

Double-Blind Sequential Lineups: Field Experiment Results

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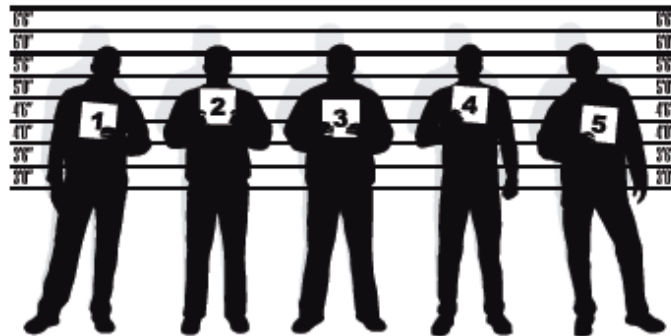
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A Test of the Simultaneous vs. Sequential Lineup Methods

*An Initial Report of the
AJS National Eyewitness Identification Field Studies*

• Rectangular Snip

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U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
National Institute of Justice




Eyewitness Evidence

A Guide for Law Enforcement



research report

The Double-Blind Sequential Lineup

- ▶ Rationale: Witnesses compare photos in simultaneous lineup to make a decision
 - ▶ Relative judgment vs. absolute judgment
 - ▶ Sequential lineup: Photos one at a time
 - ▶ Double-Blind: Lineup administrator does not know who the suspect is
- 

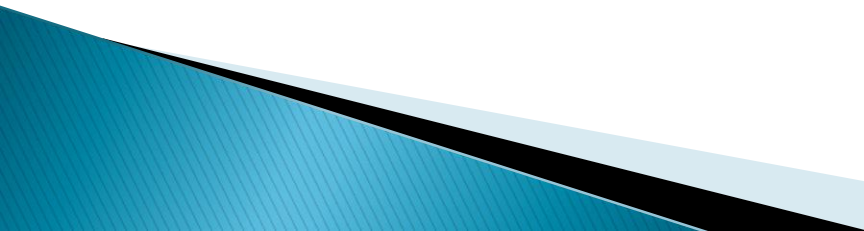
The
PoliceChief
The Professional Voice of Law Enforcement



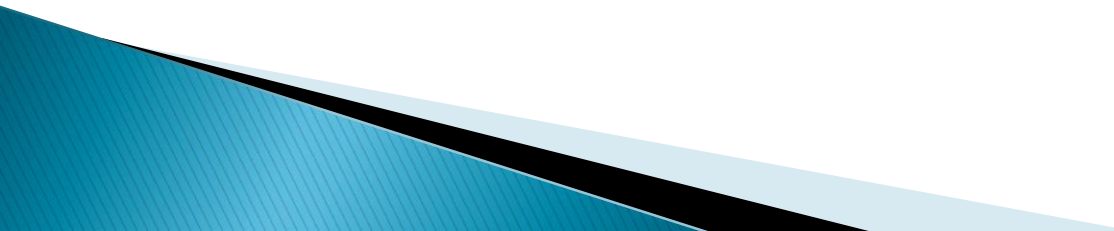
Successful Eyewitness Identification Reform: Ramsey County's Blind Sequential Lineup Protocol

By Susan Gaertner, Ramsey County Attorney, Saint Paul, Minnesota; and John Harrington, Chief of Police, Saint Paul, Minnesota

Research Objectives

- ▶ Direct comparison of sequential and simultaneous procedures in the field
 - ▶ Scientifically-sound research design
 - ▶ Laptop computer delivery of lineups
 - standardized, consistent procedures
 - record of all witness responses, including audio
 - preserved documentation of lineup photos
 - systematic collection of case-related data
- 

Features: The “Gold Standard”

- ▶ Double-blind lineups (all)
 - ▶ Random assignment to sequential or simultaneous procedure
 - ▶ Random assignment of photo positions in the lineup
 - ▶ 1 suspect per lineup + 5 fillers
- 

Do Any Of These Individuals Look Familiar To You?

Yes

No

Not Sure

1



2



3



4



5



6

Does This Person Look Familiar To You?

