

The Effects of Own-Race Bias on Memory and Perception

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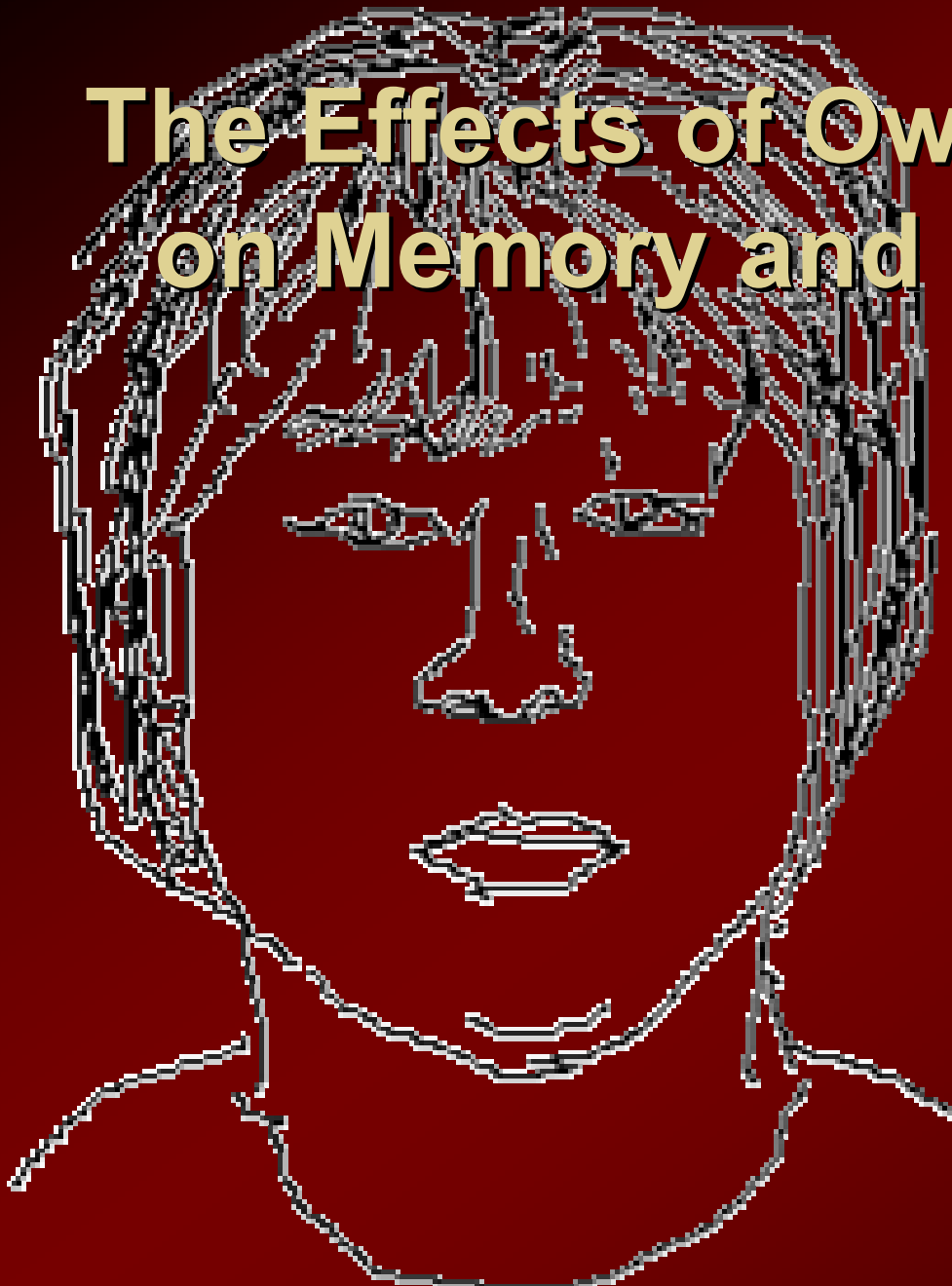
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Memory and the Justice System

- Our justice system relies heavily on eyewitness accounts
- 77,000 people become criminal defendants after being identified from a lineup



Fallacies in Eyewitness Identification

- Difficult to commit a clear image of the perpetrator to memory under stressful conditions
- Eyewitness confidence is a poor gauge of accuracy
- Eyewitnesses are almost as likely to be wrong as they are to be correct when identifying a suspect

