

Csi effect essay

[Law](#), [Evidence](#)



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Introduction

CSI effect has brought a lot of frustration to the American legal system as jurors have developed unrealistic hopes as television shows has always made forensic science look simple, whereby in real life, it is a complex procedure. It has been found that the CSI effect has a huge impact on the legal system, especially in regards to the situation where jurors demand forensic evidence to use in criminal trials. This has led to criticism of forensic science television programs.

CSI effect is the way in which forensic science becomes exaggerated on the crime shows in television so as to influence the perception of the public to believe that things are easy in forensic science, but in reality it is complex and involves long procedures to be followed (Stevens, 2010).

In 2005, a survey was carried out in Maricopa County by the chief prosecutor whereby 102 out of 300 attorneys, all of whom had experience in trial, were interviewed about the CSI effect. The office of the prosecutor carried out more than 40, 000 trials each year and it was reported that CSI effect was a myth (Andrews, 2006). The research question was to determine whether CSI effect was fact or fiction. From the different attorneys interviewed, 38%

responded that, they had overseen some trials that led to the acquittal by the jury because there was absence of forensic evidence, even though they had other non-forensic evidence, which could have led to conviction. In 40% of all prosecutors' cases, jurors required evidence like; mitochondrial DNA, ballistics, trace evidence and latent prints.

The real situation in the prosecutor's office is the lack of enough resources to carry forensic investigation. Some of the law enforcement centers have the equipment used in the television shows, but they can only be used on serious crimes. Maricopa County lacks such equipment, as many criminals get involved in low-profile crime like drug possession and assault. Such cases do not require scientific evidence to convict an individual, but the greatest concern is if the jury room demand for forensic evidence (Andrews, 2006). In all cases where a verdict, delivered, 72% of them are delivered by jurors who watch CSI shows as they show expertise swaying those who do not watch them.

The method used was direct interviewing of the jurors. The prosecutor talked to the jurors immediately about the case in which they had just delivered a verdict. Most of the jurors, (74%) responded that they delivered the verdict based on forensic evidence, even though non-scientific evidence was available (Andrews, 2006). 45% of the prosecutors felt that the jury left out some evidence like witnesses, police evidence and other non- scientific evidence, which were available. Statements from the defendants failed to convince the jury, on the basis that the case lacked scientific evidence like fingerprints.

In my opinion, the officials in court should take action and ensure that

opportunity for fair trial is reserved. Prosecutors should worry about the delivery of justice, which might not be done fairly if the jury will apply the styles they watch in television shows, and their dependence on forensic evidence while ignoring other non-forensic evidence. Prosecutors should point out the reason why forensic evidence is not available for a given case so that, they can be able to restore justice in a criminal system. In addition, evidence should not be based on scientific evidence only because forensic science shows have also helped criminals how to conceal evidence that could be used against them when they do a crime.

Conclusion

CSI effect has affected the manner through which students become trained and this has caused the increased number of students taking undergraduate studies in forensic science. However, many students enroll to this course with expectations, which are unrealistic. These courses do not prepare the students adequately for work, and many students get out of the university without scientific principles of forensic science.

References

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