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The Influence of Regret Proneness, Evidence Strengthening,
and Perceived Responsibility on Verdict Preference

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Masters of Arts

Forensic Psychology

Feinstein College of Arts and Sciences

Roger Williams University

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ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE PROGRAM IN FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY
THESIS PROJECT FORM

Date: 10/20/10

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a candidate for degree of Master of Arts in FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY, to use the following thesis topic:
REGRET PRONENESS & UNRELIABLE JURORS

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Abstract

In the present study, we investigated perceived responsibility, evidence strengthening, and defendant gender in the context of a criminal trial involving DNA. Evidence was introduced post-trial and varied as strengthening the defendant's guilt v. innocence. We also examined perceptions of perceived responsibility for verdict in order to more closely evaluate the role of regret in decision-making. Results indicated that DNA evidence is perceived as reliable, regardless of whether it strengthened guilt or innocence. In addition, greater confidence in verdict was observed when evidence strengthened the guilt of a female defendant vs. a male defendant. Finally, jurors experiencing high levels of regret perceived DNA evidence more selectively compared to jurors with low levels of regret, supporting the importance of identifying individual difference factors prior to trial.

The Influence of Regret Proneness, Evidence Strengthening,
and Perceived Responsibility on Verdict Preference.

Decision-making is critical to our lives. When confronted with a decision, we often weigh the pros and cons of each option and attempt to arrive at the best choice. This process has been the topic of copious research in both cognitive and social psychology arenas. For example, rational choice theory postulates that individuals are rational choosers and will carefully compare options to maximize our preferred choice (von Neumann & Morgenstern, 1947). In other words, we will always choose the option best suited for the situation. However, decision-making is not always so straightforward. Several factors are at play when making a decision, beyond simply choosing the most rational option. In the present study, we examined individuals' perceptions of decision-making in the context of a criminal trial.

Regret and Decision Making

One factor closely related to decision-making is regret. Researchers began theorizing about the role of regret in consumer decision-making during the economic boom of the 1980s. Regret theory (Bell, 1982; Loomes & Sugden, 1982) emerged from Expected Utility Theory (von Neumann & Morgenstern, 1947), which proposed that decisions are made on the goal of maximum utility and financial payoff, or rather the pain and pleasure associated with the outcome of an option. However, while regret and joy only happen after the decision is made, they are often taken into account when evaluating all the options. Regret theory states that the decision maker is usually prepared to trade financial return in order to avoid regret. Meaning, people are generally willing to sacrifice some pleasure in order to avoid potential pain. Therefore, by incorporating regret, the Expected Utility Theory becomes a better predictor of decisions. Furthermore, researchers have found that most people are averse to regret to the point

that they seek to avoid choosing options that will induce regret (Bell, 1982; Loomes & Sugden, 1982; Zeelenberg, 1999). Interestingly though, individuals tend to overestimate the amount and intensity of emotions compared to when they actually experience it (Buehler & McFarland, 2001; Kermer, Driver Linn, Wilson, & Gilbert, 2006). This is especially true when experiencing the emotion of regret compared to other emotions.

Upon further analysis of the regret construct, Sugden (1985) proposed two components to the construct of regret: feelings of responsibility, blame, and subjective evaluation of the quality of the decision and comparison of chosen option to alternatives. As an emotion, it is the reaction to a past behavior or decision. “Regret itself is a negative, cognitive-based emotion that is experienced when we realize or imagine that the present situation could have been better had we acted differently” (Sandberg & Conner, 2008, p. 590). Once a decision is made, the individual must contend with the possibility that it may not have been the best option.

