Digital Commons@Lindenwood University. For more information, please contact [phuffman@lindenwood.edu](mailto:phuffman@lindenwood.edu).

## **The Impact of Restricting a Jury's Access to Visual Information about a Defendant**

*Krystia Grembocki<sup>1</sup>*

*A primary problem with the current criminal justice system in the United States is that it almost solely relies on a jury to determine whether a defendant is guilty or not guilty of committing a crime. While this system has been in place for many years, it is flawed because it ignores the fact that people tend to make judgments based on extralegal factors, or variables that are not related to a case, which may lead them to have implicit biases toward or against an alleged offender. Previous findings indicate that extralegal factors that impact juries include gender, race and ethnicity, facial maturity, dress, perceived socioeconomic status, attractiveness, emotional engagement, and jurors' views of their own attractiveness. The present study evaluates whether the presence of visual information (i.e. what a juror can visually observe about a defendant) affects the verdict of a trial. Participants were divided into three groups who heard a fictional crime scenario about an armed robbery incident. Along with the scenario, participants in the first group saw a picture of an attractive offender, participants in the second group saw a picture of an unattractive offender, and participants in the third group did not see a picture of an offender at all. It was hypothesized that participants who saw the attractive offender would find him guilty less often and recommend less harsh sentences when convicted, but the findings were not significant for either of these hypotheses.*

The purpose of a criminal justice system in any society is to maintain order and protect individuals or groups from unfair and wrongful treatment. One may be lead to believe that justice systems around the world function relatively simply: in a criminal case, a person is accused of committing an act of wrongdoing and is thus subjected to court hearings, attorneys, and a fair and speedy trial by jury. However, it is usually not that straightforward. Extralegal variables, or

---

<sup>1</sup> Krystia Grembocki, Department of Psychology, Lindenwood University. Correspondence concerning this research paper should be addressed to Krystia Grembocki, Department of Psychology, Lindenwood University, St. Charles, MO 63301 or Email: [klg997@lionmail.lindenwood.edu](mailto:klg997@lionmail.lindenwood.edu)

non-evidence-based factors presented in court that tend to influence jurors' perceptions of a case, pose a significant and nearly unresolvable problem in the process, especially in the United States' criminal justice system. Many studies have been conducted by social psychologists that reveal how various extralegal variables impact the outcome of criminal trials.

A factor that is frequently studied in this context is gender. In an experiment conducted by Ahola, Hellstrom, and Christianson (2010), participants reviewed scenarios that differed in criminal severity as well as in the attractiveness of the criminals associated with each scenario. Participants answered questions pertaining to their assumptions of "the defendant's credibility, reliability, guilt, culpability, aggressiveness, insensitiveness, disagreeableness, ruthlessness, and degree of mental disorder, as well as seriousness of the crime" (Ahola et al., 2010, p. 314), and they also made a sentencing decision for each defendant. Women generally received more sentencing leniency than men, an effect that was exacerbated by attractiveness ratings. That is, attractive women were sentenced less harshly than unattractive women, and although men typically received more severe sentences compared to women, attractive men were generally given less harsh sentences than unattractive men. The most severe sentencing recommendations were given by female jurors to female defendants (Ahola et al., 2010). This suggests that the gender of jurors and defendants may influence the turnout of a case.

Jurors' decisions are also affected by race and ethnic identifiers of defendants. Abwender and Hough (2001) recruited 207 participants to take part in their study, 43% of which were

Black, 27% were Hispanic, and 30% were White. They read a scenario about negligent homicide committed by an intoxicated female driver, and they were asked to rate how guilty the woman was of committing the crime based on her photo and to make an appropriate sentencing decision. Abwender and Hough (2001) believed that jurors who shared racial characteristics with the defendant would treat her with more leniency than defendants of other races. They found that White jurors treated Black and White defendants more harshly than Black and Hispanic jurors. Like Ahola et al. (2010), they concluded that female jurors' sentencing decisions were much more severe than male jurors, especially when shown pictures of unattractive defendants (Abwender & Hough, 2001).

Another important extralegal variable is facial maturity. Work by Zebrowitz and Collins indicates that when a person has immature facial qualities, he or she is said appear more kind and less culpable of committing a crime than someone with more mature features (as cited in Dumas & Teste, 2006). In an effort to better understand this claim, Dumas and Teste (2006) designed a study in which participants were given a crime scenario and asked to determine whether they believed the defendants were guilty, to rate their confidence in their decision, to recommend a punishment, and to evaluate the facial characteristics of the defendants. While overall attractiveness did not have a significant effect on conviction or sentencing decisions, facial maturity did. Namely, there was a correlation between participants rating defendants as "baby-faced" – as having immature facial features – and a "not guilty" verdict (Dumas & Teste, 2006).

