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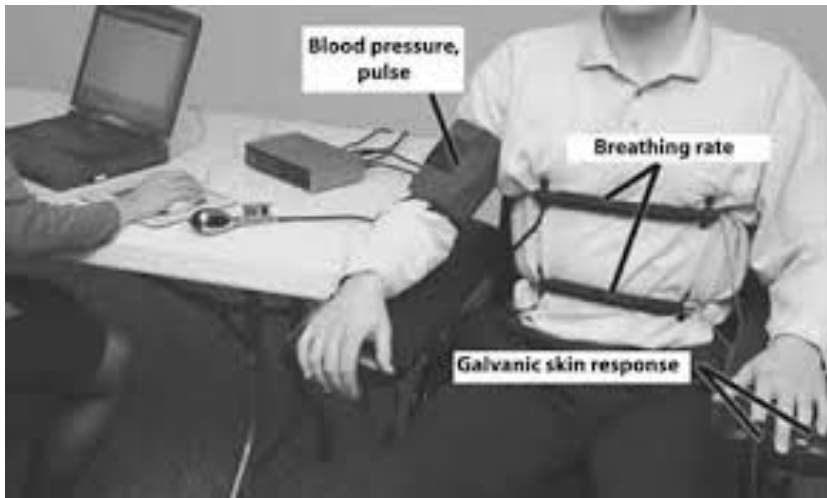
**Liars Beware! A Body Doesn't Lie.
An Activity on Polygraph Analysis**

Question 1: Have you ever been lied to? What is some body language you noticed when someone was lying to you?



Have you ever lied? If the answer is yes, maybe you noticed that your heart beat faster or you started breathing faster. Your muscles may have become tense. Or, you may have started to sweat. These are all changes that can be measured.

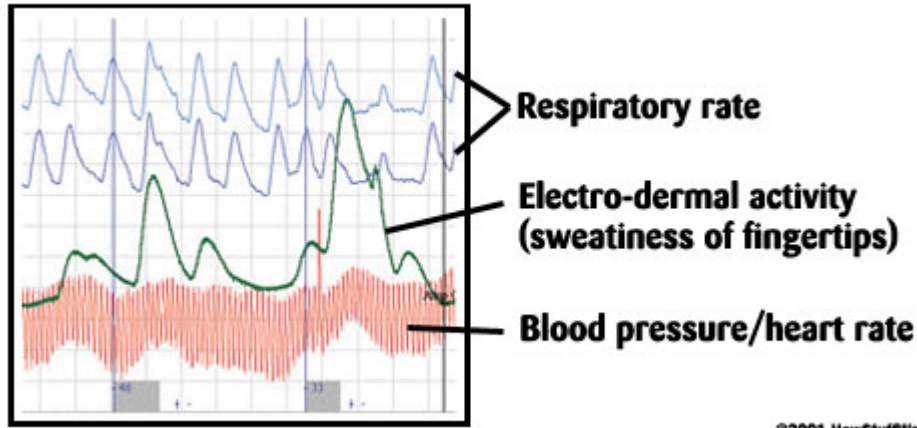
A forensic psycho-physiologist is a trained scientist who uses a polygraph, or lie detector, to determine whether a suspect is lying. He or she uses computer programs and monitors to measure a person's heart rate, blood pressure, and perspiration.



Question 2: What does a polygraph monitor?

The scientist asks the subject a series of yes/no questions and watches for increases or spikes from the sensors. If the perspiration, heart rate, or breathing increases when a subject answers a question, it is an indication he or she is lying. The subject is asked simple questions at first, to develop a baseline which is compared to responses given later in the test to determine if the subject is being deceitful.

Question 3: Why does the scientists ask the test subject simple questions at first?



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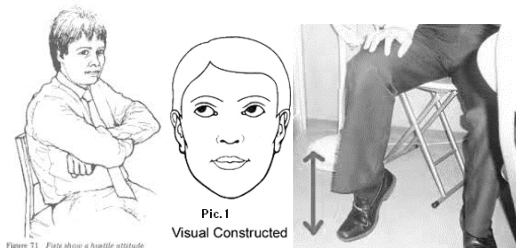
In addition to the body's physiological responses to lying, there are other subtle clues that an examiner can use to determine whether a person is lying.

1) Speech

- Voice can change pitch or speed when you lie
- Liars give limited information and details and try to answer with short answers
- Liars make negative statements (example- I wasn't at the store) rather than positive statements (example- I was at the park) and use the past tense more often

Question 4: Oh no! Your phone charger is missing! Would a liar be more likely to say, "I didn't take your phone charger" or "I used Mom's phone charger"?