Regret as a Mediator

The amount of regret felt can vary significantly depending on the decision the individual makes. Roese and Summerville (2005) suggested that regret is intensified by perceptions of future opportunity, known as the opportunity principle. Through a survey, they found that the life domains that are most regretted are the areas with the greatest potential for change, such as education, career, and romance. Conversely, the less regretted life domains have less potential for change, such as friends, spirituality, and community. It is the more stable factors of life that are regretted the least. For example, Boninger, Gleicher, and Strathman (1994) found that people who habitually consider future consequences and how they may avoid future negative outcomes experience less, rather than more, intense regret after a negative outcome. These individuals learned from their past regrettable decisions in order to reduce the amount of regret they would

have in the future. Using the opportunity principle, people tend to learn from their past mistakes and therefore develop satisfactory stable situations. However, there is some debate over the opportunity principle. In a more recent study, Beike, Markman, and Karadogan (2009) conducted a series of 3 experiments and found that feelings of regret are more likely elicited by perceptions of lost opportunities. People tend to have more regret for outcomes that could have been changed in the past but cannot be changed now. These are the stable factors that take more time to change once they are set, such as family and community.

From the research, it appears that regret is a highly individualized, rather than universal, construct. Each person has their own standards for acceptability and weighted importance on their various decisions. Furthermore, everyone has his or her own threshold for experiencing regret. Interestingly though, there appears to be some patterns along the gender lines emerging with regard to what is a regrettable decision. Men are more likely to experience regrets of inaction whereas women are more likely to experience regrets of action (Dickson, Paul, Herbison, & Silva, 1998; Klassen, Williams, & Levitt, 1989; Oswald, Cameron, & Koob, 2005; Roese, Pennington, Coleman, Janicki, Li, & Kenrick, 2006). Although these studies were limited to regret associated with sexual acts, they are interesting to consider. Identifying an individual's personal threshold for regret could indicate their potential leanings toward guilty or not guilty verdict before evidence is even presented.

Finally, there are several aspects of the decision itself that influences the amount of regret individuals expect to feel. When an individual makes a poor decision that is unconventional, they are more likely to expect feeling regret even with more traditional options available (Simonson, 1992). Additionally, more regret is expected for decisions of action rather than failures to act, such as accepting bad advice rather than rejecting good advice (Crawford, McConnell, Lewis, &

Sherman, 2002) or acting foolishly rather than failing to act wisely (Gilovich & Medvec, 1995; see Gilbert, Morewedge, Risen, & Wilson, 2004). Learning of the outcomes to other alternatives after making a poor decision is also more expected to elicit feelings of regret than if the alternative outcomes are unknown (Ritov & Baron, 1995; Zeelenberg, 1999). Finally, people expect to experience more regret if they learn they had failed by a narrow margin rather than a wide margin (i.e. missing a bus by 2 minutes versus 15 minutes, Kahneman & Tversky, 1982; Medvec, Madey & Gilovich, 1995). These findings indicate that there is some consideration of regret expected before an individual makes a decision.

Anticipated regret and expected feedback. Anticipated regret has been demonstrated to play a crucial role in decision-making. In a review of anticipated regret, Anderson (2003) argued that there are seven contributors to anticipated regret: expected outcome feedback, perceived responsibility, reversibility, degree of loss aversion, mutability, anticipated future opportunities, and abnormal options. Each of these contributors has empirical support indicating their impact on anticipated regret. For the purposes of the present study, only outcome feedback and perceived responsibility are considered in the context of our criminal trial scenarios.

More regret is experienced when it is believed that a similar decision must be made in the future (Markman, Garvanski, Sherman, & McMullen, 1993). Fear of repeating the same mistake or not realizing the decision was wrong until it is too late makes anticipated future opportunities a powerful contributor to anticipated regret. In the same vein, aversion to feelings of regret causes people to overestimate the amount of regret they expect to feel if they make a sub-optimal decision. Through a series of studies, Gilbert, Morewedge, Risen, and Wilson (2004) found that people are less susceptible to regret than they expect. Specifically, individuals tend to be hypersensitive to regret to the point of inflating its impact on their decisions. This expectation of

