



Call For Participants: A Study about Triage Crime Scene Items

This is a call for participants to complete an online study about human factors affecting triaging of crime scene items. The findings of this study may have implications for improving practice and training about triaging decisions.

This is a collaborative project between the UCL Centre for Forensic Sciences and Yale Decision Neuroscience Lab.

Below are the study details:

- (A) Research context; and
- (B) Participant Invitation Letter, with the study link.

(A) Research context:

Judgments made at or after crime scene investigations could potentially impact the direction of police investigations and/or the case legal outcomes. One such decision is the triaging (or prioritization) of crime scene items.

Triage could be needed to optimize the quality of forensic evidence (for example, speed and type of forensic tests to identify suspects). However, some factors could potentially affect the quality of the triaging process. These may include human factors, resource factors, and other factors (US Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2019).

This study aims to explore human factors that may play a role in the triaging of crime scene items. The findings may have implications for improving forensic practitioners' practice and training about triaging decisions.

References:

US Bureau of Justice Assistance. (2019). Triage of forensic evidence testing: A guide for prosecutors (No. 254513). <https://bja.ojp.gov/library/publications/triage-forensic-evidence-testing-guide-prosecutors>.

(B) Participant Invitation Letter, with the study link:

Would you like to participate in a study about factors affecting forensic decision-making?

Dear Participant,

Judgments made at or after crime scene investigations could potentially impact the direction of police investigations and/or the case legal outcomes. The aim of this study is to explore factors that may play a role in the triaging of crime scene items.

We are seeking volunteers to participate in this online study. The inclusion criteria are as follows: any crime scene investigators or forensic examiners who can be involved in the process of prioritizing (or triaging) of crime scene items. For this study, the participant will be asked whether they would choose to send (or not) crime scene items for two broad types of forensic analyses: biological traces (like blood) and fingerprints.

The participant can be working in any relevant sections/ departments (such as crime scene, evidence recovery, or biology).

Reasonable fluency in English is necessary for the completion of the study tasks.

As a participant, you will be asked to evaluate a forensic casework brief. Specifically, the study tasks involve the following:

- First, you will be asked to complete tasks that may resemble a 9am-5pm working day in a forensic science setting.
- Then, you will view crime scene photographs and items from these scene photographs. You will be asked to make decisions about the case, including triaging decisions.
- Finally, you will also be asked to complete a task in which you will make a series of choices between pairs of visual options. You will be asked to choose which of the two options you prefer. For example, you might be asked to choose whether you would prefer an option with a 100% chance of a certain outcome, or an option with another probability of a different outcome.

If you are interested in participating in this study, please:

- Use this link: https://uclresearch.fra1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ex66RdIdyb6w8gm
- Make sure that your audio is turned on. Some tasks will require you to hear recordings.
- Take part in this study only if you are using a desktop/ laptop computer.

The study will take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete. There is time for a short break in the middle if you need it.

Participation is voluntary and you are free to quit at any time. All data collected for this study are anonymous and aggregated. You will be asked some basic demographic questions (e.g., age), but no individual identifying information is collected and reported.

This study was approved by Yale HIC (#0910005795). If you have any questions about this study, please contact the Principal Investigator, Dr. Ifat Levy, at ifat.levy@yale.edu

Thank you very much!

Yale Decision Neuroscience Lab