2) Body language



- Liars tend to make hand to face gestures (touching the side of the nose, rubbing the back of the neck, touching ears, pulling at the collar, putting fingers in mouth, rubbing or scratching the eyes)
- Liars avoid eye contact
- Liars tend to look up when telling a lie
- Liars tend to jiggle their feet and legs (raising up on toes of feet if standing or raising heels off ground if sitting)
- Liars tend not to show open palms when speaking (open palms are a sign of honesty). Instead, liars cross arms in front of them (hiding palms), put hands in pockets, or cross hands behind the back.

Question 5: Are people likely to make eye contact when telling a lie?

CASE STUDY: The American Murder: The Family Next Door (On Netflix!)

Chris Watts, 33, spoke to Denver7's Tomas Hoppough on Tuesday about the disappearance of his pregnant wife and their two daughters a day earlier. On Wednesday, police say he confessed to killing all three of them.

Watch the video: <https://deceptiondetectionspecialists.com/chris-watts-murder-written-analysis/>

- As you watch the video, study Chris Watts's body language and try to spot signs of deception in the suspect. Record them in the box below.



DECEPTION USUALLY OCCURS IN CLUSTERS, WHICH IS EASIEST TO SEE WHEN WE HAVE A CLEAR BASELINE OF KNOWN TRUTHS TO COMPARE AGAINST POTENTIAL LIES.

CHRIS WATTS IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF A CLEAR BASELINE OF KNOWN TRUTHS (HIS NAME, SPELLING, KIDS NAMES, AGES, POLICE ACTIVITY WHICH WE KNOW TO BE TRUE) AND COMPARE IT AGAINST WHAT HE STATES ABOUT HIS MISSING WIFE AND CHILDREN WHICH WE KNOW TO BE DECEPTIVE. WATCH THE VIDEO ABOVE AND READ THE TEXT BELOW TO SEE IF YOU CAN SPOTS SIGNS OF DECEPTION.

Chris Watts

1:07 – 1:30 – Right now its they've got K-9 units, the Sheriff's Dept., everybody's like, they're doing their best right now to figure out if they can get a scent, see where they went, if they went on foot if they went in a car, if they went somewhere. And right now it's just like, they've been on point, they're going through the house trying to get a scent and hopefully they can pick something up to where it's going to lead to something.

1:35 -2:13 – She came home from the airport at 2 a.m. and I left around 5:15, she was still here. And about 12:10 that afternoon her friend showed up at the door, like I had texted Shanann a couple times that day, called her to say, hey, you know, but she never got back to me. But she wasn't getting back to any of her people as well, and that's what really concerned a lot of people, is like if she's not getting back to me that's fine, she gets busy during the day, but she didn't get back to her people which is really concerning. And Nicole called me when she was at the door and that's when I came home and then walked in the house and nothing, just vanished, nothing was here.

1:14 – 1:17 – I mean she wasn't here, the kids weren't here, nobody was here.

1:22 – “Bella and Celeste”

1:30 1:33 – “Bella's 4 and Celeste is 3.”

- ***The beginning where he answers his name, spelling and his children's names and ages is a great baseline for what Chris looks and sounds like when he is being honest. He is straight forward, direct, normal moving eye contact, standing straight and firm. At times he sways slightly but not consistently. He keeps his honest answers short, direct and to the point. Pay attention to when we know he is telling the truth (names, ages, etc...) and how that changes in various ways during the interview.***

1:37 – 2:01 – “I called her 3 times, texted her about three times just to say, you know, what's going on. Like after I called her and texted her once it was like, maybe she was just busy, she had just gotten back, you know. Like everybody's probable calling her from her trip you know. She just got back from Arizona and I figured she was just busy, but when her friend showed up that's when it just registered — like alright, this isn't right.

- ***Towards the end of this portion, you notice his blink rate unnaturally changes for a brief moment. This doesn't mean that he's being deceptive but it does indicate that he's uncomfortable with the questions and really has to think and/or create the responses.***
- ***His body language changes slightly with more swaying and extended, unnatural eye contact. These minor red flags clustered together all add-up. He's engaging in perception management and attempting to establish an alibi.***

2:04 (Tomas asks, “Do you think she just took off?”)

2:06 – 2:49 – I mean right now I don't even want to just like throw anything out there, like I hope that she's somewhere safe right now and with the kids, but I mean could she have van...could she have just taken off, I don't know, but if someone has her and they're not safe I'll want them back now. Like, that's,

that, that's what's in my head is like, if they're safe right now, they're gonna come back, but if they're not safe right now that's the not knowing part, like if they're not safe. Last night I was, I had every light in the house on, I was hoping that I would just get just ran over by the kids running in the door and just like barrel rushing me, but it didn't happen and it was just a traumatic night trying to be here."