regret is often factored into how a decision is made. For example, in escalation situations, people tend consider in the emotions they expect to experience (i.e. anticipated regret) with events that have happened in the past (i.e. responsibility for initiating the previous decision; Wong & Kwong, 2007). Furthermore, in a meta-analysis, anticipated regret accounted for 7% of the total variance in decisions after attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control were controlled for (Sandberg & Conner, 2008). In addition, when an individual expects to know the outcome of all the options prior to making the decision, anticipated regret is factored in. In other words, comparing what is with what could have been is one of the root causes of regret (Zeelenberg, 1999). This is primarily due to the expectation of feedback regarding other options (Larrick & Boles, 1995; Ritov, 1996; Ritov & Baron, 1995; Tsiros & Mittal, 2000; Zeelenberg & Beattie, 1997; Zeelenberg, Beattie, van der Pligt, & de Vries, 1996). When a person is expecting to learn how well or poorly each option did, the decision becomes more complex and anticipated regret is factored in. Even if the individual is not expecting feedback, they can still experience regret and anticipate regret. This can be particularly powerful within the court setting, after a verdict is rendered when a juror learns of additional evidence proving the alternate verdict.

Perceived responsibility. The more responsible a person feels for the decision outcome, the more they will factor regret into their decision. Some research has found that more regret is expected when the decision is a personal responsibility, unless the choice seems well justified or not causally related to an experienced bad outcome (Kordes-de Vaal, 1996; Inman & Zeelenberg, 2002; Simonson, 1992; van Dijk, van der Pligt, & Zeelenberg, 1999; Zeelenberg, van den Bos, van Dijk, & Pieters, 2002). Conversely, others claim that responsibility is neither a necessary nor substantial component of regret (Connolly, Ordonez, and Coughlan, 1997). More recently, several studies have indicated that responsibility is an important component of regret, though it is

unclear whether it is a necessary one (Ordonez & Connolly, 2000; Zeelenberg, van Dijk, & Manstead, 1998, 2000). Finally, Seta, McElroy, and Seta (2001) found that responsibility is a possible moderating variable on research regarding the effect of consistency on regret.

Affect. An individual's overall affect could potentially mediate interpretation of a situation and influence an individual's judgments and decisions. Watson and Tellegen (1985) presented a two-factor model of affect, including Positive Affect (PA) and Negative Affect (NA). According to Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988), PA refers to the extent a person feels "enthusiastic, active, and alert". Therefore, an individual with high PA would feel energetic and excited and a low PA person would feel lethargic and depressed. Conversely, NA reflects the level of distress or disengagement an individual is experiencing. Thus, a high NA person would exhibit anger, fear, or nervousness. A low NA person would exhibit calmness and tranquility. It is important to note that these two dimensions are not polar opposites, but rather are distinct dimensions that can fluctuate independently and are not always correlated with one another (see Watson, et al., 1988).

In order to measure this concept, Watson, et al. (1988) developed the Positive Affect Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) as a means of identifying and clarifying the dominant dimensions of affect. The measure consists of 20 terms, with 10 creating the PA subscale and 10 for the NA subscale, that are rated on a 5-point scale. Participants rank how they are feeling right now in regards to each term on this scale. The measure has good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .86 to .90 for the PA subscale and .84 to .87 for the NA subscale. The current study will examine the affective state of the participant, rather than their affective stable traits. Furthermore, this measure will indicate the participant's level of distress and other

emotional states immediately after receiving additional case evidence and rendering a second verdict.