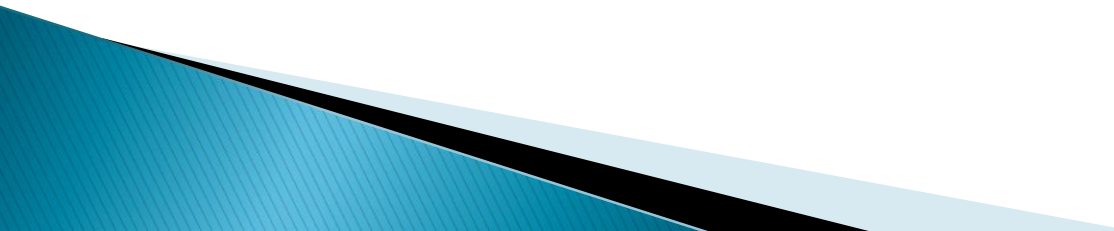
Yes

No

Not Sure

1



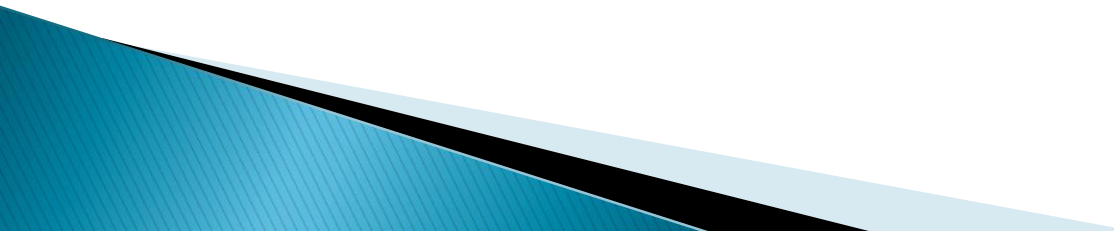
- ▶ Charlotte–Mecklenburg NC
 - ▶ Tucson AZ
 - ▶ San Diego CA
 - ▶ Austin TX
-
- ▶ 855 lineups
 - ▶ 497 “protocol–consistent”
- 

Results: Eyewitness decisions

	<u>Sequential</u>	<u>Simultaneous</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Suspect ID	27.3	25.5
Filler pick	12.2	18.1
No pick	60.5	56.4

- ▶ Of witnesses who pick from the lineup:
 - ▶ Sequential: 69.1% chose the suspect
 - ▶ Simultaneous: 58.4% chose the suspect
- ▶ No picks:
 - ▶ Sequential: more likely to use “not sure” (47% vs. 19%)
 - 29% of seq “not-sure” are suspect

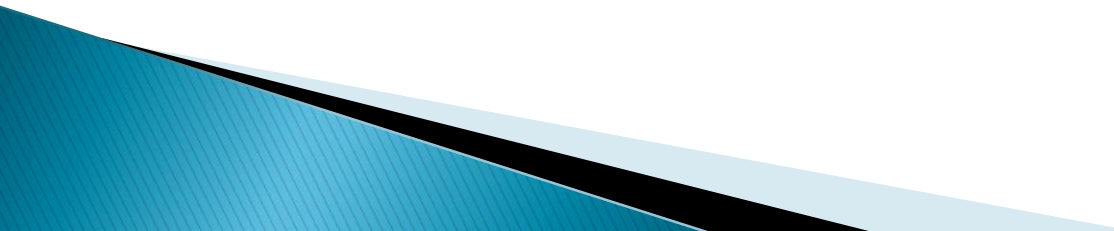
Conclusions

- ▶ Sequential lineup significantly reduces mistaken identifications
 - ▶ Sequential lineup is just as effective in producing suspect identifications
 - ▶ Sequential witness is less likely to reject the lineup altogether when not identifying any photo
 - ▶ Results consistent with decades of lab research on eyewitness memory principles
- 

Thank you

- ▶ Police Departments
 - ▶ American Judicature Society
 - ▶ Innocence Project
 - ▶ Police Foundation
 - ▶ Center for Problem Oriented Policing

 - ▶ Open Society Foundations
 - ▶ Laura and John Arnold Foundation
 - ▶ JEHT Foundation
 - ▶ National Institute of Justice

 - ▶ Mike Garner, SunGard Public Sector, Inc.
- 

Results

Figure 2. Percentages of Witnesses Identifying the Subject, a Filler, or Making No Identification for the Simultaneous and Sequential Procedures [N = 497]