- **Chris Watts shook his head back and forth to say "no" but verbally says: "I mean, right now, I don't even want to just like throw anything out there." – This is a huge red flag. His body language contradicts his verbal statement. His verbal statement isn't much of an answer. He never directly answered the question. He did, in many ways, communicate "no, I don't think she just ran off". He then goes on to move the conversation away from the question and attempt to make himself appear like a grieving father (perception management). This is polar opposite to his baseline of short, direct answers of known truths. This is a huge red flag!**
- **The use of the word "if" throughout the entire interview is very concerning but gets worse as the interview goes on.**

3:54- 3:55 – (Stutters) I mean, er, I mean my kids are my life 3:56 – 4:46 – I mean those smiles light up my life. And it's like, I mean last night, like during like at like you know when they usually eat dinner, it was just like I miss them. Like, I mean I miss the telling them like you got to eat that, like or you're not going to get your dessert, or just, like you're not going to get your snack, after, you know (laughs). I miss that, like I miss them cuddled up on their couches, they have like a Minnie Mouse couch and a Sofia couch that like they cuddle up on or watch you know Bubble Guppies or something and it was just like you know, I miss, I was (sigh), it was tearing me apart last night and I needed that, I needed that last night and for them, for nobody to be here last night and to go into their rooms and not, and know that I wasn't going to turn their rain machines on and know that I wasn't going to turn their monitor on and know I wasn't going to kiss them to bed tonight it was, (sigh) it was, I, I, that's why last night was just horrible

- **He never stutters or uses filler words such as "um" or "like" or "I mean" when he was asked other direct questions where we know he was being truthful which we can use as a baseline. This indicates he is creating rather than remembering.**
- **I do believe, to some extent, he did love his children and feels some remorse for the loss of his children.**
- **At the end, he closes down his body/arms even tighter, tension in his shoulders, bites his lips and unnaturally blinks holding eye contact far too long. He wants to say something but is holding back. Unfortunately, the camera shifts.**

3:46 – 3:55 I couldn't do it, I just, (laugh), I want everybody just to come home. Like, wherever they're at, just come home. That's what I want.

- **The placement of the laugh is very telling. He's really trying to show emotions but can't. He's trying to display the worried husband/father but he can't. In my humble opinion, that tiny little laugh was a small but significant tell that he wasn't even buying his own story. It is followed again by the biting of his lip, unnatural blinks and self-soothing swaying. Unfortunately the camera shifts again and the interviewer completely changes the conversation.**

3:55 – 4:24 – Tomas moving camera, Chris explaining just timeline of when she was supposed to get home, flight delayed, when she got home at 1:48, got home, got to bed at 2.

4:36 – I left for work early that morning, like 5:15 to 5:30, so like, she barley, I mean, she barely got, barely gotten into bed pretty much.

4:46 – 4:50 (Tomas – I know this might be a tough question, but did you guys get into an argument or anything before she left?)

4:51 – 4:55 – It wasn't like an argument, we had an emotional conversation but I'll leave it at that.

- **He is clearly trying to minimize what happen here as well as avoid any direct answer to the question.**
- **He is also holding himself and swaying back & forth which is a form of self-soothing. He does this several times during the interview but not the entire time. It indicates that that some questions are making him more uncomfortable than others.**

4:55 – 5:01 – “But it’s, sigh, I just want them back (smiles and laughs) I just want them to come back.”

- **He does an asymmetrical smirk which is a universal sign for contempt. He then laughs while shaking his head no while stating “I just want them back.” – This is a huge red flag!**

5:02 – 5:14 – And if, if they’re not safe right now, that’s what’s tearing me apart, because if they are safe, they’re coming back, but if they’re not, this, this, this has got to stop, like this, somebody has to come forward.”

5:38 – 5:46 – Colorado is, I mean, um, you can’t just drive around and look, I mean it’s just like, you wouldn’t really know what you were looking for that’s what the cops pretty much told me.

5:46 – 5:50 – That first day I was like I want to get out and drive around and they were like you wouldn’t know what to look for.

- **His wife and two small kids go missing and he never even goes looking for them – not once! Huge red flag!**

6:51 – 6:56 (Tomas: “If your wife could see this, if she could watch this, what would you like to tell your wife?)

6:56 – Shanann, Bella, Celeste, if you’re out there, just come back, like if somebody has her, just please bring her back, I need to see everybody, I need to see everybody, again, this house is not complete without anybody here. Please bring them back.