Additional mediating factors. Life's major decisions, or at the very least long-term decisions, such as the purchase of a new car, which college to attend and who to marry, are very difficult not only to form but also to reverse. Several researchers have demonstrated that people tend to anticipate less regret if the decision is reversible (Tsiros & Mittal, 2000; Zeelenberg, Beattie, van der Plicht, & de Vries, 1996). However, Gilbert and Ebert (2002) found that people actually experience less satisfaction with reversible decisions than with irreversible decisions. Thus, while reversible decisions are easier to make, they do come with only moderate satisfaction. Individuals also experience an aversion to loss associated with decision-making. Loss aversion refers to the active, though not always conscious, avoidance of any knowledge regarding the other options' outcomes. This is a modification of the original Regret theory. People tend to avoid knowledge of an outcome, especially if the effects of regret over a bad outcome are greater than the effect of rejoicing over a good one (Baron & Ritov, 1994; Ritov & Baron, 1995). For example, investors who limit their knowledge of the day-to-day fluctuations for their investments are attempting to avoid knowing how much they gained or lost in a given day. Another example can be found in women who avoided having children before the test for Huntington's disease was discovered and still avoid having the test now that their childbearing years are over. Now that the decision is irreversible, they do not want to know that they could have had children safely and feel the loss resulting from their decision. This concept is also applicable within the judicial system, when post-verdict jurors avoid media coverage of the appeals and emerging evidence of their trial. It is human tendency to weigh outcomes viewed as losses more heavily than equivalent gains (Anderson, 2003).

Moderating Characteristics and Regret

Cognitive dissonance. The amount of regret experienced has a great deal to do with the incongruity between an individual's choice and information presented that counters that choice. Cognitive dissonance theory states that when one's thoughts and behaviors are not consistent, individuals feel pressure to align these two elements (Festinger, Riecken, & Schachter, 1964). Research on cognitive dissonance suggests that experiencing dissonance must be at a severe level for a person to change. For example, Vinski and Tryon (2009) argued that their non-significant findings in an induced hypocrisy paradigm for academic cheating are explained by the fact that, while aware of hypocritical behavior, participants have chosen simply to live with their dissonance rather than change their behavior. Additionally, 90% of participants admitting to cheating in the past reported no punishment for their actions. This construct permeates almost every aspect of life. When a person is on a jury, they may often experience cognitive dissonance when they believe an individual is guilty but the evidence does not prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. This is particularly true when the evidence of the case is circumstantial or inconclusive. In the present study, dissonance will be indirectly measured through observed differences in verdict preference as a function of evidence strengthening. Individuals should experience dissonance when evidence strength is counter-attitudinal with verdict. This aspect of our study generalizes to death-qualified jurors as our trial manipulations involve a capital offense. This is important considering the research that demonstrates that death-qualified jurors tend to express more concern about the crime, more favorable attitudes toward the police and prosecutors, less sympathy for criminal defendants, more suspicion of defense attorneys and greater impatience with due process safeguards in criminal trials (Bronson, 1970; Fitzgerald & Ellsworth, 1984; Vidmar & Ellsworth, 1974). In addition, Thompson, Cowan, Ellsworth, and

Harrington (1984) found that death-qualified jurors interpreted the evidence in favor of the prosecution and had a lower threshold of conviction compared to non-death-qualified jurors. Furthermore, death-qualified participants expressed less regret for erroneous convictions and more regret for erroneous acquittals. The current study is the first attempt to apply what is known about regret and dissonance to the courtroom. We hope our findings will assist attorneys in understanding the role of regret and death-qualification.

Authoritarianism. In order to quantitatively measure an individual's tendency to hold authoritarianism beliefs, Altemeyer (1981) introduced the concept of the "right-wing authoritarian" and developed the Right-Wing Authoritarian (RWA) scale. This scale was derived from 3 of the subcategories in Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, & Sanford's (1950) original California F (fascism) scale. This new scale measures traditional authoritarianism on 2 dimensions: "authoritarian aggression and submission" and "conservatism" (see Manganelli Rattazzi, Bobbio, & Canova, 2007; Van Hiel, Cornelis, Roets, & De Clerco, 2007).

Authoritarian submission refers to the tendency to uncritically submissive to authority.

Authoritarian aggression indicates a feeling of anger towards those who violate the social norms.