These results seem to support Zebrowitz' and Collins' previous conclusions that looking youthful is often associated with appearing innocent.

Fontaine and Kiger's (1978) work suggests that clothing choice may also impact a jury's conviction decisions. In this study, participants were shown video footage of criminal trials involving manslaughter committed by a White man and were asked to determine how guilty the defendant looked. In the middle of the video, they were shown a picture of the defendant dressed in a prison jumpsuit or a picture of the defendant wearing business-like attire. In each picture, the defendant was either accompanied or not accompanied by a guard (Fontaine & Kiger, 1978). The main conclusion was that lone-standing defendants wearing a suit were convicted less often and given less severe sentences than all other defendants, and defendants who stood alone while wearing a prison jumpsuit rather than a formal suit were judged more harshly by participants overall (Fontaine & Kiger, 1978). This means that, at least to some extent, jurors are influenced by the way defendants dress in court.

Interestingly, Kutys (2012) conducted a related study evaluating the effects of defendants' perceived socioeconomic status on jurors' conviction decisions and sentencing recommendations. While the findings were not statistically significant, a trend in the data indicated that defendants who were perceived as unattractive and as having a low socioeconomic status tended to be convicted more often and given harsher sentencing recommendations (Kutys, 2012).

Other variables that have been analyzed include jurors' perceptions of defendants' emotions during a trial and their perceptions of their own physical attractiveness. Researchers have found that the perceived emotional engagement of defendants has a significantly negative impact on jurors' conviction decisions, especially when their facial expressions indicate boredom or lack of remorse, whereas those who show sorrow and sincerity are likely to incur a lower conviction rate and less punishments for their crimes (Antonio, 2006). Similarly, work by Darby and Jeffers (1988) showed that participants who rated themselves as attractive convicted unattractive offenders more frequently and punished them more severely than attractive offenders, whereas the conviction and sentencing decisions of participants who rated themselves as average or unattractive did not systematically vary with offender attractiveness.

Given that the physical appearance of a defendant does seem to affect people's perceptions of the crime, guilt status, and punishment, it is important to consider whether withholding the visual impact of a defendant's image could potentially lead to fairer and more consistent outcomes in criminal trials. The present study aims to understand whether implicit biases form within jurors who do and do not have access to visual information about a defendant. That is, does knowing how a defendant looks impact jurors' conviction decisions? Participants were divided into three groups, and each group was provided with different visual information regarding the offender's appearance in respect to a scenario depicting armed robbery. The primary hypothesis of the present study was that participants who were shown an attractive

offender would find him guilty less often than participants shown an unattractive offender or shown no picture at all. Secondly, it was predicted that, when found guilty, an attractive offender would receive a lighter sentence than an unattractive offender or an offender whose attractiveness is unknown.

## Method

### Participants

For the present study, 37 participants were recruited (26 women, 10 men;  $M_{age} = 20.0$  years, age range: 18-28). Participants were recruited through Facebook and the Lindenwood Participant Pool (LPP) using a recruitment description and fliers. LPP participants were compensated with extra credit, but other participants from Lindenwood University and Facebook were not compensated for taking part in the study. The majority of participants were Caucasian women who have obtained some college education. Participants' occupations varied, and one participant indicated that they had served on a jury during a trial at some point in their lives.

### Materials

**Recruitment materials.** The Sona Systems recruitment description included a basic overview of the study, stating its purpose and that participants would be asked to watch a video on a crime and answer questions about the video (see Appendix A). Fliers were created using the Microsoft Office Publisher application and hung around campus to recruit interest from Lindenwood University students and staff who are not members of the LPP; they included a

basic punchline about the study's purpose as well as an image of a judge and gavel (see Appendix B). The Facebook recruitment description included a request for potential participants to take part in a psychology study about how jurors make conviction decisions (see Appendix C).

**Informed consent statement and demographic survey.** The informed consent statement was used to make participants aware that they would be taking part in an online study containing a short video about a crime, and that they would subsequently be asked to answer questions about the video. They were also made aware that they could discontinue the study at any time without penalty (see Appendix D). A demographic survey was used to collect data from participants regarding their gender, highest level of education achieved, race, age, current occupation, and whether they have served on a jury in a trial prior to participating in the present study (see Appendix E).

