

TRIAL BY TABLOID: CAN ONE-TIME EDUCATION REDUCE PRETRIAL
PUBLICITY BIAS?

by

Courtney Nicole Meyers

HONORS THESIS

Submitted to Texas State University
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for
graduation in the Honors College
May 2020

Thesis Supervisor:

Angela M. Jones

Second Reader:

Kimberly Wong

ABSTRACT

Negative-defendant pretrial publicity (PTP) is prevalent and can threaten a defendant's right to a fair trial. Extensive research supports the contention that negative defendant PTP can bias juror decision-making by rendering a juror incapable of determining a verdict based solely on trial evidence (Stebly et al., 1999; Ruva et al., 2007). Voir dire is used to assess potential jurors' knowledge of the publicity surrounding the case and potential bias against the defendant. In high profile cases it might be difficult to find jurors who have not seen or heard anything about the case. A variety of safeguards have been proposed to address the negative effects of PTP (e.g., voir dire, deliberation), though with minimal impact. The state of Washington recently developed an educational video on unconscious bias. This video is shown to jurors just prior to voir dire to reduce bias and increase the fairness of jurors' decisions. Yet, little is known regarding the effectiveness of this proposed remedy. The current study tested whether this video reduces PTP-related biases. A total of 251 students participated in the 2 (PTP: negative PTP vs. unrelated) x 2 (One-time education: debiasing training video vs. none) between-subjects factorial design. When participants received PTP, they were more likely to convict, found the defendant more culpable and less credible, and sentenced more harshly. Neither one-time education nor its interaction with PTP affected any outcomes.

Trial by Tabloid: Can One-Time Education Reduce Pretrial Publicity Bias?

Pretrial publicity (PTP) involves media coverage of criminal or civil cases through mediums such as newspapers, television, and social media. Exposure to pretrial publicity can bias a variety of legal decisions (Kramer et al., 1990; Otto et al., 1994; Ruva, 2018), which can threaten a defendant's Fifth Amendment right to due process and Sixth Amendment right to a fair trial by an impartial jury of one's peers (Greene et al., 1988; Otto et al., 1994; Steblay et al., 1999). The courts have attempted and largely failed to counter the negative effects of PTP through multiple remedies, such as voir dire and trial continuance (Ruva, 2018). Because of these failures, courts have proposed new remedies, notably educational videos and modified jury instructions (Roberts, 2018). The use of these videos has gained popularity and has quickly spread in use (Roberts, 2018). Yet, no empirical evidence supports its effectiveness for reducing PTP-related biases. The present study seeks to test the effectiveness of the unconscious bias juror video currently used in Washington state.¹

Pretrial Publicity Biases

Implicit biases are unconscious feelings, fears, perceptions, and stereotypes (e.g., bias blind spot, PTP bias, racial bias, and confirmation bias; Bennett, 2010; Morewedge et al., 2015). The nature of these biases means that most individuals do not recognize their judgment is biased (Wilson & Brekke, 1994). Jurors exposed to PTP are likely to form implicit biases against the defendant prior to receiving trial

¹ The Western District of Washington's "Unconscious Bias Juror Video" is shown to all potential jurors. The video can be viewed here: <https://www.wawd.uscourts.gov/jury/unconscious-bias>. Implicit bias and unconscious bias are used interchangeably throughout this manuscript.

evidence (Ruva, 2018). These biases may be stronger in more serious cases, which receive greater amounts of PTP (Lieberman & Sales, 2007).

The effects of PTP also depend on the content of PTP and the time lapse between being exposed to PTP and the trial. The content of PTP may be positive or negative toward the defendant. Pro-defendant PTP exists primarily in cases in which the defendant holds a high or celebrity status in the community. In addition, PTP coverage may portray victims with a negative slant in sexual assault or domestic violence cases (Ruva, 2018; Ruva et al., 2011). More commonly, however, media coverage of a case prior to trial is anti-defendant in nature (Lieberman & Sales, 2007). Anti-defendant PTP can bias jurors' judgments regarding verdict, sentencing, and defendant perceptions (Stebly et al., 1999; Ruva et al., 2007). Those exposed to PTP tend to view the defendant as less credible and are more likely to convict compared to those not exposed to PTP (Kerr et al., 1999; Otto et al., 1994; Ruva et al., 2007; Ruva et al., 2011). This negativity bias suggests that people pay more attention to negative information than to positive information (Fiske, 1980; Meffert et al., 2006; Rozin & Royzman, 2001). As a result, anti-defendant PTP affects juror decisions and perceptions of defendant credibility more than pro-defendant PTP (Ruva & McEvoy, 2008).

PTP can also elicit emotional responses, such as anger (Ruva, 2018). Negative emotions can cause stronger biases to develop and increase the likelihood of guilty verdicts (Kramer et al., 1990; Ruva & Guenther, 2015). These emotional reactions may be driven by jurors relying on System 1 cognitive processing (Kramer et al., 1990; Milkman et al., 2009). System 1 cognitive processing is more intuitive, automatic, implicit and emotional; in contrast, System 2 is slower, conscious, effortful, and

logical (Stanovich & West, 2000). Mistakes and poor decision-making are more likely to occur when jurors are engaged in System 1 processing (Milkman et al., 2009).

Finally, the time delay between PTP exposure and the verdict decision exacerbates the effects of PTP (Stebly et al., 1999). This may be due to source misattribution, which occurs when an individual does not recall where the memory originates from (Johnson et al., 1993). The longer the delay between PTP and the trial, the more likely it is for source misattribution to occur (Ruva & McEvoy, 2008; Ruva, 2018; see also Frost et al., 2002). Jurors commit these source attribution errors at high rates despite confidence that they are only considering evidence presented at trial (Ruva & Guenther, 2015). For example, PTP-exposed jurors made nearly three times the critical source-memory errors as jurors without a similar exposure (Ruva & Guenther, 2015; Ruva, 2018). Jurors are more likely to convict as the number of source misattributions increase (Ruva & Guenther, 2015; Ruva & McEvoy, 2008; Ruva et al., 2007). The combination of source attribution errors and overconfidence may explain why a trial continuance has been largely ineffective at reducing PTP bias and may in fact exacerbate the problem (Ruva, 2018).

Remedies for Pretrial Publicity

In the technological age, it is difficult to prevent a potential juror from learning about a case through online news or social media. PTP is so pervasive that the issue of whether jurors can render a verdict in a criminal case based solely on the evidence presented during trial is vital to the functioning of our judicial system (Ruva, 2007). The courts have provided several remedies for PTP to protect a defendant's Sixth Amendment right to a fair trial, while refraining from infringing on the media's First Amendment

right to free speech. These include a trial continuance, change of venue, jury deliberation, jury instructions, and voir dire (Ruva, 2018). However, few of these proposals have shown much success.

The use of a continuance can be helpful for combatting PTP, as the majority of PTP typically occurs at the time of the incident and arrest and decreases over time (Ruva, 2018; *Sheppard v. Maxwell*, 1966). However, the effectiveness of a continuance is questionable in modern times, since most adults receive their news from internet sources and social media outlets. In cases that have large amounts of PTP, the exposure becomes repeated over long periods of time, strengthening memory traces for potentially extra-legal information (Ruva, 2018).

Early research suggested that people residing outside a trial venue have less exposure to PTP than those living within (Nietzel & Dillehay, 1983). Yet, due to the spread of the internet and social media, these findings may no longer apply (Ruva, 2018). Jury deliberations are another remedy thought to correct errors and bias among individual jurors (Kerr et al., 1999; Ruva, 2018), but evidence is mixed. Some research suggests deliberation may exacerbate PTP bias through group polarization (Kerr et al., 1999; Kramer et al., 1990; Otto et al., 1994; Ruva et al., 2007; Studebaker & Penrod, 1997). That is, jurors are more likely to convict after deliberation than prior. Other research suggests jury deliberation has no effect on jurors exposed to PTP (Ruva & Guenther, 2015; Ruva et al., 2007). In these studies, deliberation was unable to correct for the biased interpretation of the trial evidence that stems from PTP exposure (Ruva & Guenther, 2015).

Instructions or admonitions to disregard outside information are designed to inform jurors about what information they should or should not consider. However, jurors still discuss PTP information during jury deliberations, despite being advised against it (Kramer et al., 1990; Ruva & Guenther, 2015). This discussion may be intentional because jurors believe the PTP helps them evaluate the evidence (Devine et al., 2001), or may be unintentional, such as when PTP is confused with trial evidence (Kramer et al., 1990; Ruva & LeVasseur, 2012). Thus, instructions appear to be of limited utility to address PTP biases.

Voir dire is standard in all jury trials and proposed as another potential remedy for PTP. The purpose is to assess jurors' knowledge of a case and attempt to eliminate biased jurors (Kramer et al., 1990). A juror is often defined by the courts as being free from prejudice if they report the ability to set aside personal opinion and render a verdict based solely on the evidence presented at trial (Ruva, 2018). This process assumes that jurors can accurately assess their own biases and are willing to report such information to the courts, a task that is likely difficult for most individuals (Kerr et al. 1991). Given that much of the bias associated with PTP exposure is outside of conscious control, it is unlikely that a self-assessment remedy will eliminate all, or even most, of the PTP bias in prospective jurors (Ruva, 2018). If individuals are unaware that their judgment is biased, they will not try to rectify it (Wilson & Brekke, 1994). In addition, judges and attorneys are no better at recognizing implicit bias than potential jurors, likely rendering voir dire ineffective for addressing PTP-related bias (Kerr et al., 1990; Ruva 2018).

Debiasing Strategies

Given that the previous court remedies have been largely ineffective at combating PTP-related biases, the limited, but growing literature on debiasing strategies may offer some potential solutions (Lilienfeld et al., 2009). The debiasing research has focused on implicit bias and ways to correct for its presence (e.g., Devine et al., 2012; Elek & Hanaford-Agor, 2014; Kang et al., 2012). Some of the debiasing strategies focus on perspective-taking, delayed decision-making, and one-time education and trainings.

Motivation to reduce bias occurs when one is aware of their biases and concerned about the consequences (Devine & Monteith, 1993; Plant & Devine, 2009). Therefore, the purpose of implicit bias education is to make people more skeptical of their own ability to be objective, evoke a general concern about implicit bias, motivate them to evaluate their own biases, and learn how to apply these strategies in daily life (Devine et al., 2012; Kang et al., 2012).