Finally, conservatism refers to the adherence to conventional social norms and values. Similarly, legal authoritarians tend to believe in the ability of the criminal justice system to prosecute guilty persons (Butler & Moran, 2002; Butler & Wasserman, 2006; Cowan, Thompson, & Ellsworth, 1984; Fitzgerald & Ellsworth, 1984; Haney, Hurtado, & Vega, 1994; Thompson, Cowan, Ellsworth, & Harrington, 1984). Legal authoritarianism has been found to be a predicting factor in verdicts for both capital and non-capital cases (Martin & Cohn, 2004; Narby, Cutler, & Moran, 1993). This can be particularly important in jury selection, when many individuals with a particular bias as potential jurors. Furthermore, authoritarians tend to give harsher punishments

to defendants. Butler and Moran (2007) demonstrated that death-qualified and legal authoritarian participants were significantly more likely to recommend the death sentence than their non-death qualified counterparts.

Given the need to screen jurors for bias for or against the defendant, Kassin and Wrightsman (1983) developed the Juror Bias Scale (JBS) as a measure for pre-trial juror bias. This scale was designed to assess an individual's tendency to convict or acquit across two dimensions: probability of guilt and the individual's threshold of reasonable doubt (Kassin & Wrightsman, 1983; Myers & Lecci, 1998). This scale is understood to be a measure of legal authoritarianism. Enough overlap between the JBS and traditional authoritarianism to be considered highly correlated, but not entirely redundant (Narby, et al., 1993). It is necessary to measure both right wing authoritarianism and legal authoritarianism in order to understand the potential juror's disposition. De la Fuente, de la Fuente, and Garcia (2003) found that juror bias plays a significant role in verdict rendering when the admitted evidence is inconclusive or circumstantial. This is particularly important given that most trials are built upon this type of evidence, since when the evidence clearly indicates guilt or innocence the case does not generally reach a jury. Furthermore, Thompson and Dennison (2004) utilized the JBS in their study of the impact of graphic evidence of violence (GEV) on mock juror verdicts. They found no difference between participants in the GEV – present and GEV – absent conditions. However, when GEV was present, defense-biased mock jurors had a higher threshold for conviction than when the GEV was absent. Prosecution-biased participants did not differ in their conviction thresholds between conditions. Prosecution-biased individuals rendering more guilty verdicts overall and across conditions could cause this.

Maximization and Satisficing. Another moderating variable in the relation between regret and decision-making is an individual's tendency to exhaust all options, or "maximize", and their tendency to experience regret. Given all of the factors influencing regret and anticipated regret, research has demonstrated that people routinely violate the principles of rational choice (Baron, 2000; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979, 1984; Tversky, 1969; Tversky & Kahneman, 1981). They do not always make the best decision based on the pros and cons of each option. However, some people do attempt to maximize the gains from any decision. Simon (1955, 1956, 1957) argued that the goal of maximization is generally unrealizable. Instead, people actually have the goal of "satisficing" rather than maximizing. To satisfice, people need only to have a threshold of acceptability and their subsequent decision will tend to be good enough. In order to assess the construct of maximization, Schwartz, B., et al. (2002) developed the Maximization and Regret scales. The Maximization Scale measures the tendency of the individual to satisfice or maximize their decisions. This 13-item scale focuses on 3 factors of decision-making: openness to better options, choosing the best option, and setting high standards for oneself. A fourth factor emerged during the development of the Maximization Scale, which ultimately became the Regret Scale. This scale measures the tendency to experience regret and includes 5 items. Findings from the development and validation studies of these scales have shown that maximizers tend to be more concerned with their relative position (social comparison) than satisficers and are generally less happy. Furthermore, maximizing was positively correlated with regret, depression, and decision difficulty and negatively correlated with happiness, life satisfaction, optimism, and decision outcome satisfaction (Schwartz, et al., 2002).