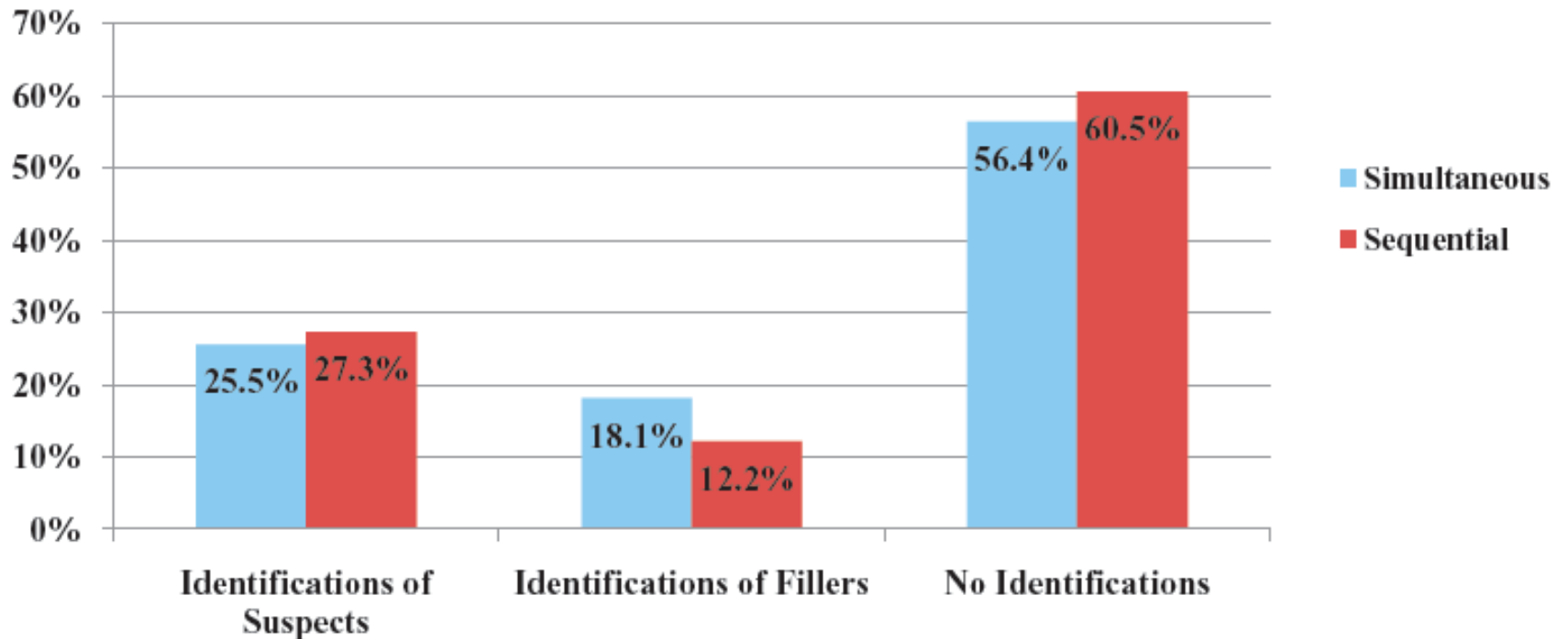


Figure 3. Percentages of Suspect and Filler Identifications Among Those Who Attempted an Identification for the Simultaneous and Sequential Procedures [N = 207]

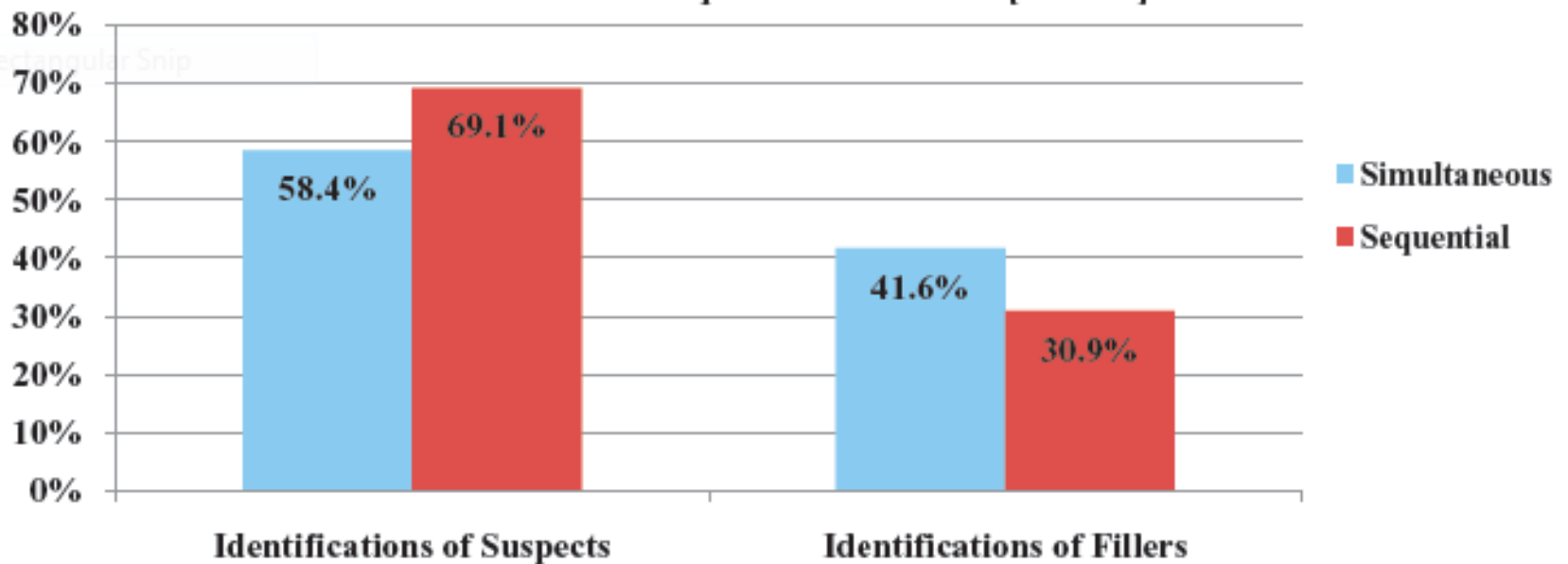


Figure 4. Percentages of "Not Sure" Responses and Lineup Rejection Responses Among Those Making No Identification [N = 288]

