
Over the centuries, one of the most perplexing problems in all judicial systems has been misidentification. In Psychological Issues in Eyewitness Identification, Sporer, Malpass and Kochukren grapple with this issue by employing the most comprehensive literature review we have seen. Their intended readership includes legal scholars and psychologists, but clearly this well-written work will have a much broader appeal.

This monograph makes a powerful case on psychological issues in eyewitness identification, regarding not only the judicial system but political, social and personal issues as well. Leading experts in the field summarize relevant research available in their respective specialties. The collection of evidence as well as the eyewitness testimony has depth, diversity, and originality. The book uses both synchronic and diachronic time frames.

The 13 chapters are: Introduction: 200 Years of Mistaken Identification; Legal Aspects of Eyewitness Testimony; The Effects of Witness, Target and Situational Factors on Eyewitness Identification; Psychological Aspects of Person Descriptions; Face Recall—Methods and Problems; Voice Identification by Humans and Computers; The Other-Race Effects and Eyewitness Identification: Enhancing Eyewitness Memory; Forensic Applications of Line-Up Research; Children's Identification Evidence; The Elderly Witness: Logic and Methodology of Experimental Research in Eyewitness Psychology; and Conclusions.
That is an impressive table of contents. In addition, we found the quality of writing superior for an edited monograph. Typically, edited volumes demonstrate an uneven quality of writing, with some chapters clearly better than others in both style and content. Sporer, Malpass, and Kechtlen must be applauded for producing a seamlessly written volume, clearly a reflection of their hard work. Also, many edited volumes lack intellectual connections between the chapters and therefore appear disorganized. The writers and editors of *Eyewitness Identification* did a superior job of establishing transitions from one idea to the next and from one chapter to the next. This is a difficult task in an edited volume and can be accomplished only with insight and self-discipline.

The monograph is not without its faults. The editors note in their preface, "There are some areas and topics in which our current knowledge may not be sufficient to clearly demarcate processes to use or to avoid, and in which we should not offer interpretations of the validity of testimony."

Specifically, we identified four shortcomings of this work. First, no chapters or citations within any chapter address the probability of a citizen's being mistaken for another. For example, if a systematic national sample indicated that 85% of the population had been mistaken for someone else, defense lawyers would have a new, effective strategy in convincing juries of reasonable doubt. Within this book, no such study was conducted or cited.

Second, and less important, the volume lacks material on misidentification by computer tracking. It is becoming common for suspects to be tracked by a database, and errors in computer tracking share common characteristics of eyewitness misidentification—except that we readily agree that people make mistakes but that computers do not. No author noted that some databases are actually compiled from eyewitnesses' accounts—compounding the problem.
Third, no chapter discusses DNA analysis. Linking citations that address DNA analysis with eyewitness identification would have enhanced the quality of this volume and might significantly increase sales in the United States.

The most serious shortcoming of this volume is the authors' use of surprisingly old citations. We suspect that the editors worked diligently to produce a masterfully written monograph at the expense of timeliness.

*Psychological Issues in Eyewitness Identification* is an excellent book overall. No law library should be without it. Libraries as institutions of higher education that include curricula in criminal justice, criminology, and/or police science should also purchase it. However, the material is not purely academic. We envision a much broader readership. All criminal defense attorneys should be familiar with the material presented here; we recommend it for private law libraries. In summary, *Psychological Issues in Eyewitness Identification* is a well-written, well-organized volume packed with information equally valuable to legal scholars and a wide variety of legal practitioners.

**BOOKS RECEIVED**