**Armed robbery scenario transcript.** The armed robbery scenario was completely fictional and was carefully developed to include two separate accounts of an armed robbery allegedly committed by a man against his brother-in-law. The alleged offender is named Will Jones, and his brother-in-law is named John Robins. While Mr. Robins claims that Mr. Jones came into his apartment, held a gun to him, and demanded \$200 from his wallet, Mr. Jones claims that the situation was a misunderstanding, that he was carrying a gun in a holster on his hip, and that Mr. Robins offered him the money back after borrowing it a few weeks before (see Appendix F). Differences between the accounts, which are both detailed in the scenario, were



intentionally included to instill a sense of ambiguity in participants regarding whether the offender actually committed a crime or not. To avoid confusion, the scenario was written in plain, non-technical language, and does not contain qualitative biases.

**Offender visuals.** Pictures of attractive and unattractive defendants were chosen using one of Princeton University's Social Perception Lab databases containing 25 photos of computer generated faces displaying attractive and unattractive characteristics (Todorov, Dotsch, Porter, Oosterhof, & Falvello, 2013). The attractive and unattractive pictures feature faces of men on a black background (see Appendix G). These photos have also been desaturated of color (i.e. they were black and white), such that the skin and eye-color of the models did not become confounds to the study.

**Voice over and video production.** The voice over for the present study was conducted by the principle investigator, who read the scenario aloud and integrated a recorded copy of it into the video. The video for the present study was created using Microsoft Office Power Point.

**Post-video questionnaire.** A questionnaire was administered to participants following the video. The questionnaire ranged in length from two to four questions. The first question asked whether the participant believed the defendant was guilty or not guilty. The second question asked participants to justify their choice. The third question asked participants to make a sentencing recommendation for a prison term of 0 to 5 years, 5 to 10 years, 10 to 30 years, life

in prison, or the death penalty. The fourth question asked participants to justify their choice of sentencing recommendation (see Appendix H).

**Feedback statement.** A feedback statement was provided to all participants upon completion of the study. The statement explained the purpose and proposed hypotheses as well as necessary information regarding obtaining the findings of the study at a later date (see Appendix I).

### **Procedure**

The study was conducted online using Qualtrics, so that participants could watch the video and complete the questionnaire when and where it was convenient for them. LPP participants accessed the survey link through Sona Systems, whereas other Lindenwood University participants and Facebook participants accessed the survey through a link provided by the researcher. Prior to beginning the study, participants were asked to sign the informed consent statement and complete the demographic survey.

Participants were then divided into three groups. The first group watched a video featuring a written and verbal description of the armed robbery scenario. Included with the text was a picture featuring an attractive male face (see Appendix G), with a caption stating that he was the offender. The second group watched a similar video containing the same written and verbal description of the armed robbery scenario, featuring the unattractive male face in the accompanying picture (see Appendix G), with a caption indicating he was the offender. Lastly,

the third group watched a video containing only the written and verbal description of the armed robber and no pictures of the offender. It is important to note that, although the attractive offender group and the unattractive offender group were given a picture to go with the text on the screen, no explicit information regarding the defendant's appearance was mentioned in the armed robbery description to any of the groups. Participants were not informed of the offender's skin color, eye color, height, weight, clothing, or anything else pertaining to his physical appearance.

After watching the corresponding video, participants were asked to complete the post-video questionnaire. Participants who found the offender guilty of committing armed robbery answered all four questions, and participants who found the offender not guilty of committing armed robbery answered only the first two questions. To thank participants for taking part in the study, a feedback letter was subsequently provided.

## Results

A total of 65 participants took part in the study; however, only 37 participants completed the entire study (i.e. responded to all of the questions). Partial or incomplete responses from 28 participants were not used in the statistical analyses. To determine whether offender attractiveness was related to conviction rates and sentencing decisions, a chi-squared analysis was conducted. There was a significant difference between groups,  $X^2(2, N = 37) = 6.20, p < 0.05$ . In comparing the three groups' conviction rates, it should be noted that 10 out of 14

participants (71.4%) who saw the attractive defendant found him guilty, 9 out of 12 participants (75.0%) who saw the unattractive defendant found him guilty, and 6 out of 11 participants (54.5%) who did not see the defendant found him guilty. Despite these group differences, the first hypothesis, which predicted that offenders who were attractive would be convicted less often than unattractive offenders or offenders whose attractiveness was unknown, was not supported.