Own-Race Bias (ORB)/ Cross-Race Identification Bias

- Own-Race Bias (ORB)
- More accurate in recalling faces of one's own race than of other races



Methods

Subjects:

- 61 GS Students
- 8 counselors
- 34 Males
- 35 Females
- Racial Composition:
 - 52% Caucasian
 - 25% Asian
 - 19% South Asian
 - 4% Other

Materials:

- Consent Forms
- 2 videos
 - Asian
 - Caucasian
- Questionnaires
- 2 lineups
- Demographics Forms

Video

- Staged crime shown
 - Committed by Asian or Caucasian
 - Purse stolen from 1 of 3 people on bench
 - Brief frontal view of perpetrator
- Filmed in Madison in Center Square
- 1 Minute Length

Video (cont'd)

- Change Blindness
 - To test subject's attentiveness
 - Change between cuts
 - Articles of clothing, sunglasses, shoes, purses, and people



- 3 camera angles
- Improvised, casual conversation



TOUCH ME!!

Questionnaire

- Minor details
 - Perceived Changes
 - Test to see subject's attentiveness
 - Distraction from the real purpose of study
- Race of perpetrator
- Description and/or sketch of the perpetrator
- Questionnaire served to:
 - Pass time between witnessing crime and identifying perpetrator
 - Gather information



Lineup

- Uniform quality and white background
- One lineup for each video
- Mug shots shown of perpetrator and three other suspects of same race (filler)
- Confidence rated from 1 to 5



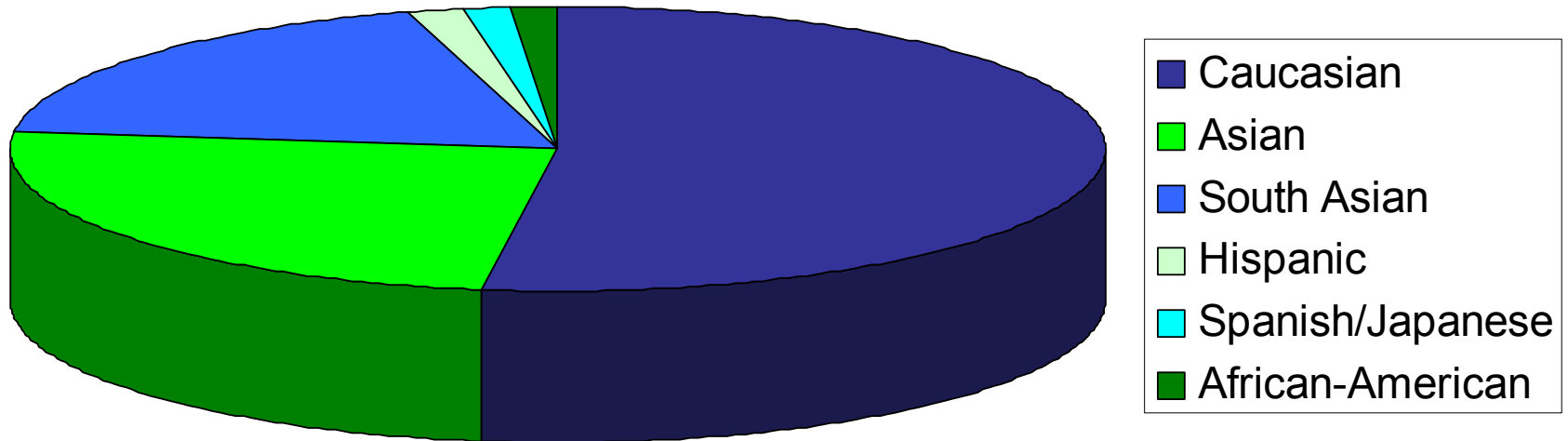
Demographics Form

- Race of subjects
- Racial composition of school
 - Environmental effect on racial identification
- Races of friends
 - Interaction with people of the same or different race