- **At this stage of the investigation they are considered “missing” so why is he saying “IF”? Chris prefaces everything with “if”.. Why “if”? and if they aren’t out there, where else would they be? The reason for the “if” is because he already knows they are dead.**
- **Also, notice he’s actually shaking his head back and forth saying “no” in his body language even though his words are saying come back. At the very end, he is actually biting his lips shut again. He clearly knows much more.**

➤ **Reflection:** What is your reaction to this interview? Do you think it is important to study body language? Do you think Chris Watts should take a polygraph test? Do you think he would pass?

Activity Objectives

You will analyze the results from a polygraph test.
You will evaluate whether the subject is being deceitful (lying).

Background Information

William Floyd High School was having a fundraiser to raise money for a new soccer field. The students worked hard all semester selling candy, having bake sales, and holding car washes. They raised almost 80% of the \$10,000 needed.

To encourage the students to keep working hard, the principal placed the money in a glass jar in the center of the courtyard so the students could see their progress. A thermometer chart showing the amount of money raised was placed beside the glass jar and a lock was placed on the jar.

Each afternoon, the janitor, Mr. Tom, was in charge of locking the glass jar in the principal's office before he left. Mr. Tom was a friendly man and was well liked by the faculty and students. In fact, the students often confided in Mr. Tom and asked for his advice and help.

Thursday, May 14, at 3:40pm, the fundraiser glass jar had been found smashed in the courtyard. All of the money was missing. Police investigating the case moved Mr. Tom to the top of suspect list when it was discovered he had a criminal background. He had been caught stealing electronic equipment when he was 15. Mr. Tom was given a polygraph test and interviewed by police.

Procedure

You will be examining the polygraph test given to Mr. Tom as well as the interrogation done by the police. You will use data from heart rate, breathing rate, and perspiration levels to help you decide if Mr. Tom is telling the truth or being deceitful. Based on the information you gathered, you will decide whether Mr. Tom committed the crime.

Data

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Question 1- Is your name Mr. Tom?

Mr. Tom- "Yes." Heart rate: 

Analysis: Telling the truth or lying? Why?

Question 2- Did you take the money?

Mr. Tom- "No." Heart rate: 

Analysis: Telling the truth or lying? Why?

Question 3- Do you work at Greenwood Middle School?

Mr. Tom- "Yes." Breathing rate: 

Analysis: Telling the truth or lying? Why?

Question 4- Do you know  who took the money?

Mr. Tom- "No." Breathing rate: 

The examiner noted Mr. Tom wiped sweat from his brow before the next question.

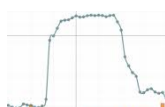
Analysis: Telling the truth or lying? Why?

Question 5- Have you ever been convicted of stealing?

Mr. Tom- "Yes." perspiration rate: 


Analysis: Telling the truth or lying? Why?

Question 6- Did you witness a student stealing the money?

Mr. Tom- "No." perspiration rate: 


Analysis: Telling the truth or lying? Why?

Question 7- Are you 41 years old?

Mr. Tom- "Yes." Heart rate: 

Analysis: Telling the truth or lying? Why?

Question 8- Did you see anyone suspicious or unusual at the school Thursday, May 14th?

Mr. Tom- "No." Heart rate: 

Analysis: Telling the truth or lying? Why?

Interrogation notes from Detective Smith:

I interrogated Mr. Tom at 8:32am, May 15th. Mr. Tom started the interrogation with a calm voice and made good eye contact. I asked him if he stole the money and his response was no. He explained that he had worked at the school for 4 years and enjoyed his job. He used his hands to gesture as he talked. His favorite part of his job was helping the students. He explained that early in the morning on May 14th, he talked to Andy, a 7th grade boy who was sad and upset. His father had been in a car accident and wasn't able to work. His mother was having a hard time paying the medical bills. After Mr. Tom listened to Andy, he bought him breakfast and told him to come and talk to him whenever he needed to.

- Was Mr. Tom telling the truth or being deceitful during this part of the investigation? Support your answer.
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Mr. Tom's demeanor began to change as I questioned him about the events surrounding the stolen money. His answers were short and he sat with his arms crossed. He seemed hot, as he tugged at his collar and told me he didn't see anyone take the money. He rubbed at his nose as he said he had no idea who had taken the money. When I asked if he could think of anyone that might have stolen the money, he looked up, as if to think, and answered no as he jiggled his feet.

- Was Mr. Tom telling the truth or being deceitful during this part of the investigation? Support your answer.
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Conclusion

1. Do you think Mr. Tom stole the money? _____

2. If you think Mr. Tom is innocent, do you think he knows who stole the money? Why?

3. Why did Mr. Tom lie?

4. Why do you think critics of polygraph tests argue that they are not reliable?

5. Write a scenario as to what you believe happened to the money on May 14.