Examples of one-time education includes brief and non-technical tutorials, trainings, and presentations, as well as the unconscious bias juror video tested in the current study. The contents of these methods can vary widely. One-time education decreases participants' tendency to fall prey to some types of biases (Devine et al., 2012; Evans et al., 1994; Lilienfeld et al., 2009; Morewedge et al., 2015). For example, a brief diversity training on gender stereotypes in science, engineering, technology, and math resulted in more positive implicit attitudes toward women in these areas (Jackson et al., 2014). Additionally, customized games and educational videos that define various biases and include debiasing strategies such as "consider-the-opposite" and "consider-the-alternative" reduced bias blind spot, confirmation bias, fundamental attribution errors, projection, and representativeness heuristics (Morewedge et al., 2015; Shaw et al., 2018).

These approaches encourage participants to think about how they might be wrong or how others may view an event (Lilienfeld et al., 2009). Such strategies are designed to slow down cognitive processing and induce participants to engage System 2 processing (Lilienfeld et al., 2009; Milkman et al., 2009). Evidence is mixed on long-term change or bias reduction (Devine, 1989; Devine & Monteith, 1993; Morewedge et al., 2015). However, the aforementioned studies showed substantial short-term reduction, which is all that is needed for a trial and the rendering of a verdict.

Courtroom Applications

To counter the effects of bias among jurors, some states have imposed an implicit bias training video (Roberts, 2018). The pioneer in this type of remedy is Judge Mark Bennett of Iowa, who uses jury instructions, a PowerPoint slideshow, training video, and discussion during voir dire to address the effects of implicit bias (Roberts, 2018).

Following the lead of Judge Bennett, the Western District of Washington implemented its own debiasing video to be presented to jurors just prior to voir dire. The eleven-minute video titled, “Unconscious Bias Juror Video,” was designed to help jurors recognize and subsequently reduce their own implicit biases (Roberts, 2018). The Western District of Washington video and instructions are available on their official website, which has led other districts and states to use them at their own discretion (Roberts, 2018; Horowitz & Horowitz, 2019; Xiong, 2019).

To date, no empirical studies have determined if a one-time education can effectively assuage the effects of anti-defendant PTP. Given that legally irrelevant, but highly emotional information can bias mock jurors’ judgments (McCabe & Krauss, 2011), an effective remedy is needed. As the use of debiasing videos is

spreading without empirical knowledge of the consequences, this study sought to test the effectiveness of the Washington debiasing video for reducing PTP bias. Consistent with prior research, it was expected that participants exposed to PTP would sentence more harshly and view the defendant as less credible and more culpable compared to participants who were not exposed to PTP. Among those exposed to PTP, it was expected that the debiasing video would align sentencing and defendant credibility and culpability judgments to levels observed in the unrelated PTP condition.

Method

Participants

A diverse, jury eligible sample of 251 undergraduate students were recruited based on an a priori power analysis (95% power to detect a medium effect size, $f = .25$). The student sample was 68.5% female, racially diverse (36.3% Caucasian, 9.6% African American, 48.2% Hispanic, 6% Other), with an age range of 18-51 ($M = 20.64$, $SD = 4.03$).

Design and Procedure

The current study employed a 2 (PTP: negative defendant PTP vs. unrelated crime stories) x 2 (One-time education: debiasing training video vs. none) between-subjects factorial design. In Phase 1, participants were randomly assigned to read eight crime stories that either did or did not involve the defendant's case. In Phase 2, an average of 9.5 days later ($SD = 2.31$), half of the participants were randomly assigned to watch the debiasing video. All participants subsequently answered voir dire type questions (e.g., "Have you ever been convicted of a felony?") and viewed a condensed version of an actual murder trial (*NJ v. Bias*) that has been used in previous research (see Ruva et al.,

2007 for a full description of trial). The trial was chosen because it is ambiguous to guilt, perceived as realistic, and participants are unlikely to have heard about it. The defendant was charged with murdering his wife, who he claims committed suicide. After viewing the trial, participants completed dependent measures (see Appendix) and were compensated with course credit.

Independent Variables

Pretrial publicity. Participants were randomly assigned to read negative defendant PTP or unrelated crime stories. Both the PTP and unrelated crime stories were adopted from Ruva and colleagues (2007). The PTP stories involved modified newspaper articles published about the case. The stories contained general information about the case (e.g. the victim and a description of the crime) and potentially biasing information that was not presented during the trial (e.g., the husband had a drinking problem, and remarried 10 months after his wife's death). The unrelated crime stories discussed a woman accused of embezzling child support funds. Both types of stories were of similar length.

One-time education. Participants were randomly assigned to watch the debiasing training video produced by the State of Washington (Unconscious Bias Juror Video, 2017). The video is 11 minutes long and contains an introduction to the topic of implicit bias presented by a federal judge. During the video, jurors are encouraged to actively acknowledge any implicit biases they may have, noting that these biases can result in subjective and unfair judgments. Jurors are provided multiple examples of implicit biases, including age, race, and gender stereotypes. Jurors are asked to take the time to examine their own biases and use strategies such as "consider the opposite" to increase awareness and engage System 2 cognitive processing.

Attention and manipulation checks. Participants completed two manipulation checks: the first, presented during the voir dire process, asked if the participant had heard anything about the *New Jersey v. Bias* case. Participants assigned to read unrelated crime stories were more likely to correctly report that they had not heard of the *New Jersey v. Bias* case (97.7% vs. 55.1% for those assigned to PTP), $\chi^2(1, N = 251) = 65.65, p < .001, \phi = .51$. The second manipulation check asked if the participant watched a video on unconscious bias at the beginning of Phase 2. Participants assigned to view the debiasing training video were more likely to correctly report watching this video (91.7% vs. 26.2% for those not assigned to watch the video), $\chi^2(1, N = 250) = 109.66, p < .001, \phi = .66$.

A subset of participants ($n = 126$) completed Phase 2 online. To ensure participants were attentive throughout the study, we created two true/false attention check questions for those assigned the debiasing training video (e.g., “Only bad people are affected by unconscious bias.”) and five true/false attention checks for the trial video (e.g., “The mother of Lise Bias testified in court.”). Only one participant missed one of the debiasing training video attention checks (.4%). For the trial related attention checks, 86.4% of participants correctly answered all five questions; 94.2% answered four or more correctly.

Dependent Variables

All dependent variables are available in the Appendix.

Verdict and Sentencing. Participants provided dichotomous verdict judgments (0 = Not guilty, 1 = Guilty). For those participants who convicted the defendant, they were also asked to provide a sentencing recommendation between one and 30 years ($M = 19.45; SD = 8.05$).

Defendant Culpability. Participants answered five seven-point Likert scale questions concerning the defendant's culpability (e.g., 1 = Not at all responsible, 7 = Completely responsible). Items were recoded as necessary and averaged to create a single scale, with higher values indicating greater perceptions of defendant culpability (M = 4.64; SD = 1.52; $\alpha = .88$).

Defendant Credibility. Participants answered nine seven-point Likert scale questions about the defendant's credibility (e.g., 1 = Not at all credible, and 7 = Completely credible). Items were recoded as necessary and averaged to create a single scale, with higher values indicating greater perceptions of defendant credibility (M = 3.81; SD = .89; $\alpha = .80$).

Results

Correlations among all variables are presented in Table 1. Conditional means are presented in Table 2. We first regressed the dichotomous verdict on PTP, one-time education, and their interaction in a logistic regression analysis. The omnibus test with all partial effects was significant, $\chi^2(2, N = 251) = 17.96, p < .001$, Nagelkerke $R^2 = .10$. The odds of a guilty verdict were 3.07 times greater when participants were exposed to PTP, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 251) = 14.99, p < .001, Exp(B) = 3.07, 95\% CI [1.74, 5.41]$ (see Table 2). The debiasing training video did not affect verdict decisions, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 251) = 2.16, p = .14, Exp(B) = 1.51, 95\% CI [.87, 2.62]$, nor did the interaction, Wald $\chi^2(1, N = 251) = .10, p = .75, Exp(B) = .83, 95\% CI [.27, 2.59]$ (see Table 2).

Second, we conducted an analysis of variance (ANOVA) among the subset of participants who convicted to examine the main and interactive effects of PTP and one-time education on sentencing. Sentencing decisions were harsher when participants were

exposed to PTP, $F(1, 168) = 5.03, p = .03, \eta_p^2 = .03, d = .34, 95\% \text{ CI } [.03, .64]$ (see Table 2). There were no significant effects for one-time education, $F(1, 168) = .01, p = .92, \eta_p^2 < .001$, or its interaction with PTP, $F(1, 168) = 1.98, p = .16, \eta_p^2 = .01$.

Third, we conducted an ANOVA to examine the main and interactive effects of PTP and one-time education on defendant culpability. Participants viewed the defendant as more culpable when they were exposed to PTP, $F(1, 247) = 29.33, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .11, d = .69, 95\% \text{ CI } [.44, .95]$ (see Table 2). There were no significant effects for one-time education, $F(1, 247) = 1.59, p = .21, \eta_p^2 = .01$, or its interaction with PTP, $F(1, 247) = 1.21, p = .27, \eta_p^2 = .01$.

Finally, we conducted an ANOVA to examine the main and interactive effects of PTP and one-time education on defendant credibility. Participants viewed the defendant as less credible when they were exposed to PTP, $F(1, 247) = 9.10, p = .003, \eta_p^2 = .04, d = -.39, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.64, -.14]$ (see Table 2). There were no significant effects for one-time education, $F(1, 247) = 1.54, p = .22, \eta_p^2 = .01$, or its interaction with PTP, $F(1, 247) = 3.06, p = .08, \eta_p^2 = .01$.

Discussion

The current study sought to test whether a promising debiasing strategy could reduce PTP bias. It was expected that participants exposed to PTP would sentence more harshly and view the defendant as less credible and more culpable than participants who were not exposed to PTP. Among those exposed to PTP, it was expected that the Washington debiasing video would align sentencing decisions and defendant credibility and culpability judgments to levels observed in the unrelated PTP condition.