Results

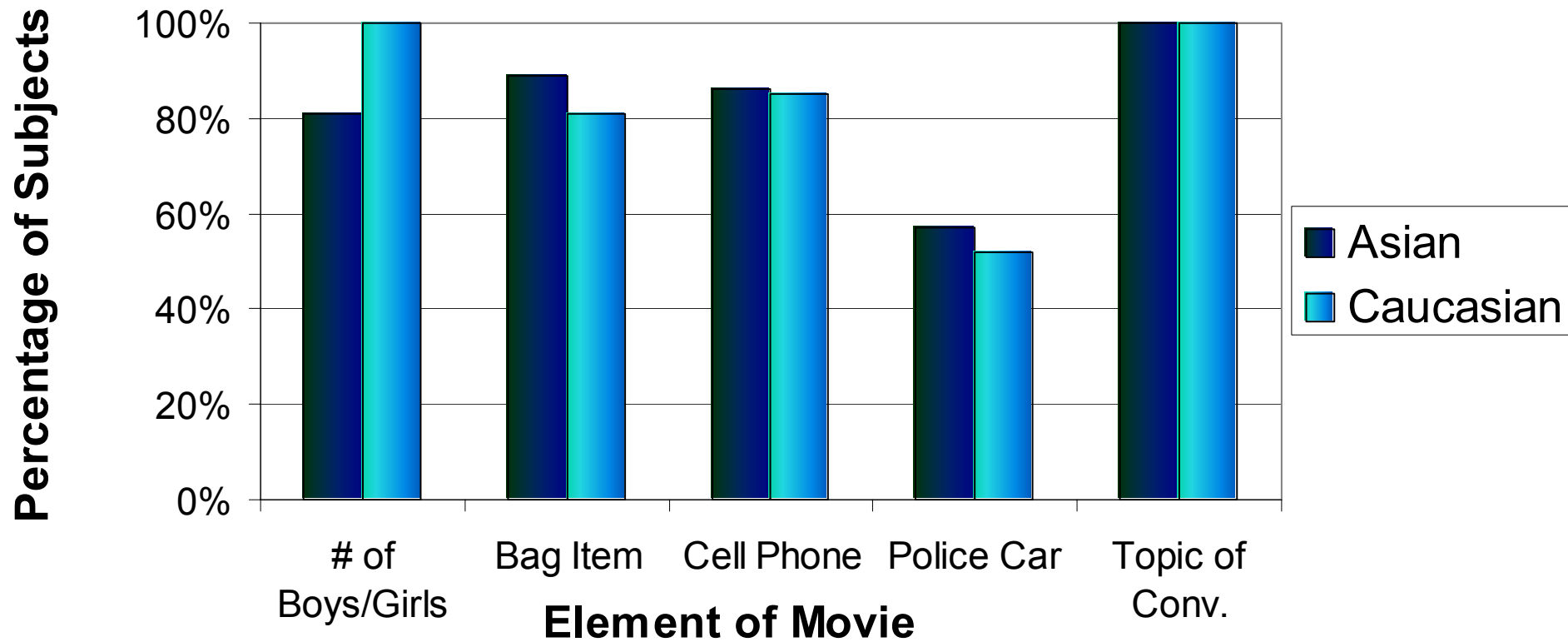
- 69 total subjects
- 42 watched the Asian video
- 27 watched the Caucasian video

Racial Breakdown of Subjects



Attentiveness

Attentiveness of Subjects



What's "His" Race?