Furthermore, to understand whether the attractive defendant was given less severe sentences than the unattractive defendant or defendant whose attractiveness is unknown, as the second hypothesis suggested, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted, and statistical significance was not found,  $t(17) = -0.05$ ,  $p = 0.48$ . These findings indicate that the second hypothesis was also not supported, which means that sentencing recommendations was not necessarily impacted by offender attractiveness.

For further insight into participants' justifications for their conviction decisions and sentencing recommendations, content analysis was also conducted. Participants who found the offender guilty, regardless of attractiveness, cited reasons such as the presence of a weapon on the defendant's body, and most of them believed that the defendant's answers were "too perfect" or "premeditated" when responding to officers' questions about the incident. Participants who determined the defendant was not guilty reasoned that the defendant was properly licensed to carry the firearm, and that there was not enough evidence to prove beyond a reasonable doubt

that the defendant was truly guilty. Regarding sentencing recommendations, most participants who found the offender guilty indicated that they believed that prison would be useful in teaching him a lesson about the crime he committed.

### **Discussion**

Although neither hypothesis was supported, it is interesting that there was a statistically significant difference between groups based on defendant attractiveness and verdict. While there is not a large difference between the groups who saw a picture of the attractive offender (71.4%) and the unattractive offender (75.0%) in terms of finding him guilty, there is a relatively notable difference between the groups who saw a picture – averaging 73.2% – and the group that did not see a visual at all (54.5%). Perhaps this suggests that, as previous research indicates, the presence of visual information regarding a defendant's physical appearance, has at least some effect on the outcome of a criminal trial. Since only 54.5% of participants who did not see a visual of the defendant found him guilty, it is possible that participants in this group took a more objective approach to determining whether he was guilty or not guilty. This may indicate that participants without a picture of the offender based their judgments solely off of facts presented in the crime scenario rather than on the visual information that was provided in each picture. Further investigation is required to understand if and how significant the effect of visual information on a juror may be.

There are various design limitations that may have confounded the results of the present study. One potential design flaw is that this study took place online, making it incredibly difficult to replicate a realistic jury-style setting. An online study was conducted because it was most feasible for the researcher as well as in the recruitment process, since one of the primary methods of recruitment took place through Facebook. Even with the availability of a laboratory, it is nearly impossible create an environment that is similar to that of an actual court room. This challenge makes this line of investigation somewhat tedious because it is unlikely that future researchers will be able to simulate the setting of a real trial, regardless of the environmental controls they put in place.

Another potential limitation was that few participants were recruited to take part in the study. Since the study did not receive institutional approval until a late date, it was difficult to recruit a substantial amount of participants to take part in the study in a short period of time. It should be noted that the sample size was initially 65 participants, but had to be reduced to 37 participants for statistical analysis, given that almost half of the participants who took part in the study did not complete it entirely, meaning that they skipped questions or quit the survey early. Overall, the sample size issue can be improved in the future by allowing six to eight weeks for recruitment into the study.

In addition, no manipulation check was used to determine whether participants actually found the offenders attractive or unattractive. Since the offender visuals were retrieved from a

database comprised of computer-generated models of attractive and unattractive people, which was constructed by previous researchers (Todorov et al., 2013), without the use of a manipulation check, it is difficult to determine whether participants found the offenders truly attractive or unattractive. Moreover, it is also possible that the offender visuals did not appear realistic enough to impact participants. This may be improved in future studies by using photographs of real people and by conducting a manipulation check to determine whether participants believe the people are attractive or unattractive.

Lastly, there was potentially too much emphasis on the scenario rather than on the picture featured with it. In the video, a text version of the crime scenario was featured on the screen next to a picture or next to no picture at all. It is possible that participants were distracted by hearing the voiceover of the scenario and trying to read along with the scenario that they did not pay as much attention to the offender visual as would be desirable for research purposes. This design flaw can be improved by removing the text from the screen and only placing a visual of the offender on the screen while participants hear the crime scenario.

Experimenters who are interested in continuing this line of research may be interested in uncovering whether observable variables other than attractiveness, such as race or age, have a significant effect on conviction rates and sentencing recommendations. Researchers may also investigate whether there is a difference between verdicts of participants who hear the facts of a case, those who see a case unfold, and those who obtain facts by reading a case rather than

hearing or seeing it live. The continuation of this research is important because it may indicate that a “blind” jury – one that does not have access to visual cues about a defendant’s physical appearance – is more objective, and thus more useful, in providing a fair and equal trial for all.