Supporting our first hypothesis, PTP exposed participants were three times more likely to convict the defendant compared to those who did not receive PTP. Furthermore, PTP exposed participants sentenced harsher and found the defendant less credible and more culpable. These findings replicate past research, which shows that PTP has strong biasing effects among jurors (Otto et al., 1994; Ruva et al., 2007; Ruva, 2018). In contrast to our second hypothesis, the debiasing video did not reduce PTP-related bias. In fact, the video had little effect on any of the jurors' decisions that we examined.

The ineffectiveness of the Washington debiasing video conflicts with other successful methods to reduce biases using one-time educational presentations, games, and videos (Jackson et al., 2014; Morewedge et al., 2015; Shaw et al., 2018). These efforts have resulted in reductions in gender bias, bias blind spot, confirmation bias, fundamental attribution errors, projection, and representativeness heuristics (Jackson et al., 2014; Morewedge et al., 2015; Shaw et al., 2018).

The difference in effectiveness may be due to the content of the educational methods.

Successful educational methods have been tailored to the specific types of biases they were intended to reduce or eliminate. The Washington debiasing video may have been ineffective because participants were not given explicit examples of implicit bias related to PTP. Instead, the video broadly discussed implicit bias and provided examples related to race, age, and gender biases, none of which were an issue in the trial stimulus. Thus, jurors in the current study likely found the video to be irrelevant because it did not help them to realize the biasing nature of the PTP and correct for it accordingly. This is problematic considering that the Western District of Washington is currently showing this

video to all jurors, including those who may develop unconscious biases unrelated to those exemplified in the video.

Limitations

Undergraduate students were used in this study. Past research has indicated that students might present a confounding variable when applied to the general public.

Students are well-educated, disproportionately white, unmarried, childless, and socially and politically liberal (Bornstein et al., 2017). However, the number of non-traditional students attending universities is growing and this sample is reflective of that change (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2015).

Whatever differences remain, students' legal decision-making is still comparable to the general public (Bornstein et al., 2017).

Another limitation is that mock-jurors may not take this task as seriously as real jurors due to the lack of consequences. However, we used a condensed version of a real trial as the stimulus, which has successfully been used in the past (see Ruva et al., 2007; 2008; 2011 studies). This increases ecological validity along with the delay we implemented that ranged between 7 and 14 days.

Conclusions

Our results suggest the general nature of the Washington debiasing video was not enough to overcome the implicit biases associated with PTP. Past research suggests tailored debiasing strategies can be effective, especially if such efforts are interactive in nature (Morewedge et al., 2015; Shaw et al., 2018). Interactive one-time education may be difficult to accommodate in a courtroom setting but may improve jurors' ability to effectively evaluate their own biases. Yet there is reason to suspect that this will also fail.

Research examining the effectiveness of instructions to disregard outside information suggests that the intent of the instructions may backfire, drawing *more* attention to inadmissible evidence such as PTP (Lieberman & Arndt, 2000). Instructions, and similarly one-time education, may be more effective if an explanation is given for why the prejudicial information is unreliable (see Lieberman & Arndt, 2000 for review).

As the use of one-time education methods spreads, empirical evidence on their effectiveness for reducing biases, including those due to PTP, is needed. One-time education may still be an effective remedy for PTP bias if the videos are tailored to address this type of bias specifically. However, more research is needed, including exploring an interactive method for the education, and revising the current videos to provide specific examples of PTP-related bias. The goal of the Washington “Unconscious Bias Juror Video” is to define implicit bias and motivate jurors to self-correct. However, the results of the current study suggest this is not the outcome.

References

- Bennett, M. W. (2010). Unraveling the gordian knot of implicit bias in jury selection: The problems of judge-dominated voir dire, the failed promise of batson, and proposed solutions. *Harvard Law and Policy Review*, 4(1), 149-172.
- Bornstein, B. H., Golding, J. M., Neuschatz, J., Kimbrough, C., Reed, K., Magyarics, C., & Luecht, K. (2017). Mock juror sampling issues in jury simulation research: A meta-analysis. *Law and Human Behavior*, 41(1), 13-28. doi:10.1037/lhb0000223
- Brandon, S. E., Wells, S., & Seale, C. (2018). Science-based interviewing: Information elicitation. *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling*, 15(2), 133-148. doi:10.1002/jip.1496
- Daftary-Kapur, T., Dumas, R., & Penrod, S. D. (2010). Jury decision-making biases and methods to counter them. *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 15(1), 133-154. doi:10.1348/135532509X465624
- Devine, P. G. (2001). Implicit prejudice and stereotyping. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 81(5), 757-759. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.81.5.757
- Devine, P. G., Forscher, P. S., Austin, A. J., & Cox, W. T. L. (2012). Long-term reduction in implicit race bias: A prejudice habit-breaking intervention. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48(6), 1267-1278. doi:10.1016/j.jesp.2012.06.003
- Dexter, H. R., Cutler, B. L., & Moran, G. (1992). *A test of voir dire as a remedy for the prejudicial effects of pretrial publicity* Retrieved from https://search.credoreference.com/content/entry/wileycacj/prejudicial_pretrial_publicity/0

- Evans, J. S. B. T., Newstead, S. E., Allen, J. L., & Pollard, P. (1994). Debiasing by instruction: The case of belief bias. *European Journal of Cognitive Psychology*, 6(3), 263-285. doi:10.1080/09541449408520148
- Hannah, S. D., & Carpenter-Song, E. (2013). Patrolling your blind spots: Introspection and public catharsis in a medical school faculty development course to reduce unconscious bias in medicine. *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 37(2), 314-339. doi:10.1007/s11013-013-9320-4
- Hillard, A., Ryan, C., & Gervais, S. (2013). Reactions to the implicit association test as an educational tool: A mixed methods study. *Social Psychology of Education*, 16(3), 495-516. doi:10.1007/s11218-013-9219-5
- Hope, L., Memon, A., & McGeorge, P. (2004). Understanding pretrial publicity. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied*, 10(2), 111-119. doi:10.1037/1076-898X.10.2.111
- Horowitz, D. P., & Horowitz, L. M. (2019, Jan 28,). Jurors and implicit bias. *New York Law Journal*
- Jackson, S., Hillard, A., & Schneider, T. (2014). Using implicit bias training to improve attitudes toward women in STEM. *Social Psychology of Education*, 17(3), 419-438. doi:10.1007/s11218-014-9259-5
- Katherine L. Milkman, Dolly Chugh, & Max H. Bazerman. (2009). How can decision making be improved? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4(4), 379-383. doi:10.1111/j.1745-6924.2009.01142.x

Kerr, N. L.; Kramer, G. P.; Carroll, J. S.; Alfini, J. J. (1991). On the effectiveness of voir dire in criminal cases with prejudicial pretrial publicity: An empirical study.

American University Law Review, 40(2), 665-702.

Kerr, N. L., Niedermeier, K. E., & Kaplan, M. F. (1999). Bias in jurors vs bias in juries:

New evidence from the SDS perspective. *Organizational Behavior and Human*

Decision Processes, 80(1), 70-86. doi:10.1006/obhd.1999.2855

Kramer, G. P., Kerr, N. L., & Carroll, J. S. (1990). Pretrial publicity, judicial remedies,

and jury bias. *Law and Human Behavior*, 14(5), 409-438. doi:10.1007/BF01044220

Lieberman, J. D., & Arndt, J. (2000). Understanding the limits of limiting instructions:

Social psychological explanations for the failures of instructions to disregard pretrial

publicity and other inadmissible evidence. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 6(3),

677-711. doi:10.1037/1076-8971.6.3.677

McCabe, J. G., & Krauss, D. A. (2011). The effect of acknowledging mock jurors'

feelings on affective and cognitive biases: It depends on the sample. *Behavioral*

Sciences & the Law, 29(3), 331-357. doi:10.1002/bsl.990

McCabe, J. G., Krauss, D. A., & Lieberman, J. D. (2010). Reality check: A comparison of

college students and a community sample of mock jurors in a simulated sexual

violent predator civil commitment. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 28(6), 730-750.

doi:10.1002/bsl.902

Morewedge, C. K., Yoon, H., Scopelliti, I., Symborski, C. W., Korris, J. H., & Kassam,

K. S. (2015). Debiasing decisions. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain*

Sciences, 2(1), 129-140. doi:10.1177/2372732215600886

- Otto, A. L., Penrod, S. D., & Dexter, H. R. (1994). The biasing impact of pretrial publicity on juror judgments. *Law and Human Behavior, 18*(4), 453-469.
doi:10.1007/BF01499050
- Roberts, A. (2018). Chapter 5 Implicit jury bias: Are informational interventions effective? *Criminal Juries in the 21st Century: contemporary issues, psychological science and the law*, 85-107.
- Ruva, C. L., & Guenther, C. C. (2015). From the shadows into the light: How pretrial publicity and deliberation affect mock jurors' decisions, impressions, and memory. *Law and Human Behavior, 39*(3), 294-310. doi:10.1037/lhb0000117
- Ruva, C. L., Guenther, C. C., & Yarbrough, A. (2011). Positive and negative pretrial publicity. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 38*(5), 511-534.
doi:10.1177/0093854811400823
- Ruva, C. L., & McEvoy, C. (2008). Negative and positive pretrial publicity affect juror memory and decision making. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied, 14*(3), 226-235. doi:10.1037/1076-898X.14.3.226
- Ruva, C., McEvoy, C., & Bryant, J. B. (2007). Effects of pre-trial publicity and jury deliberation on juror bias and source memory errors. *Applied Cognitive Psychology, 21*(1), 45-67. doi:10.1002/acp.1254
- Ruva, C. L., (2018). From the headlines to the jury room: An examination of the impact of pretrial publicity on jurors and juries. *Advances in Psychology and Law, 3*, 1-39.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-75859-6_1

- Scott O. Lilienfeld, Rachel Ammirati, & Kristin Landfield. (2009). Giving debiasing away: Can psychological research on correcting cognitive errors promote human welfare? *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 4(4), 390-398. doi:10.1111/j.1745-6924.2009.01144.x
- Shaw, A., Kenski, K., Stromer-Galley, J., Mikeal Martey, R., Clegg, B. A., Lewis, J. E., . . . Strzalkowski, T. (2018). Serious efforts at bias reduction. *Journal of Media Psychology*, 30(1), 16-28. doi:10.1027/1864-1105/a000174
- Stebly, N. M., Besirevic, J., Fulero, S. M., & Jimenez-Lorente, B. (1999). The effects of pretrial publicity on juror verdicts. *Law and Human Behavior*, 23(2), 219-235. doi:10.1023/A:1022325019080
- Stebly, N., Hosch, H. M., Culhane, S. E., & McWethy, A. (2006). The impact on juror verdicts of judicial instruction to disregard inadmissible evidence. *Law and Human Behavior*, 30(4), 469-492. doi:10.1007/s10979-006-9039-7
- Studebaker, C. A., & Penrod, S. D. (1997). Pretrial publicity. *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law*, 3(2-3), 428-460. doi:10.1037/1076-8971.3.2-3.428
- Wilson, T., & Brekke, N. (1994). Mental contamination and mental correction: Unwanted influences on judgments and evaluations. *Psychological Bulletin*, 116, 117-142. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.116.1.117>

Table 1*Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlation Matrix among Dependent Variables*

	1.	2.	3.
1. Sentence			
2. Defendant Culpability	.38*		
3. Defendant Credibility	-.29*	-.64*	
4. Verdict (% Guilty)	.50*	.77*	-.59*

Note. $n = 251$, except for sentencing decisions, where $n = 172$.