- 26% incorrectly identified the race of the perpetrators
- 16% were not sure

Perpetrator Recollection

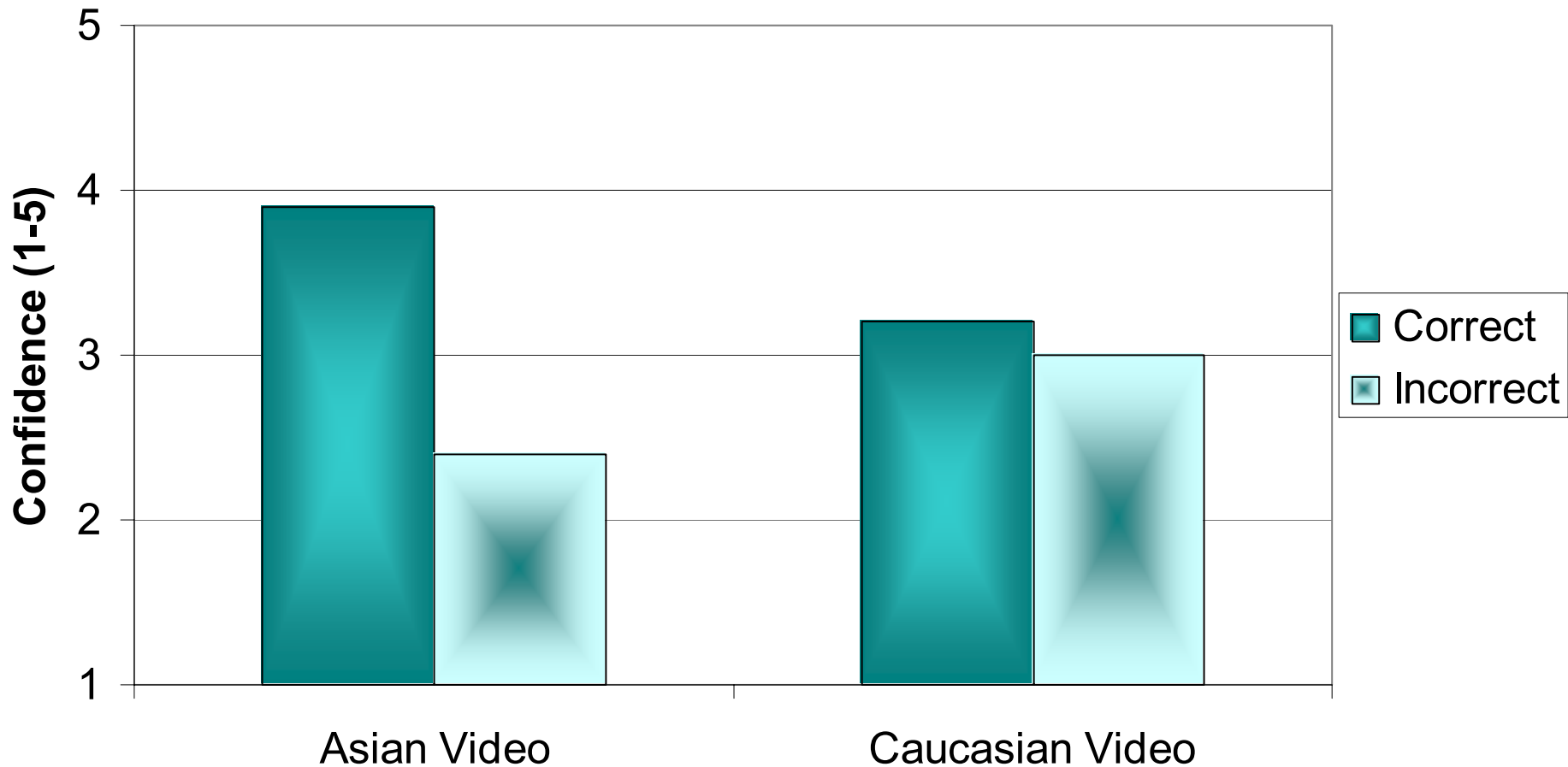
- Provided sketch and description
 - Clothing and color
 - Hair
 - Height
 - Build
- 2 subjects claimed culprit to be classmate:
 - Larry/Yuhan
 - Lee-Shing

Lineup Identification

- For all subjects & all videos, 62% correctly identified the perpetrator from the lineup
- For the Asian video, 67% correctly identified the perpetrator
- For the Caucasian video, 56% correctly identified the perpetrator

Were You Confident?