### References

- Abwender, D. A., & Hough, K. (2001). Interactive effects of characteristics of defendant and mock juror on U.S. participants' judgment and sentencing recommendations. *Journal of Social Psychology, 141*(5), 603-615. doi:10.1080/00224540109600574
- Ahola, A. S., Hellström, Å., & Christianson, S. Å. (2010). Is justice really blind? Effects of crime descriptions, defendant gender and appearance, and legal practitioner gender on sentences and defendant evaluations in a mock trial. *Psychiatry, Psychology & Law, 17*(2), 304-324. doi:10.1080/13218710903566896
- Antonio, M. E. (2006). Arbitrariness and the death penalty: How the defendant's appearance during trial influences capital jurors' punishment decision. *Behavioral Sciences & The Law, 24*(2), 215-234. doi:10.1002/bsl.673
- Darby, B. W., & Jeffers, D. (1988). The effects of defendant and juror attractiveness on simulated courtroom trial decisions. *Social Behavior and Personality, 16*(1), 39-50. doi:10.2224/sbp.1988.16.1.39
- Dumas, R., & Testé, B. (2006). The influence of criminal facial stereotypes on juridic judgments. *Swiss Journal of Psychology, 65*(4), 237-244. doi:10.1024/1421-0185.65.4.237



Fontaine, G., & Kiger, R. (1978). The effects of defendant dress and supervision on judgments of simulated jurors: An exploratory study. *Law and Human Behavior*, 2(1), 63-71.

doi:10.1007/BF01047503

Kutys, J. M. (2012). Juror decision making: The impact of attractiveness and socioeconomic status on criminal sentencing and an examination of motivated reasoning in mock jurors (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from <http://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu>.

Todorov, A., Dotsch, R., Porter, J., Oosterhof, N., & Falvello, V. (2013) Validation of data-driven computational models of social perception of faces. *Emotion*, 13, 724-738, and

Todorov, A., & Oosterhof, N. N. (2011) Modeling social perception of faces. *Signal Processing Magazine, IEEE*, 28, 117-122.

## **Appendix A**

### LPP Recruitment Materials

Sona Systems Recruitment Description: “An important, and often under-discussed topic, is how jurors make conviction decisions during criminal trials. This study aims to understand the factors that influence these decisions. Participants will watch a video about a crime that has allegedly taken place and will then be asked to answer a few questions pertaining to the video. This only study should not take more than 10-15 minutes to complete.”

## Appendix B

### Campus Recruitment Materials

# INTERESTED IN LAW AND ORDER?

TAKE PART IN AN IMPORTANT  
PSYCHOLOGICAL STUDY\*  
ABOUT JURY DELIBERATION TODAY!



\*PLEASE NOTE:  
Study is online  
and will take no  
more than 10-15  
minutes of your  
time. Members of  
the LPP will earn  
bonus credit for  
participating.

Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)



Contact: Krystia Grembocki  
[kg997@lindenwood.edu](mailto:kg997@lindenwood.edu)

## **Appendix C**

### Online Recruitment Materials

Facebook Recruitment Description: “Please consider taking part in my anonymous online psychology study about how jurors make conviction decisions. It is for my research project for the Advanced Research Methods class at Lindenwood University. It should not take more than 10-15 minutes of your time. Your participation is completely voluntary. Thank you!”

## **Appendix D (cont.)**

### **Informed Consent Statement**

#### **Introduction**

The researcher conducting this study is an undergraduate student at Lindenwood University who is enrolled in the PSY40400: Advanced Research Methods course. The primary purpose of this study is to understand how conviction decisions are made in criminal cases. The findings of this study may be published or presented at a future research conference.

#### **Procedures**

This survey asks you to respond to a few demographic items as well as watch and listen to a video about a crime. You will also be asked to respond to either 2 or 4 questions after the video regarding your thoughts on the crime. This questionnaire will be conducted with an online Qualtrics-created survey, and should not take more than 10-15 minutes of your time.

#### **Risks/Discomforts**

There are no known risks associated with this study. If you do not feel comfortable completing any part of this survey, you are free to skip any questions or withdraw without penalty.