* $p < .001$

Table 2*Dependent Variables as a Function of PTP and One-Time Education (n = 251)*

Dependent Variable	PTP <i>M (SD)</i>		Overall
	PTP	Control	
Sentence			
No video	21.46 (6.48)	17.00 (8.93)	19.55 (7.89)
Debiasing video	19.86 (7.38)	18.84 (9.13)	19.36 (8.25)
Overall	20.68 (6.94)*	18.00 (9.03)	19.45 (8.05)
Defendant Culpability			
No video	5.15 (1.43)	3.97 (1.41)	4.53 (1.53)
Debiasing video	5.18 (1.13)	4.40 (1.70)	4.76 (1.50)
Overall	5.17 (1.29)*	4.17 (1.56)	4.64 (1.52)
Defendant Credibility			
No video	3.60 (.77)	4.13 (.99)	3.88 (.94)
Debiasing video	3.66 (.63)	3.80 (.99)	3.73 (.84)
Overall	3.63 (.71)*	3.97 (1.00)	3.81 (.89)
% Guilty			
No video	77%	51%	63%
Debiasing video	82%	63%	72%
Overall	80%*	56%	67%

Note. Sentence ranged from 1-30 years for those who convicted (n=172). Defendant culpability: 7-point Likert scale with higher values = more culpability. Defendant credibility: 7-point Likert scale with higher values = more credibility.

*Differences between PTP and control, $p < .001$

Appendix A: PTP Crime Stories and Associated Attention Checks

ND1

Date: SATURDAY, April 8, 1989

Page: B09

Edition: SECOND

BAIL SET AT \$150,000 IN PHILLIPSBURG SLAYING

by JOE NIXON, The Morning Call

Bail was set at \$150,000 yesterday for a Phillipsburg man accused of shooting his wife in the back of the head in late February in their home. Warren County Prosecutor Richard C. Hare asked Warren County Superior Court Judge John Kingfield to set bail at \$150,000, while Bias' attorney, Elizabeth Smith, suggested \$25,000. Smith stated that Bias was not a flight risk and would be unable to make bail for a greater amount. Bias was remanded to Warren County Jail in lieu of bail.

Daniel N. Bias Jr., 26, of 259 Chambers St., was charged by Phillipsburg police Thursday night with the first-degree murder of his wife, Lise Caren Bias, 27. She was found dead Feb. 26, 1989 in the doorway of the couple's bedroom.

Hare told Kingfield a review of the medical, forensic and ballistic evidence indicated the death was homicide. He said suicide was a "physical and medical impossibility," and that Bias intended to deceive authorities into believing the death was a suicide. Hare added that the location of the body in the doorway of the couple's bedroom indicates that Mrs. Bias was attempting to exit the bedroom when she was shot.

According to Phillipsburg Patrolman Thomas Walsh, Bias told police that he had just returned home visiting a friend and was fixing something to eat when his wife came

downstairs with the weapon and threatened to shoot herself with it. He told the victim to go back upstairs and put the weapon away. Approximately two minutes later, he went upstairs, opened the door, and saw the victim pull the trigger. Bias later changed his story stating that the gun went off when he tried to take it from his wife.

Friends of the victim, Lise, and Daniel Bias recalled that the couple “frequently argued” and that these arguments often started after “Dan had been drinking.” Hare said that Daniel Bias was drinking alcohol on the night of Lise’ death. A co-worker of Daniel Bias, who was questioned by police as to Bias’ nature, said that Bias had a bad temper and was often complaining about his wife. Chris Jensen of Hope, who hunted with Bias, stated that “Dan only married Lise so that he could have children” and when Lise seemed to be choosing a career over his plans for a family he got angry. “He just about shot everything in sight when he started talking about her.”

Russell stated that Lise had told family members that the couple often fought about money and the amount of time that Dan spent on the shooting range. Bias denies both the prosecutor’s and the family’s assertions. He stated that the couple did not frequently fight about money or the amount of time that he spent on the shooting range.

Negative Defendant Questions: Story #1

1. Bail was set at _____ for Dan Bias.
 - a. \$150,000.00
2. Prosecutor Hare told the Judge, Kingfield, “suicide was a ‘_____.’”
 - a. Physical and Medical Impossibility
3. Most fights between Dan and Lise started after

a. Dan had been drinking

ND2

Date: SATURDAY, April 12, 1989

Page: B09

Edition: SECOND

DEFENDANT IN PHILLISPSBRUG SLAYING RELEASED FROM JAIL

by JOE NIXON, The Morning Call

Daniel Bias, the Phillipsburg man accused of shooting his wife in the back of the head in late February in their home, was released from jail today on a \$150,000 property bond.

Bias, a tall man with blond hair and a blond mustache, an electrician and a 1980 graduate of Hunterdon Central High School, calmly told Judge Kingfield he understood the charges against him and understood his rights. His father, Daniel Bias Sr., of Whitehouse Station, Hunterdon County, was in the courtroom yesterday. Defense attorney Elizabeth Smith told the court the elder Bias would put his home up, along with his son's, in order to make bail. Warren County Superior Court Judge John Kingfield agreed to release the defendant on a \$150,000 property bond.

Daniel N. Bias Jr., 26, of 259 Chambers St., was charged by Phillipsburg police Thursday night with the first-degree murder of his wife, Lise Caren Bias, 27. She was found dead Feb. 26 in the doorway of the couple's bedroom.

Warren County prosecutor Richard C. Hare told Judge Kingfield a review of the medical, forensic and ballistic evidence indicated the death was homicide. He said suicide was a "physical and medical impossibility," and that Bias intended to deceive authorities into believing the death was a suicide. Hare added that the location of the body in the

doorway of the couple's bedroom indicates that Mrs. Bias was attempting to exit the bedroom when she was shot.

The prosecutor said some aspects of the case, starting with the initial investigation, "gave us some cause for concern." He said the death was suspicious from the start. Bias' refusal to take part in a lie detector test only furthered those suspicions.

According to Hare, Bias is considered "hot-tempered" by friends, and has a history of turbulent relationships with women. Hare said that the women whom he spoken with, who had been in a relationship with Bias at one time, claimed that Dan would often become "threatening" and "abusive" during even the "smallest of arguments." Hare said that one of these women found it necessary to obtain a restraining order against Bias.

After a year of therapy Dan Bias had presumably learned to control his temper and had made a "fresh start" when he married Lise, though the couple still went through some rough patches. It can plainly be seen that Dan's past history will leave a challenge for Defense attorneys to surmount.

Negative Defendant Questions: Story #2

1. What did Dan Bias refuse?
 - a. lie detector test
2. In what room of the house was Lise found?
 - a. Bedroom, her room
3. How old was Lise at the time of her death?
 - a. 27 (somewhere in her 20's)

ND3

Date: FRIDAY, April 21, 1989

Page: B03

Edition: THIRD

P'BURG MAN FACES TRIAL IN WIFE'S DEATH

by JOE NIXON, The Morning Call

The Warren County grand jury yesterday returned a three-count indictment against Daniel N. Bias Jr. of Phillipsburg, charging him with the first-degree murder of his wife Lise in late February.

Phillipsburg police charged Bias, 26, on April 6th with shooting his wife in the back of the head Feb. 26 with a 357-caliber magnum handgun in the couple's home. In addition to first-degree murder, Bias was indicted on charges of possession of a weapon for unlawful acts and for resisting arrest. According to Phillipsburg Patrolman Thomas Walsh, at the time of his arrest Bias did not cooperate with police, causing police to use force in order to take him into custody.

Bias stated that at the time of the arrest he was upset, and he could not believe that the police were arresting him for the murder of his wife. Bias stated that "I loved Lise and would never do any-thing to hurt her." He stated that the thought of being arrested for her murder caused him to "snap and lash out against the officers."

Bias, of the 200 block of Chambers Street, is scheduled to enter a plea to the indictments at 9 a.m. May 5 at the Warren County Courthouse. His attorney, Elizabeth Smith of the Public Defender's office said yesterday her client will plead innocent to the charges and is looking forward to presenting his side of the case at trial.

Warren County Prosecutor Richard C. Hare told County Superior Court Judge John Kingfield at the bail hearing that, based on the evidence in the case, suicide was a "physical and medical impossibility." He said Lise Bias was shot from a distance because the wound was not a contact or close-contact wound. Lise Bias was found in the doorway of the couple's bedroom. The gun, which was legally owned by the defendant, was recovered at the scene. The prosecutor's office has not said whether it will seek the death penalty in the case. A conviction on first-degree murder carries a minimum sentence of 30 years in prison without parole.

Daniel and Lise Bias had been married for about five years and had moved to Phillipsburg about two and a half years ago from Hunterdon County. Friends of the victim, Lise, and Daniel Bias recalled that the "couple frequently argued" and that these arguments often started after "Dan had been drinking." Hare said that Daniel Bias had been drinking alcohol on the night of Lise' death.

Elsa Gasiorowski, Lise's mother, stated that Mrs. Bias was shopping for new clothes for her new job on the day of her death. Elsa said she was very happy because of her promotion and was looking forward to working in her new job.

