

## Psychology and Law

### Deception Detection<sup>1</sup>

#### Learning goals

1. Understand and critique the assumptions of various strategies for detecting deception
2. Evaluate the empirical evidence for the efficacy of strategies for detecting deception

**Essential goal:** Understand why it is so difficult to detect deception accurately

## Detecting Deception

### Activity: Catch Me If You Can

#### Suspect Instructions.

Look inside your envelope.

- If you see no cash, then you are INNOCENT. Think about what you were doing yesterday at 7:55 PM. When the interrogator asks what you were doing, you must tell the truth.
- If you see cash, then you are GUILTY of stealing money from WOC yesterday at 7:55 pm. You showed up to the basement of Paresky to rent some hiking gear and quickly realized no one was behind the counter. You walked behind the counter, opened the money box, and stole some, but not all of the cash. When the interrogator asks what you were doing, you must lie — convince them that you did not steal the money. Because you are not actually guilty and therefore do have a credible alibi, you could just say the thing you were actually doing, but please don't as that would defeat the purpose of this activity!

#### Interrogator Instructions.

1. Look inside your envelope. Inside you will find instructions for one or two techniques you should use when assessing the credibility of your suspect.
2. Tell your suspect they are suspected of having stolen some money. Ask them: "Tell me what you were doing yesterday between 7 and 8:30 PM?" Suspects must answer this question in 1-2 minutes.
3. Assess whether the suspect was lying (yes or no). List the reasons for your decision below



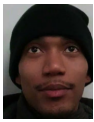
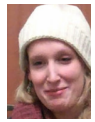
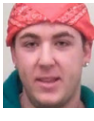

<sup>1</sup> Link to editable word version of this document [here](#).

Cues indicating lying	Cues indicating truth-telling
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

## Class 19: Cues to Deception

### Activity: Can You Spot the Liar?

*Directions.* Subjects in a study on body language and lying were asked several general questions — and then told off camera to lie or tell the truth when answering. Can you tell truth from falsehood? Write down what made you decide each person was or was not lying.

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	<input type="checkbox"/> Lying <input type="checkbox"/> Not Lying		<input type="checkbox"/> Lying <input type="checkbox"/> Not Lying
	<input type="checkbox"/> Lying <input type="checkbox"/> Not Lying		<input type="checkbox"/> Lying <input type="checkbox"/> Not Lying



Video Source:

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/03/21/science/can-you-spot-the-liar.html>

## Activity 1. Strategies for Assessing Behavioral Cues Indicating Deceit or Truth-telling

Ask "Can you repeat that in reverse chronological order?" (Starting from the last thing you did and ending with the first thing you did?)

Ask the suspect a question about the timing of a sequence of events (e.g., "Who finished their food first, you or your friend?")

Ask the suspect to draw the scene they described.

Ask the suspect to answer a spatial question: "In relation to the front door where you sat in the restaurant, where were the closest diners?"

Pay attention to whether the suspect's account contains a roughly similar amount of detail throughout.

Pay attention to whether the suspect's account contains information that is out of sequence.

Pay attention to whether the suspect's account contains no emotion for what you deem to be an emotionally arousing event.

Pay attention to phrases indicating a time gap such as “The next thing I remember....” or “Before I knew it...” or “Eventually....”

Pay attention to whether your suspect’s is averting your gaze or making too much eye contact.