#### **Compensation and Benefits**

By taking part in this study, Lindenwood Participant Pool (LPP) members will be compensated in the form of extra credit toward a participating course. Other participants will not be compensated. However, all participants will gain experience taking part in a psychological study and potentially learn more about the field. If you are interested in learning more about this study or would like to learn more about the results of this study once completed, please contact Krystia Grembocki at [klg997@lionmail.lindenwood.edu](mailto:klg997@lionmail.lindenwood.edu).

#### **Confidentiality**

No personally identifying information will be collected, including your IP Address. All data obtained from participants will be kept confidential and will only be reported in an aggregate format (by reporting only combined results and never reporting individual ones). All questionnaires will be concealed, and no one other than the researcher and her course professor, Dr. Michiko Nohara-LeClair will have access to them. The data collected will be stored in the HIPPA-compliant, Qualtrics-secure database until it has been deleted by the primary investigator.

#### **Questions about the Research**

If you have questions regarding this study, you may contact Krystia Grembocki at [klg997@lionmail.lindenwood.edu](mailto:klg997@lionmail.lindenwood.edu) or direct your inquiries to the course professor, Dr. Nohara-LeClair at [mnohara-leclair@lindenwood.edu](mailto:mnohara-leclair@lindenwood.edu) or (636) 949-4371.

Q1 I have read, understood, and printed a copy of the above consent form and desire of my own free will to participate in this study.

- Agree (1)
- Disagree (2)

Condition: Disagree Is Selected. Skip To: End of Survey.

Q2 How old are you?

- I am at least 18 years of age. (1)
- I am younger than 18 years of age (2)

Display This Question:

If How old are you? I am younger than 18 years of age Is Selected

Q3 Do you have a signed parental consent form filed with the LPP Office?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't know. (3)

Condition: Yes Is Not Selected. Skip To: End of Survey.

## Appendix E

### Demographic Survey

Q1 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
- Female (2)
- Other (please specify): (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- Prefer not to say (4)

Q2 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED) (1)
- Some college, but no degree (2)
- Associate's Degree (3)
- Bachelor's Degree (4)
- Graduate/Professional Degree (5)

Q3 What is your race? Choose all that apply.

- Caucasian (1)
- African American (2)
- Native American (3)
- Asian (4)
- Hispanic (5)
- Other (please specify): (6) \_\_\_\_\_

Q4 What is your age?

Q5 What is your current occupation?

Q6 Have you ever served on a jury during a trial?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Display This Question:

If Have you ever served on a jury during a trial? Yes Is Selected

Q7 Please specify the calendar year in which you last served on a jury during a trial (e.g. 2005, 2008, 2016, etc.).

Display This Question:

If Have you ever served on a jury during a trial? Yes Is Selected

Q8 Please specify the city in which you last served on a jury during a trial (e.g. St. Louis, Kansas City, etc.)



## Appendix F

### Armed Robbery Scenario Transcript

“On Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, Will Jones was accused of armed robbery after allegedly entering into his brother-in-law’s apartment and taking \$200 from him while carrying a gun. Police arrived on the scene at 152 North Cherry Street around 9:00 p.m. The brother-in-law of the alleged perpetrator was identified as John Robins.

Mr. Robins gave a statement to the police regarding the incident, claiming that Mr. Jones knocked on Mr. Robins’ front door at approximately 8:30 p.m. Though Mr. Robins was not expecting him, he opened the door and let him inside of his apartment. Mr. Robins told police that Mr. Jones had been angry with him because he borrowed \$200 from Mr. Jones and had not yet paid the money back. The conversation quickly became heated, and Mr. Jones allegedly pulled a gun out his pocket, and threatened Mr. Robins that he would harm him if he did not tell him where his wallet was so he could retrieve his \$200. Mr. Robins, terrified, pointed to the counter where his wallet was lying. Mr. Jones reached for the wallet, took \$200 from it, and fled the scene.

After taking Mr. Robins’ statement, police searched for Mr. Jones. They found him at his apartment, located less than a mile away. Police knocked on Mr. Jones’ door, and he met them with a friendly demeanor. He welcomed them to come inside, and so they did. They explained the situation, and requested to know his side of the story.