Elsa Gasiorowski said that her daughter loved her job at Somerset Trust Company, but Dan did not. Elsa stated that her daughter was overjoyed about the promotion, but when she called Dan to tell him the news, he was angry and began to yell at her over the phone. He told her not to take the promotion, because it meant more hours and more time away from home. Lise told her mother after she got off the phone that she didn't care and she wouldn't let Dan spoil her good mood; she was going to take the job anyway.

Negative Defendant Questions: Story #3

1. How long were Dan and Lise married?
 - a. 5 years
2. What was Mrs. Bias shopping for on the day of her death?
 - a. New Clothes, professional clothes, work clothes
3. Where did Lise work?
 - a. The Somerset Trust Company

ND4

Date: Saturday, February 2, 1991

Page: B14

Edition: SECOND

BIAS WILL AWAIT TRIAL AT HOME IN NEW YORK

The Morning Call

Phillipsburg resident Daniel Bias Jr. was granted permission yesterday to move to New York while awaiting a murder trial. Bias, 28, of Chambers Street remains free on \$150,000 property bond while awaiting the start of a trial scheduled for October. Bias is accused of shooting his first wife Lise, in the head in February 1989. Bias contends that Lise was attempting to commit suicide and the pistol fired when he tried to pull it away.

New Jersey Superior Court Judge John Kingfield granted Bias permission to join his wife and daughter in New York. Bias remarried 10 months after the death of his first wife Lise and the couple now has one child. Bail will remain at \$150,000. "The move is permanent inasmuch as Mr. Bias intends to reside there between now and the trial," Bias' attorney, Elizabeth Smith noted.

Assistant Warren County Prosecutor Robert Russell felt the move might jeopardize the trial date, which "absolutely cannot be changed." Judge Kingfield said permission to move to New York was granted on the following conditions:

*Bias is to remain in contact with the bail unit of the probation department in a method to be determined by the unit.

*Bias is to remain at the address which he will give to the court and cannot move without permission from the court.

*Bias must be available to his defense attorney at any time to prepare for the case.

*Bias must be present at all pretrial hearings when requested by the court.

"The trial will not be adjourned in the future because the defendant is unavailable to counsel," the judge warned.

Negative Defendant Questions: Story #4

1. Was Dan permitted to leave the state while awaiting the trial?

a. Yes

2. Where did Dan move to while awaiting his trial?

a. New York

3. Bias was granted permission to live with his _____?

a. Wife and Daughter, new family, wife, daughter

ND5

Date: Saturday, September 7, 1991

Edition: SECOND

Section: LOCAL/REGION

PARENTS GRIEVE THE LOSS OF THEIR DAUGHTER AND LAY BLAME ON THEIR EX SON-IN-LAW

"My never-ending nightmare began on Feb. 26, 1989, at 11 p.m. when a police officer came to my front door and told us my daughter was dead – shot in the head. This never-ending pain of not seeing her smile or hearing her voice has devastated me."

These are the words of Elsa Gasiorowski, the mother of Lise Bias. As time brings us closer to the trial for Daniel Bias Jr., we decided to talk to Lise's parents, Elsa, and Chester Gasiorowski, to see how they are coping with their loss and preparing for the trial ahead.

Dan is accused of shooting his wife, Lise Gasiorowski Bias, in the head on the night of Feb 26, 1989. Although Dan Bias has pled not guilty, Lise's parents have no doubt that he is the cause of their daughter's death. To Bias, Mrs. Gasiorowski asks, "Why did you kill my daughter? You are a murderer. Our beloved Lise has been taken away from us. Why did you do it? Why did you take her away from us?"

Taken at the prime of her life, Lise Bias was only 27 years old at the time of her gruesome death. She had just received a promotion at the Somerset Trust Company, where she worked. Lise and her mother had gone shopping on the morning of her death for some "corporate" looking clothes. Mrs. Gasiorowski, Lise's mother, said that Dan had not wanted Lise to take the promotion to supervisor. Lise's mother said that the couple had often argued about having children.

"He wanted her to quit her job and start a family," Lise's mother said, when asked about Dan and Lise's relationship. "Lise wanted it all though—a career, family, and loving husband. He just didn't want the same things for her and did his best to prevent her from following her dreams."

"Dan Bias Jr. has never shown any emotion about [Lise's] death -- no remorse." Lise's mother says. "He never said he was sorry that Lise was dead. They were married about six years, yet he remarried just 10 months after her death. Not once has he said a good word about my daughter. He sits there stone-faced, self-righteous. Dan is a murderer and should pay for his crime by being in jail for as long as possible without parole."

"I guess he finally got the family he wanted," Lise's mother added, "Only 10 months after Lise died Dan remarried and now has a child with his new wife. It's just not fair how he can act like nothing happened, like he doesn't care that my daughter lost her future and her life, while he just goes off and starts a new one with this woman. I don't see how anyone could marry him knowing the allegations against him right now, regardless of the fact that he hasn't been in court yet. Especially now that his abusive past has been exposed."

Indeed, many have been talking about Dan's past relationships. According to Assistant Warren County Prosecutor Robert Russell, Bias was considered "hot-tempered" by friends and has a history of turbulent relationships with girlfriends. "Dan has had a long line of turbulent relationships with women, including one who received a restraining order against him, though she does not wish to be quoted," said Russell. "She did, however, claim that Dan would often become 'threatening and abusive during even the smallest of arguments.'" Presumably, after a year of therapy Bias had learned to control his temper and had made a "fresh start" when he married Lise, though the couple still went through some rough patches.

When we went to interview Chester Gasiorowski, Lise's father, he was too upset to speak with us. Instead, he asked us to include a statement he had written. In his letter he stated, "Lise's dead, and no one can change that. We are tormented by her loss. Dan Bias Jr. is a coward. He knows exactly what he did. He cost the state of New Jersey over \$1 million to investigate this crime. He shows no emotion. He refused to take a lie detector test. He feels if he keeps quiet and has a good lawyer, he will get off lightly. He will never be found innocent, it's just not possible. The only question is the degree of his guilt."

Gasiorowski, suffering from cancer, said his daughter was his strength in his fight against the disease. He said Lise had helped him paint his house and that he and his daughter were extremely close. Gasiorowski noted that he helped Bias when he needed a job, and Lise supported him through electrician's school.

Negative Defendant Questions: Story #5

1. What kind of school did Lise provide support for during their marriage?

a. Electrician's school

2. Instead of Chester doing an interview, he asked them to read a _____?

a. A statement he had written

3. Chester Gasiorowski is suffering from _____?

a. Cancer

ND6

Date: Monday, October 7, 1991

Page: B03

BIAS DIDN'T KILL HERSELF, PARENTS SAY

The Morning Call

Lise Bias did not like guns and was unlikely to have shot herself to death, her parents say in reaction to Daniel Bias' claim that she committed suicide on Feb. 26, 1989. Since he was charged with the murder of his wife on April 6, Daniel Bias has maintained Mrs. Bias shot herself as he tried to take a revolver from her.

Chester Gasiorowski, Mrs. Bias' father, told reporters he had tried to teach his daughter how to fire a pistol in 1984. "She didn't like it. She fired two rounds and never fired again. Lise never had a weapon at any time."

In a video statement made to Phillipsburg police in 1989, Bias said his wife was threatening to shoot herself in the head after an argument and that he tried to take the revolver out of her left hand when it accidentally fired. Gasiorowski says that his daughter was right-handed. He says she had not been hampered in using her right hand after elbow surgery, contrary to what Bias has stated in previous interviews with police.

Gasiorowski adds that his daughter helped him paint his house. "After she had the operation on her right elbow, she lifted heavy paint buckets, moved the ladder for me, and held a paintbrush with her right hand," he said.

Lise's parents also reject the idea that she would have killed herself. Lise was excited about a new job and was looking forward being a supervisor, reports her mother, Elsa Gasiorowski. On the day of her death and in preparation for her new job Lise went shopping for new clothes. Dan Bias, however, was upset about the promotion because he believed that "Lise would not have time to take care of a family," reports Lise's mother, Elsa Gasiorowski. Elsa stated that Dan did not want Lise to take the promotion. He

wanted to start a family. Elsa stated that Lise wanted a career, family and loving husband, but unfortunately, Dan did not want the same things for her.

Negative Defendant Questions: Story #6

1. How did Lise feel about guns?
 - a. Lise did not like guns
2. What was Lise excited about before the shooting?
 - a. Being promoted
3. According to Lise's father, what was Lise able to do after she had her operation?
 - a. Lift paint buckets, move a ladder, hold a paint brush

ND7

Date: Friday, October 11, 1991

Page: B01

Edition: THIRD

DID BIAS KILL HIS WIFE, OR DID SHE KILL HERSELF?

by DENNIS KELLY, The Morning Call

"This defendant is guilty of murder," Chief Assistant Prosecutor Robert Russell told reporters. Bias said he walked into the bedroom of their residence on Chambers Street and found his wife pointing a .357-caliber Magnum at the left side of her head. He said the gun went off when he tried to stop what he thought was an attempted suicide.

From a videotaped statement to Phillipsburg Police made by Bias on the night of his wife's death, Bias was quoted as saying, "She's cold. She's jealous. She's got a bad temper. She's in one of her pissy, angry moods."

"Even if you didn't like the person, wouldn't you say something nice? Wouldn't you think something nice?" Russell said. "The anger of the guy just knocks you over when he talks about his dead wife." Russell questioned why Bias, who he said knew cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), did not administer it to his wife. "He didn't even wipe the blood away from her face."

Russell said Mrs. Bias was a young woman with a future who had just received a promotion at work and was shopping for clothing the day of her death, because she wanted a "corporate look."

Lise Bias had a strong family background, visiting her parent's house three to five times a week while married to Bias. According to Lise's mother, Elsa Gasiorowski, Dan Bias was jealous of the amount of time Lise spent with her family and resented her working. He felt that "she should devote her time to their family and to having children."

"Lise would have left a note," Elsa Gasiorowski added. "It makes no sense that Lise was going to kill herself. She wouldn't do that to us, her parents." Russell said the state had enough evidence to show that "this man picked up the gun and fired it into her head." Lise's parents believe that she would never have killed herself when she had so much to look forward to.

