

## Effects of Headline and Image Congruency on Formation of Memory and Judgement

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Information in news articles can be misleading without being false. Our study examined effects of misleading headlines on participants' judgment of paired images of the individuals mentioned in articles. Sixty-one Missouri Southern State university students participated (43 females, 18 males.) Participants read one of two sets of 4 fictional news articles then finished a questionnaire consisting of questions assessing their memory accuracy and memory of face/role associations. Each article had an image of the victim or the culprit paired with either a congruent or incongruent headline. We examined if the headline and the initial paragraph of the article affected the impressions of the person pictured, either good or bad, through a 7-point scale. We hypothesized readers would form incorrect impressions of paired incongruent headlines and images. A 2 (person in photo: bad/good) x 2 (congruency: congruent/incongruent) repeated measures ANOVA was conducted to test our prediction. The analysis revealed a main effect of role, with culprits being rated lower than victims. We did not find a main effect of congruence. The interaction between role and congruency did not approach significance. We concluded that participants corrected initial assumptions made between the headline and image. Results indicate that further study is needed to confirm previous findings contrary to our results.