In Mr. Jones’ statement, he explained that this incident was nothing but a misunderstanding. He told officers that when he arrived at Mr. Robins’ apartment, Mr. Robins opened the door and greeted him. He went inside, and the two of them talked for awhile about his new gun, which he displayed proudly on his hip in a leather holster. He stated that he had just gotten his Conceal to Carry License a week before purchasing his new handgun, and that Mr. Robins congratulated him on his accomplishment. Meanwhile, Mr. Robins had been making dinner. As he stirred a pot of soup, he said to Mr. Jones, “Hey, man. I forgot to pay you back when I saw you last week, but I have your money in my wallet. It’s on the counter, if you want to grab it out of there. \$200, right?” Mr. Jones removed two hundred-dollar bills from Mr. Robins’ wallet, and told him, “Thanks, man! Money is tight right now, so I really appreciate you paying me back. But, hey, I gotta run! I’ll catch ya later!” Mr. Jones subsequently stated that he exited Mr. Robins’ apartment and made his way home.

After finding the gun on his hip and \$200 in Mr. Jones’ pocket, police weren’t sure what to believe, so they put Mr. Jones into handcuffs and took him to the station for further questioning.”

## Appendix G

Offender Visuals (Todorov et al., 2013)



*Figure A: Attractive offender*



*Figure B: Unattractive offender*

## Appendix H

### Questionnaire

#### Armed Robbery Scenario

Q1 Please click the link to view the crime scenario. When you are finished, please proceed to the next question.

Q1 Please click the link to view the crime scenario. When you are finished, please proceed to the next question.

Q1 Please click the link to view the crime scenario. When you are finished, please proceed to the next question.

#### Armed Robbery Scenario Responses

Q1 Based on the information given in the scenario, do you think that the alleged offender is guilty or not guilty of committing the crime of armed robbery?

- Guilty (1)
- Not Guilty (2)

Display This Question:

If Based on the scenario presented in the previous video, do you think that the alleged offender is gui Guilty Is Selected

Q2 Why do you believe the alleged offender is guilty?

Display This Question:

If Based on the scenario presented in the previous video, do you think that the alleged offender is gui Not Guilty Is Selected

Q2 Why do you believe the alleged offender is not guilty?

Display This Question:

If Based on the scenario presented in the previous video, do you think that the alleged offender is gui Guilty Is Selected

Q3 Armed robbery is recognized as a felony offense in the state of Missouri. It is punishable by up to 30 years in prison, and depending on the severity of the crime, an offender may be

punished by life imprisonment or given the death sentence. Based on the information presented in the scenario, what is an appropriate punishment for the crime committed by Mr. Jones?

- Prison (up to 1 year) (1)
- Prison (1-5 years) (2)
- Prison (5-10 years) (3)
- Prison (life sentence) (4)
- Death penalty (5)

**Display This Question:**

If Based on the scenario presented in the previous video, do you think that the alleged offender is guilty?  Guilty  Not Guilty

Q4 Please explain why you believe this punishment is appropriate.

## Appendix I

### Feedback Statement

Thank you for participating in this study. The present study was conducted in order to determine whether restricting jurors' (participants') access to visual information about an alleged offender impacts conviction decisions. Participants were assigned to one of three groups. The first group was shown a picture of an alleged offender that is attractive in conjunction with the armed robbery scenario. The second group heard and read the same crime scenario, but saw a picture of an alleged offender who is unattractive. The third group was presented with the same crime scenario as the other groups, but did not see a picture of the alleged offender. None of the groups were directly told anything about how the alleged offender looked. The main hypothesis was that the participants in the first group (shown a picture of the attractive alleged offender) would find the offender guilty less often than participants in the second (shown a picture of an unattractive alleged offender) and third (shown no picture) groups. I believed that participants in the first group would think that the alleged offender who is attractive looks less capable than the alleged offender who is unattractive of committing armed robbery, and participants in the third group would base their judgments solely off facts of the case, not how the alleged offender looked. Please note that the purpose of this study was not to obtain or evaluate your individual results; rather, we are only interested in the overall findings based on aggregate data. No identifying information about you will be associated with any of the findings, nor will it be possible for us to trace your responses on an individual basis.

If you are interested in obtaining the final results of this study, or if you have any questions or concerns regarding any portion of this study, please do not hesitate to let the researcher know now or in the future. Contact information can be found at the bottom of this letter.

Thank you again for your valuable contribution to this study.

Sincerely,

Krystia Grembocki

Principal Investigator

(636) 675 - 5117

klg997@lionmail.lindenwood.edu

Dr. Michiko Nohara-LeClair

Supervising Faculty Member

(636) 949 - 4371

mnohara-leclair@lindenwood.edu