Negative Defendant Questions: Story #7

1. Did Dan like having Lise spend lots of time with her family?
 - a. No he didn't
2. What medical procedure did Dan Bias know how to perform?
 - a. CPR

3. What style of clothing did Lise want to buy?
- a. Business, Corporate, professional

ND8

Date: Friday, October 18, 1991

Page: B03

Edition: THIRD

JURY SEATED IN BIAS MURDER TRIAL WIFE-SLAYING CASE TO OPEN OCT. 21

by DENNIS KELLY, The Morning Call

Jury selection is complete and pre-trial motions began yesterday in the trial of a Phillipsburg man accused of fatally shooting his wife in the head. The trial of Daniel N. Bias, 28, for first-degree murder of Lise Bias on Feb. 26, 1989, gets under way. He is accused of shooting her with a .357-caliber Magnum.

The jury selection process began Monday and ended yesterday after 16 people were chosen. "It went quicker than I thought," Assistant Prosecutor Robert Russell said of the jury selection. Afterward, Superior Court Judge John F. Kingfield heard the pretrial motions of both attorneys.

Russell said Bias' attorney wanted to exclude the testimony of a psychiatrist, who would have disputed the defense's claim that Bias' wife was suicidal. The psychiatrist will testify that Lise was not suicidal prior to her death that she had strong family support and her career was taking off. In his defense, Bias said the shooting was accidental and that he was trying to stop a suicide attempt by his wife when the gun went off.

Defense Attorney Elizabeth Smith feels that the state "cannot prove there was purposeful murder or knowing murder." "There were only four bullets in the gun," Smith said. "If there were six, I could see how the jury could conclude it was purposeful."

Russell, when confronted with this statement from the defense, refuted it. "This is a cold, calculated murder. When he aimed the gun at her head, he knew he was going to kill her. This was not a self-inflicted wound. The only person there was the defendant. What's important is the defendant puts himself there."

He added that "though four bullets were found in the gun, two others were found in the room. Indeed, it is suspicious for the other two bullets to be found in the room. If only four were left in the gun, why bother with the other two in the room? Also, if Bias knew his wife to be so emotional as to consider suicide, why keep a loaded weapon in the house at all? There are just too many questions."

Russell stated that the defense also wanted to eliminate the testimony of a New York witness "who was going to testify about something Bias said." Sources have it that Bias made statements to his New York neighbor that his first wife was "spoiled" and "only thought of herself, refusing to start a family so she could have her career." The neighbor is reported as saying that Dan now has the family life he always wanted, something his former wife would not give him.

Earlier this year, Judge Kingfield allowed Bias to live in New York with his second wife and their child to await a trial date after Bias posted \$150,000 in bail, but Russell said Bias has been living in New Jersey for the past few months. Bias and his first wife lived on Chambers Street at the time of the shooting. Bias also faces charges of possessing a gun for an unlawful purpose and hindering apprehension or prosecution.

Negative Defendant Questions: Story #8

1. Whose testimony did the Prosecutor, Robert Russell, try to exclude?

a. Psychiatrist

2. How many bullets were in the gun?

a. Four bullets.

3. What is the name of the judge presiding over the Bias case?

a. Judge John Kingfield

1. Were you familiar with any of the stories you read here?

a. No

b. Yes

Appendix B: Unrelated Crime Stories and Associated Attention Checks

U1

Date: SUNDAY, April 29, 1984

Page: B01

Edition: THIRD

Memo: All the cases in this series are real, but in respect for their privacy, the parents' names have been changed.

LATE SUPPORT CHECKS POINTED WAY TO DOMESTIC RELATIONS OFFICE MESS TOM MOYLAN and
ROSA SALTER,

Sunday Call-Chronicle

Right before Christmas 1982, Ann Negoescu of Nazareth noticed her weekly child support checks from the Northampton County Domestic Relations Office were routinely coming late - up to six weeks late in some cases. She was getting behind in paying her bills, and she was angry.

Finally, in March she set up a meeting with then-Deputy Domestic Relations Director William N. Davison. He gave Negoescu a computer printout on her case, but because she knew her ex-husband was up-to-date on his payments to the domestic relations office, she continued asking questions about why their checks to her were arriving so late. Then, she said, he became impatient.

"When I asked him how much interest they were earning when these checks were held back, he said, with the thumb over the shoulder, 'Look, just get out of here.' "I was so shocked I just walked out." (Later, Davison called Negoescu's version of the story "biased" and doubted her checks were arriving as late as she claimed.)

A few days later, on St. Patrick's Day 1983, Renee Godshalk, a 23-year-old computer operator in the county domestic relations office, was arrested for embezzling child support payments. Exactly how much is missing is still undetermined, but it could

be as much as \$84,000. Another \$30,000 also may be missing either through mismanagement or theft by other parties.

Before Godshalk's arrest, questions about late or missing support checks were rarely heard beyond the confines of the domestic relations office in the basement of the Northampton County Government Center.

But by fall 1983, the head of the domestic relation's office - Joseph V. Hollshwandner - had stepped down and a routine office theft had become a major legislative investigation that uncovered examples of mismanagement and negligence that shocked the community.

The investigation produced testimony that:

- Although the office handled more than \$8 million a year in child support payments, the checking account on which support checks were written was not reconciled for as long as 23 months, meaning that a theft could go unnoticed.
- The domestic relations computer had flaws that could be used to print support checks when no money was credited to an account, flaws which were used to cover stolen cash payments and used to cover up thousands of dollars in cash which were missing from a cash bag.
- Some cash child support payments from fathers were held for days, months or even years before they were deposited into the account. Whether their children ever got any money isn't known.

Northampton County - whose domestic relations office boasted an advanced case-tracking system, one of the highest collection rates in the state and which some area lawyers still say is more efficient, fairer in setting support amounts and tougher on

enforcement of support orders than other area counties - suddenly found itself with a domestic relations office gone awry.

During testimony, prosecutors and county councilmen summed up the situation in various ways. "A mess," one called it. "A slipshod operation," said another. Local newspapers, eager to expose the scandal, dubbed the affair "Domestigate."

Unrelated Questions: Story #1

1. What kind of checks are being stolen?
 - a. Child support checks
2. Why did Ann Negoescu complain to the director about her checks?
 - a. Her checks were late
3. The flaws on the computer allowed what to happen?
 - a. Cover up stolen money

U2

Date WEDNESDAY, May 2, 1984

Page: B04

Edition: THIRD

DOMESTIC RELATIONS EMPLOYEE ACCUSED OF EMBEZZELING CHILD SUPPORT FUNDS

The Morning Call

The first indication of a problem came in October 1982 when the checking account into which fathers' child support payments were deposited and from which mothers' support checks were written suddenly became overdrawn. The initial overdraft was \$5,260. An informal accounting later put the amount of support money missing at around \$85,000.

One reason the shortages weren't detected sooner was that domestic relations simply wasn't balancing its checkbook on time. The accounting firm of Peat Marwick Mitchell & Co. had warned as far back as 1981 that the checking account wasn't being reconciled with bank statements on a "timely basis." According to testimony, the domestic relations computer system was designed to do the job automatically but couldn't because the bank didn't produce the information in a compatible computer format.

By March, mothers like Ann Negoescu were complaining that they weren't getting support checks even though the fathers could show receipts of their payments to the domestic relations office.

Working nights and weekends, domestic relations officials were able to document that \$9,450 in support payments were embezzled by computer operator Renee L. Godshalk. She was arrested, jailed and asked by baffled officials to trace her thefts.

Godshalk told officials she would take a cash support payment from a father, ring it up on a cash register and give the father a receipt. She would later pocket the cash and destroy the office receipt. She would then wait until a second father paid his support with a check in the same amount as the cash payment. She credited the check to the first fathers' account. The computer would print a check for the first man's ex-wife but the second man's ex-wife wouldn't get any money until Godshalk used a third fathers' check to cover the second mans' account.

Because cash register tapes were never checked, no one noticed a difference between the amount of money the tape said was received and how much money was on hand at the end of the day. Since most of the custodial parents eventually got their support checks, Godshalk also counted on their silence about the lateness of the checks.

When someone did complain that a check wasn't received, Godshalk would take care of the complaint by covering it with a support payment from another man.

Domestic relations "sometimes tended to be tough on women who complained they didn't get their check," Dist. Atty. Donald B. Corriere told county council. Mothers, he said, would "gripe" about a missing support check but would forget about it after other checks started coming regularly. As a result, Corriere said, "there was a tendency for those complaints to be so isolated that they weren't of any significance, at least to Miss Godshalk."

In this way, she was able to embezzle money from the system that no one really missed - until January 1983, when a domestic relations accountant found some of the misapplied checks. Corriere says he's satisfied that Godshalk took \$9,450, but because former Deputy Domestic Relations Director William N. Davison says she took more than \$84,000 using this and another scheme, Corriere has asked the state auditor general for an independent determination of how much was taken and how it was done.

Unrelated Questions: Story #2

1. Were the fathers late on payments or were domestic relations at fault?
 - a. Domestic relations
2. How did Godshalk credit the first fathers account?
 - a. With a second fathers payment
3. What happened to Godshalk?
 - a. She went to jail

U3

Date: FRIDAY, May 4, 1984

Page: B01

Edition: THIRD

COMPUTER FLAW BLAMED FOR ENABLING THEFT OF CHILD SUPPORT FUNDS

The Morning Call

A Northampton County Council committee investigating embezzlements and mismanagement in the county domestic relations office will hold one more public hearing and then issue its final report within the next four to six months.

Davison, who was appointed director of the office after Hollshwandner resigned, testified that Godshalk took another \$54,493 under another scheme in which she relied on a flaw in a computer program to cover missing money. He says she would pocket a cash payment and destroy the office receipt but would tell the computer that the father had paid. The computer would then print a check for the mother. Davison says Godshalk could do that because on certain days when the flawed program was used, there was no way the amount of cash received could be reconciled with the checks that were printed.

The money wasn't missed because there was always a "float" in the checking account totaling thousands of dollars. Since the checkbook wasn't balanced regularly, no one noticed the bogus checks and cash shortage.

Domestic relations officials say that to prevent either scheme from being used again, duties are now separated so that the same person doesn't accept support payments and post them in the computer. The computer flaw was corrected, and officials also say they now check the payments received each day and that the checking account is reconciled twice a month.

