The Importance of Saying “I Don’t Know”

*Sample*

Participants will be recruited from Texas State criminal justice classes by offering them extra credit for participation in the study. They will all be given the attached consent form. I checked the pregnant, physical illness, and mental disability boxes because it is possible that any of these could apply to the participants. I will not be screening for any of these conditions. Because I believe that the risks to the participants are minimal, I am also asking omit the signature lines from the form. They will simply be given a copy of the form. The number of points for extra credit is blank because different instructors will offer different points. Who participated will be tracked with a separate sign-in sheet. I believe that the study should also qualify as exempt.

*Design*

The study is a 2 (context informed/uniformed) x 2 (dichotomous choice/trichotomous choice) design. All participants will be randomly assigned to conditions.

*Procedure*

After reading the consent form, participants will be assigned to groups. Those in the informed groups will receive information about how the videos were made. Those in the uniformed groups will not. Those in the dichotomous choice conditions will make dichotomous truth/lie judgments. Those in the trichotomous conditions will make truth/lie/inconclusive judgments.

Regardless of condition, the participants will watch 12 videos of students at another university who either did or did not cheat on a trivia task and make veracity judgments. These videos were created with the approval of Michigan State University’s IRB and have been used in several other research projects. Following the videos, participants will be thanked for their time and released.

Consent Form (IRB Approval # \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

This research project is being conducted by Dr. J. Pete Blair of Texas State University. He can be contacted at (512)245-2456 or pete.blair@txstate.edu. You were selected to participate in this project because you are a student in criminal justice classes at Texas State University.

The purpose of this project is to examine your ability to detect deception. Should you choose to participate, you will watch 12 videos of people either lying or telling the truth about cheating on a trivia task and make a judgment about whether or not each participant was lying or telling the truth. This will take approximately 1 hour of your time. For completing this task, you will receive \_\_\_ extra credit points in your class. If you choose not to participate, but still wish to receive credit, you can read a criminal justice related article from a peer reviewed journal and provide a two page written summary of the article.

All data that is collected will be anonymous. That is none of the answers that you give can be linked back to you. The data will be maintained in the researcher’s office for a period of three years. If you wish to be provided with a summary of the results, the researcher will provide one to you upon request. Please contact him at the e-mail above if you wish to receive a summary.

This study poses no physical or psychological risks to you. You may benefit in that you will learn about your ability to detect deception and the research process.

Your participation is voluntary and you may choose to withdraw from the study at anytime without prejudice or jeopardy to your standing with Texas State University. You may also choose not to answer any of the questions for any reason. If you have any questions about the research, your rights, and/or injuries you can contact the Institutional Review Board Chair, Dr. Jon Lasser at (512) 245-3413 or lasser@txstate.edu or Ms. Becky Northcut, Compliance Specialist at (512) 245-2102.