

# Looking at eyewitness testimony

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Assignment #2 Article #17 Looking Askance at Eyewitness Testimony The use of eyewitnesses has been a constant in of criminal justice system since its very beginning. Unfortunately, people do not make the best witnesses to a crime. The person may not have seen the actual criminal, but someone that looks similar to them. The witness may lie about what he or she may have scene. Also the witness can be influenced by the police as to who or what they saw at the time of the crime. The witness or victims memory of the person may have faded so that they don't remember exactly what had seen, which could be disastrous for the accused. With all these possible flaws in the testimony of witnesses and victims why do they continue to use them as primary evidence in criminal cases? The answer is simple; until recently there was no other way to prove whether or not a person was actually at the scene of a crime unless someone saw them or they left some finger prints behind that the police were able to link back to someone, which may have not been left on the victim but in the general vicinity. Until recently, with the recent breakthrough in DNA testing which allows police and investigators to gain an exact match as to who committed the crime. I personally feel that this is a much more reliable and accurate than relying on the testimony of witnesses. I believe through the use of science we as a society can now make sure that the guilty are caught and punished while the innocent are protected from wrongful prosecution. However the eyewitness should not be completely left out of the case against the possible offender. After it is determined through scientific evidence, in this case DNA, that the physically involved in the crime then witnesses can be brought in to give testimony that the offender was present at the crime scene or the victim can be sure

that the accused was truly the one involved in the actual crime. Also the procedures for recording eyewitnesses testimony have to be revised. This can be done by increasing the speed at which the statements are taken by the police as to prevent their fading from the memories of the witness. Also police do have to watch that they don't influence the witness by making comments to them to favor one suspect over another. Overall I believe that a combination of witnesses and science must be used to fully determine a persons guilt or innocence in the eyes of the law.