Although Godshalk pleaded guilty in June 1983 to taking more than \$84,000, she recanted in August, saying she took "substantially less." In a sworn statement, she said she was told to take the blame for the larger amount by Davison, who said the judges wanted to avoid adverse publicity and provide an excuse for the large sums of missing money.

An out-of-county judge (appointed after a Northampton County judge removed himself to avoid the appearance of a conflict of interest), accepted Godshalk's motion to postpone her trial until the state auditor general can determine how much money Godshalk actually took. That report is expected to be released in a week or so.

In the meantime, Godshalk is out on bail, working at another job and awaiting trial for her role in the "Domestigate" scandal. While Godshalk used a computer flaw to cover her theft of support money, County Controller Kenneth A. Florey found that the same flaw was also used by an office accountant to remove money that was supposedly deposited in the checking account by mistake. The accountant used the flaw to print support checks made payable to mothers or fathers, but which were instead deposited in a domestic relations savings account.

"It is clear that this was simply an operation of robbing Peter to pay Paul since the funds were simply shifted from one domestic relations account to another without proper validation," he said. A computer flaw also resulted in some people getting "duplicate checks," or extra payments they weren't supposed to get.

The president of the computer-consulting firm hired by domestic relations, Schuylkill Computer Services (SCS) of Schuylkill Haven, estimated that 25-50 such checks were printed totaling around \$2,800.

Davison and the county court administrator say that as much as \$20,000 in support money cannot be accounted for because of a variety of computer problems including the duplicate check problem. Until the exact figure is determined, SCS has placed \$38,905 in escrow to cover money which might be missing because of computer problems.

On learning that checks went out in error but weren't returned, County Councilman Richard T. Grucela said, "It's a sad commentary that not one honest person was found in 25-50 people to call up or come in and say, 'Why do I have this check?' "

Unrelated Questions: Story #3

1. How did Godshalk cover up the missing money?
 - a. Flawed computer
2. How often does the office now check the payments received?
 - a. Everyday
3. What did the judge allow Godshalk to do?
 - a. Postpone her trial

U4

Date: SUNDAY, May 6, 1984

Page: B02

Edition: THIRD

MISMANAGEMENT OF DOMESTIC RELATIONS OFFICE RESULTS IN DELINQUENT CHILD SUPPORT

PAYMENTS

The Morning Call

The investigation into embezzlements and mismanagement in the county domestic relations office revealed that some fathers' support payments were apparently sitting in the office undeposited for days, weeks, months or years. Some of those payments were used to help replace several thousand dollars missing from an office cash bag.

One of those payments, a money order dated Aug. 31, 1979, was three years and eight months old when it was deposited. Even then, it went not into the checking account with other support money, but into a savings account.

"Apparently," County Controller Kenneth A. Florey said, "these were checks that were laying around the office and for which the cases were closed or there was some error in terms of depositing." He is still investigating to whom that money belongs and questions why Lafayette Trust Bank of Easton accepted \$3,500 worth of checks made out to actual clients of the support system but not endorsed by those payees.

It's not known if any mothers or children went without support checks because of payments that were left undeposited, although domestic relations officials have insisted that no fathers went to jail because their support payments were misappropriated and that no beneficiaries lost support money. (One reason for that is that \$135,000 was borrowed from the savings account to cover the overdrawn checking accounts and to reimburse fathers whose money was misappropriated.)

Davison says support payments are now deposited daily and are not held under any circumstances. Support checks, he says, are distributed to mothers "within one day" after a father pays.

Council's investigation also answered the question Ann Negoescu of Nazareth asked in March 1983 about how much interest the domestic relations office earned when it held her support for 4 to 6 weeks: None. Support money is held in a non-interest-bearing checking account. If anyone benefited from the "float" of hundreds of thousands of dollars in the account, it was Lafayette Trust Bank which, council was told, had "overnight" use of the money.

Unrelated Questions: Story #4

1. What did the child support checks help replace?
 - a. Missing office money
2. Did any fathers go to jail because of the domestic relations child support issue?
 - a. No fathers went to jail
3. When Ann's checks were held from her how much money did domestic relations make off them?
 - a. None

U5

Date: TUESDAY, May 8, 1984

Page: B01

Edition: THIRD

COUNTY'S THEFT PROBE NEARS END REPORT DUE IN 4-6 MONTHS

The Morning Call

A Northampton County Council committee investigating embezzlements and mismanagement in the county domestic relations office will hold one more public hearing and then issue its final report within the next four to six months.

Councilman Richard T. Grucela, who chairs the special committee, said the committee will hear testimony from representatives of the state auditor general's office within a month and will issue a final report after that. The date of the hearing will depend on when the auditor general's report is released.

Since September, there have been eight council manic hearings at which 16 witnesses testified about the operation of the office. The last hearing was in December. Grucela said the auditor general's staff has completed its work and will be giving a report of its findings to Dist. Atty. Donald B. Corriere. Those findings will reportedly be released to council and the public after the sentencing of Renee L. Godshalk, a domestic relations computer operator who pleaded guilty to taking child support payments.

According to testimony, there may be \$114,000 missing from the domestic relations office due to embezzlement or mismanagement. Godshalk was arrested for taking \$9,450 and pleaded guilty to embezzling more than \$84,000. She later said she took substantially less than \$84,000 but was told to take the blame for the larger amount by Domestic Relations Director William N. Davison, who said the county could get reimbursed for the missing money and avoid adverse publicity.

The district attorney asked the auditor general to independently determine how much money Godshalk took and how much is missing and why it is missing. Council's investigative committee-of-the-whole previously released an interim report in which it made recommendations about how to correct problems in the domestic relations office.

In addition to the district attorney, the auditor general and council, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service has entered the case and audits are being conducted by the county controller and the private accounting firm of Peat Marwick Mitchell & Co.

Unrelated Questions: Story #5

1. Why did Godshalk take the blame for missing money?
 - a. No bad publicity, money replaced
2. Did Godshalk plead innocent or guilty on the charge of embezzlement?
 - a. Guilty
3. Who will determine how much money Godshalk took?
 - a. Auditor

U6

Date: TUESDAY, July 17, 1984

Page: B01

Edition: FIFTH <

EMBEZZLEMENT AUDIT FINISHED STATE'S FINDINGS BACK NORTHAMPTON COUNTY
by TOM MOYLAN, The Morning Call

A lone computer operator in the Northampton County domestic relations office took from \$39,825 to \$87,259, State Auditor Gen. Al Benedict said yesterday at a press conference in the courthouse.

But while that determination appears to lay to rest the question of how much money computer operator Renee L. Godshalk took from May 1981 to March 1983, Benedict's audit of the domestic relations office produced some findings and recommendations that will remain debated issues and perhaps unsolved mysteries. The 33-page audit reported that:

- Another \$18,112 is missing from a domestic relations checking account due to duplicate checks, bad checks, undocumented clerical errors, computer errors, outstanding checks or employee theft.
- There isn't enough proof to justify \$59,400 that was paid by domestic relations to a computer consultant and recommended that the county give the state back \$41,500 which it got as partial reimbursement for the computer bill.
- The domestic relations office lacked effective financial management, although some changes are being implemented.
- Domestic relations management was not knowledgeable about its computer system.

The determination of how much money was taken by Godshalk was hailed by court and domestic relations officials as a "vindication" of embattled Domestic Relations Director William N. Davison. The \$87,259 that may be attributed to Godshalk is close to the \$84,000 figure that Davison helped produce before Godshalk claimed that she was talked into taking the blame for the missing money to make the courts look good.

But Dist. Atty. Donald B. Corriere said only the theft aspect of the Godshalk case has been cleared up. He said he will now look into an alleged cover-up of information uncovered during the court's internal investigation of the matter and measures to prevent future embezzlements.

The state auditors, who have been working on the case since last fall, said that \$39,825 of missing funds can be "directly attributable" to Godshalk and that another \$47,434 "may be attributable" to the 23-year-old woman. The first figure was likened to "direct evidence" and the second was compared to "circumstantial evidence."

"We feel very strongly that we could support the (district attorney) to a point where we can get a verdict on that," Benedict said.

Unrelated Questions: Story #6

1. What was domestic relations management not knowledgeable about?
 - a. Computer system
2. What did domestic relations management lack?
 - a. Financial management
3. Godshalk's case is cleared up so what is the attorney general working on now?
 - a. Embezzlement prevention

U7

Date: THURSDAY, July 19, 1984

Page: B01

Edition: THIRD <

AUDIT PROVES THAT COMPUTER OPERATOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MISSING FUNDS

by TOM MOYLAN, The Morning Call

Renee L. Godshalk, computer operator in the Northampton County domestic relations office, pleaded guilty last year to embezzling more than \$84,000, but later said she took substantially less. The auditor general was called in to determine exactly how much she was responsible for.

Officials indicated yesterday that the county's bonding company may reimburse it for all money that it can prove was stolen, whether or not it can be attributed to anyone. Davison said Auditor Benedict's conclusion about Godshalk "clearly is a vindication of what we have been saying all along." He said much of the auditor general's information

about thefts coincided with lists Godshalk prepared while working with Davison in his internal investigation.

Of some of the other missing money, Benedict said, "We really don't know and probably never will know where some of this money went."

Benedict said his staff could not document that Schuylkill Computer Services of Schuylkill County provided services to justify a \$59,400 payment it got in June of 1983. Benedict said SCS president Nicholas D'Alio could produce only interim reports about what his employees did. He said a former SCS employee said that he never completed any computer programs for domestic relations before he was told to perform work for another SCS client.

"The only thing they did for that money that we can see," Benedict said, "is that they found \$2,100 worth of (duplicate checks)." D'Alio could not be reached yesterday for comment, but Court Administrator Al V. Marhefka said the auditors had access to five months worth of meeting notes documenting what SCS did for its money.

Doberstein said he was aware of the memos but said that after "exhaustive" checking was unable to document the work. The state auditors said a contributing factor to the theft and other losses was less attention paid to accounting controls and simple segregation of duties and an "over-reliance" on the office's computer. One employee could accept payments, record them, post them to computer records and prepare bank deposits. Money could thus be easily taken from the cash drawer and not missed because a dishonest employee could cover his or her theft.