Confidence of Subjects in Choosing Perpetrator

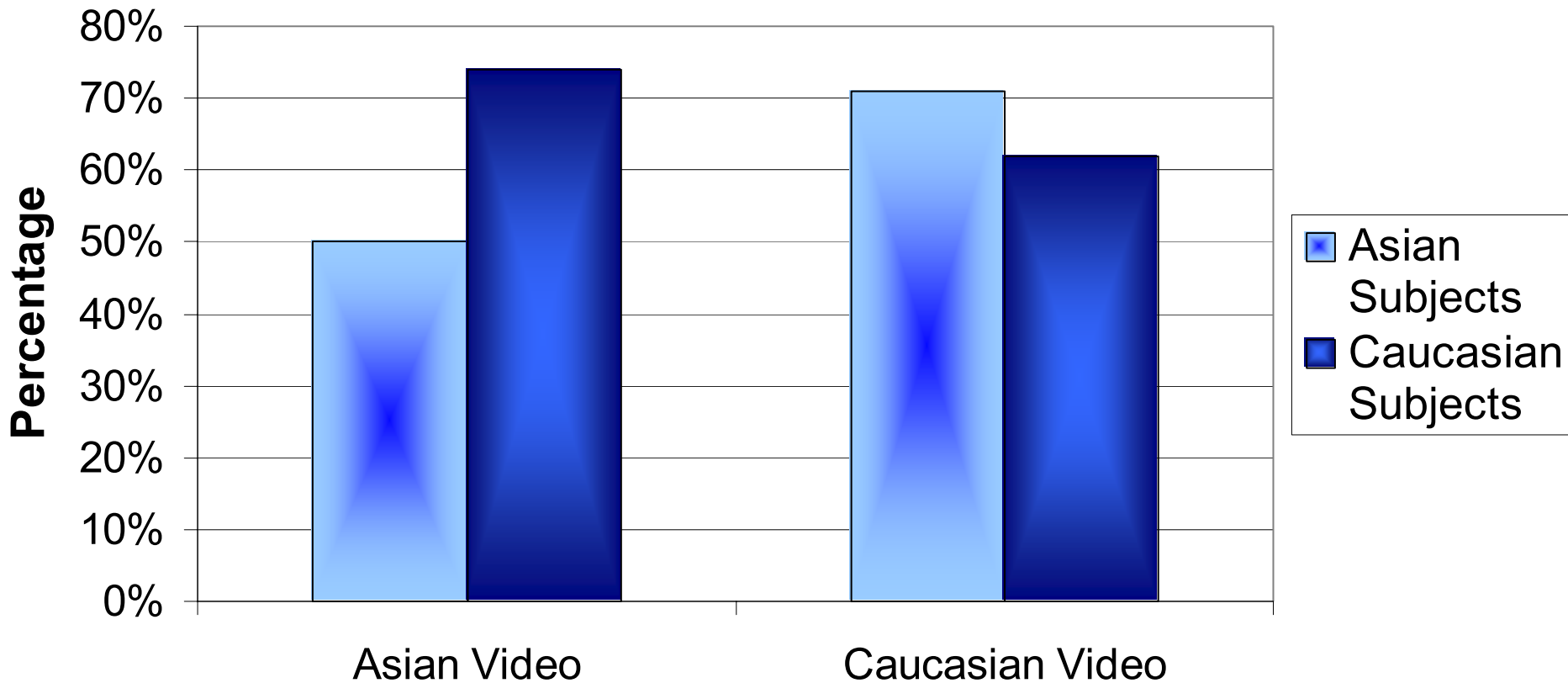


What About Own-Race Bias?

- Own-Race Bias – individuals are best at identifying people of their own race
- For our experiment, subjects should be better at identifying a perpetrator of their own race

Was There Own-Race Bias?

Percentage of Subjects that Identified Perpetrator Correctly



Own-Race Bias



	Caucasian Video	Asian Video
Caucasian Subjects	62%	74%
Asian Subjects	71%	50%

Does Environment Influence?

- One way the environment could have influenced our findings is if our subjects happened to primarily associate with members of the other race.
- However, the demographics collected suggested that this is not the case.
- Regardless of their race, subjects tended to have friends and/or schools that were primarily Caucasian.

Change Detection

- Minor Changes
 - Addition/Removal of Sunglasses
 - Purse Placement
 - Shoe Swap
 - Water Bottle swap
- Non-existent changes claimed



Own-Race Bias in Change Detection

- A significant change was in the Asian video
 - Larry turned into Yuhan
- Actor swap – 72% of subjects noticed
 - 90% of Asian subjects
 - 61% of Caucasian subjects

Potential Flaws and Improvements

- Quantity Irregularity
 - Proportion of subjects watching the Asian video and the Caucasian video was disparate
- Subjects were not entirely representative of the human population
- Video quality was not ideal
- Hairstyle of Asian perpetrator

THE END

Thank you Dr. Miyamoto, Dr. Quinn, and Dr. Surace

6'6"

five criminals . one line up . no coincidence

6'0"

5'6"

5'0"

4'6"

4'0"

3'6"

3'0"

2'6"

2'0"

1'6"

1'0"

6"

0"

0"

0"

The Usual Suspects