The auditor general said his staff discovered last month that two-year-old computer programs which allow the unauthorized printing of checks still existed. He said

the programs were still operational. Benedict and his aides repeatedly said, however, that despite lax conditions like unlocked safes, they had no indications that any other employees took money.

Benedict also said his staff was "somewhat dismayed" that domestic relations installed a bulletproof "cash room" like the kind found at banks when "armed robbery was not a major concern."

Benedict did not say how much his 10-month audit cost, saying "we don't deal in cost accounting." He at one point said his was "an expensive service," but said the cost was a "very small percentage" of the half million cost cited for the county by the private accounting firm of Peat Marwick Mitchell & Co.

Unrelated Questions: Story #7

1. Do they know where all of the money went?
 - a. No, they may never know
2. The investigation uncovered about 2100 dollars in what kind of checks?
 - a. Duplicate checks
3. What could be taken by an employee and not be missed?
 - a. Money, taken money from the register

U8

Date: FRIDAY, August 10, 1984

Page: B01

Edition: FOURTH <

CORRIERE CITES COURT COVERUP YEARS OF NEGLIGENCE WERE HIDDEN, HE SAYS

by TOM MOYLAN, The Morning Call.

The Northampton County district attorney has concluded that "virtually all details" of the embezzlement and mismanagement in the county domestic relations office "were deliberately and surreptitiously concealed from the district attorney, the council, the controller and the public until after the district attorney and the council exerted public pressure on the domestic relations section and began probing."

Testifying at the ninth and perhaps last public hearing of a county council investigative committee on the subject, Dist. Atty. Donald B. Corriere told council yesterday that while there was no cover-up of criminal activity, there was a cover-up of "14 years worth of incompetence, mismanagement, gross negligence and missing money.

County Council President Gerald E. Seyfried said he thought that Domestic Relations Director William N. Davison had admitted to a court-ordered cover-up "early on" in the county's yearlong investigation. He quoted from Davison's sworn testimony, in which he said the court wanted to keep from Corriere information about the extent of the embezzlement for fear of him turning it into a political football.

Corriere yesterday told Seyfried, "There's been a dispute to some degree on whether there was a cover-up . . . I think we've tried to document it." To support his contentions, Corriere gave council an 11-page double-spaced final report that read like a legal brief, complete with parenthetical references to other testimony, audit reports and

even news articles. Attached to the memo were 11 "exhibits," including previously undisclosed minutes of domestic relations meetings.

Minutes from an Oct. 13, 1982 session said, "WND (William N. Davison) again emphasized that no one discusses this matter with anyone else." The same minutes said that Davison told four domestic relations employees that "under no circumstances is anyone to have any conversation of this problem (a \$5,000-plus checking account overdraft) with the press."

No problems became public until March 17, 1983, when domestic relations computer operator Renee L. Godshalk was arrested for embezzlement. Other problems didn't surface until August and September of last year.

The minutes of an Oct. 26, 1982 meeting said six employees were told by former Domestic Relations Director Joseph V. Hollshwander to "keep quiet" and "don't discuss the matter with anyone, including spouses, parents, etc." The minutes continue: "JVH (Hollshwander) state that this is the last time the issue is spoken of."

Corriere said that Godshalk's accusation last year that Davison told her to admit to taking more money than she did "is still one of Miss Godshalk's word against Mr. Davison's - no third parties were present at crucial times." The district attorney said that since Godshalk admitted lying to investigators at the time of her arrest, "proof beyond a reasonable doubt based on her testimony alone would be impossible."

Corriere's memo concluded by asking: "Who will be watching?" He noted that "no one" watched the domestic relations office for 14 years. He said the state auditor general watched the office while it was conducting an audit but added "they are no longer there."

Corriere said that over and above the \$87,000 that Godshalk probably took, the domestic relations office is missing another \$115,000 through lost interest, \$15,000 of funds that are missing but not attributable to anyone, and \$40,000 that the county might have to pay back to the state welfare department for a suspect bill.

"Another question must be asked in addition to 'who will be watching,'" Corriere said, "and that is 'which is worse, the embezzlement of a 23- year-old thief which should be recovered through the (bonding company) or the outright loss of up to \$115,000 due to negligence, mismanagement and lack of accountability?'" "

During yesterday's hearing, Seyfried noted that council is looking into the hiring of additional domestic relations staff and what to do about the office's maligned computer system. Corriere told council that there was no other proof that any other domestic relations employees, present or former, were criminally responsible for taking or mishandling money in the office.

Many questions concerned the domestic relations computer. Ted Doberstein of the auditor general's office testified that there was an over-reliance on the computer and no personnel trained to work it. He said that because the computer language was an "obscure" one, the office could use only one computer consultant to keep it running.

"I think the county, in essence, has been held hostage because of the lack of expertise about the computers," Doberstein said.

Unrelated Questions: Story #8

1. What was deliberately concealed by domestic relations management?
 - a. Embezzlement and mismanagement

2. What was told to employees by domestic relations?
 - a. Not to talk to the press
3. When did problems for domestic relations become public?
 - a. After Godshalk was arrested.

2. Were you familiar with any of the stories you read here?
 - a. No
 - b. Yes

Appendix C: Questionnaires

VOIR DIRE

INSTRUCTIONS:

- A. You have been empaneled to hear the case of NJ v. Bias in which a man is accused of killing his wife and is charged with second degree murder. In this part of the questionnaire, you are asked to provide background information about yourself. This information, along with the information on the rest of the questionnaire, is completely confidential. Please note that we are not asking for names and that these data will be analyzed on a group basis.
- B. For each question, either **CIRCLE the number** which best represents your answer to the question or fill in your response when open-ended.
- C. Make sure that you answer all of the questions and provide only one answer per question. When you have completed this questionnaire please sit quietly and the experimenter will collect it.

1. Please indicate your sex.

1 = Female

2 = Male

2. How old are you? _____ years

3. Please indicate your ethnicity/race.

1 = Caucasian 2 = Black/African American 3 = Asian or Pacific Islander

4 = Hispanic 5 = American Indian or Native Alaskan 6 = Arab 7 = Other

4. Using the scale below, please indicate your political orientation.

1 = Very conservative

2 = Conservative

3 = Conservative to moderate

4 = Moderate

5 = Moderate to Liberal

6 = Liberal

7 = Very liberal

5. What is your current marital status?

- 1 = Single
- 2 = Living with a significant other
- 3 = Married
- 4 = Separated
- 5 = Divorced
- 6 = Widowed

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- 1 = Grammar
- 2 = High School or Equivalent
- 3 = Vocational/technical school (2 year)
- 4 = Some college
- 5 = Associate's Degree
- 6 = Bachelor's degree
- 7 = Master's degree
- 8 = Doctoral degree
- 9 = Professional degree (MD, JD, etc): indicate _____
- 10 = Other: indicate _____

7. Please list your most recent and primary occupation and then check the employment status that best fits your current situation.

a. Most recent occupation _____

b. Employment Status

- 1 = Employed Full-Time
- 2 = Employed Part-Time
- 3 = Unemployed
- 4 = Retired
- 5 = Homemaker
- 6 = Full-Time Student (not employed)
- 7 = Other: indicate _____

8. Have you ever been convicted of a felony?

1 = Yes 2 = No

9. Do you currently have a driver's license or state ID card?

1 = Yes 2 = No

10. You have been empaneled to hear the case of *New Jersey v. Bias* in which a man is accused of killing his wife and is charged with second degree murder.

Have you heard anything about this case, *New Jersey v. Bias*?

1 = Yes 2 = No

11. During Phase 1, you were asked to read a series of crime stories. Please take the next five minutes to recall all that you can from the Phase 1 stories that you read.

VERDICT FORM

INSTRUCTIONS:

- A. While reading these questions think of yourself as a juror in the trial you just watched and then answer the questions as you believe you would if you were an actual juror in that trial.
- B. For each question, either **CIRCLE the number BELOW** the question which best represents your answer to the question, or place a **CHECK MARK** in the appropriate space.
- C. Make sure that you answer all of the questions and provide only one answer per question. When you have completed this questionnaire, please place it upside down to let the experimenter know you are done.

1. What is your verdict in regard to the charge of **Murder in the Second Degree**?

_____ **Not Guilty** _____ **Guilty**

2. If you found the defendant guilty of Second-Degree Murder, how many years should the defendant be sentenced to State Prison? Under the sentencing guidelines for Second Degree Murder (a first-degree felony) the sentence for Count 1 must NOT exceed **30 years**.

_____ **years** sentenced to State Prison
**Maximum for Charge 1 = 30 years*

_____ I did NOT find the defendant guilty

CULPABILITY SCALE

1. How responsible is the **defendant** for the victim's death?

Not at all Responsible			Somewhat Responsible			Completely Responsible
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. How responsible was the **victim** for the victim's death?

Not at all Responsible			Somewhat Responsible			Completely Responsible
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

For the questions below indicate how much you agree/disagree with each statement.

3. The **defendant** could have prevented the victim's death.

Strongly Disagree			Somewhat Agree			Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. The **victim** could have prevented the victim's death.

Strongly Disagree			Somewhat Agree			Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. The **defendant** had motive to kill the victim.

Strongly Disagree			Somewhat Agree			Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

CREDIBILITY SCALE

INSTRUCTIONS:

- A. READ each question carefully.
- B. The following questions ask your opinion of the **DEFENDANT**. Please indicate your answer to these questions directly on this questionnaire by **CIRCLING** the appropriate choice.
-
-

1. How confident did the defendant appear?

Not at all confident						Completely confident
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2. How intelligent did the defendant appear to be?

Much less intelligent than average			About average in intelligence			Much more intelligent than average
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. How likely is it that the defendant had ulterior motives for giving the testimony?

Completely likely						Not at all likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

4. In your opinion, how accurate was the defendant's testimony?

Completely accurate						Not at all accurate
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

5. How honest did the defendant appear to be?

Not at all honest						Completely honest
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

6. How credible did the defendant appear to be?

Completely credible

Not at all credible

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

7. How believable was the defendant?

Completely believable Not at all believable
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8. How detailed was the defendant's testimony?

Not at all detailed Completely detailed
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

9. How consistent was the defendant in recounting the alleged events?

Not at all consistent Completely consistent
1 2 3 4 5 6 7

10. At the beginning of this study today, did you watch a video on unconscious bias?

1 = Yes

2 = No