Spunt, Rassin, and Epstein (2009) used the Regret Scale in their study regarding aversive and avoidant indecisiveness. They found that aversive indecisiveness (negative affect and threat-oriented cognition when making and evaluating decisions) is associated with regret proneness and maximization. Avoidance indecisiveness (avoidant preferences and difficulties making decisions) was not. Another study used both scales to assess job satisfaction of recent college graduates (Iyengar, Wells, & Schwartz, 2006). Their findings indicated that maximizers secured more lucrative starting salaries but were less satisfied with the jobs they obtained. Finally, Dar-Nimrod, Rawn, Lehman, and Schwartz (2009) used the scales to illustrate the “Maximization Paradox”. They argued that maximizers tend to sacrifice resources to attain more options that ultimately reduce their satisfaction. They tend to find an exhaustive list of possible options and are consequently less satisfied with their decision. These combined findings indicate that the scales have adequate construct validity and reliability across situations.

Need for Closure. A final moderating variable that could influence decision-making is the need for closure. Need for closure (NFC) indicates a desire for unambiguous and definite knowledge, rather than confusing or vague situations, when negotiating actions or thoughts (Kruglanski, 1989). Within this construct, it is better to receive even bad information than no information at all. Additionally, individuals vary in their need of this construct such that the motivation to attain clear, precise closure can be viewed as one end of a continuum and the need to avoid closure at the other end (Kruglanski, 1989). Webster and Kruglanski (1994) developed a measure of individual differences in NFC and its reliability and validity has been established, Cronbach’s $\alpha = .84$. This measure consists of five subsets of items that contribute to an individual’s need to make a decision and avoid ambiguity. The subsets are: (a) preference for order and structure; (b) preference for predictability; (c) decisiveness; (d) discomfort with

ambiguity; and (e) shortsightedness. Kenhove, Vermeir, and Verniers (2001) utilized a shortened, 24-item of this measure with good reliability, Cronbach's $\alpha = .77$, in their study. It is this version that will be used in the present study.

Research has indicated clear differences between individuals scoring high on the NFC measure and those scoring low. For example, individuals scoring high on the NFC scale will tend to avoid uncertain or unclear situations. He or she will be more likely to be closed-minded and rigid in their thoughts. Moreover, he or she will also base their decision on pre-existing schemas and will avoid additional information (Kenhove, et al., 2001). Furthermore, Kruglanski, Peri, and Zakai (1991) found that individuals measuring high on the NFC measure tended to reject deviant individuals and praise those that conform to conventional standards. Finally, high NFC individuals are more satisfied with knowledge that is "politically conservative, socially intolerant, anti-democratic, and system-justifying" than knowledge that could be construed as threat to the status quo (Jost, Kruglanski, & Simon, 1999). Conversely, individuals with low NFC level will often change their opinion or behavior in light of new evidence or knowledge. Additionally, they will process more information and are often reluctant to make a decision without all the facts (Webster & Kruglanski, 1994). In a trial setting, there is pressure on the jury to render a verdict quickly. In this scenario, those jurors scoring high on the NFC scale will be less likely to listen to new perspectives from the other jurors and will have made their decision early on.

Gender

The defendant in a trial can often influence the juror's perception simply based on their physical characteristics. Previous research has demonstrated increased leniency for female defendants when compared to male defendants (Finkelhor & Redfield, 1984; Hetherington &

Beardsall, 1988). However, these studies did not specify what charges were brought against the defendant. More recently, researchers have begun asking if there were lesser charge options available for the participants, would the same effect apply? Cheyne and Dennison (2005) studied the effect of defendant gender and the suddenness of the crime on verdict renderings of murder and manslaughter. They found that female defendants were more likely to be found guilty of manslaughter rather than murder than male defendants in the same scenario. Conversely, male defendants are more likely to be found guilty of murder than female defendants. Therefore, while there are many guilty verdicts, women often receive convictions that carry lower sentences. It is possible that women are viewed as more justified in their criminal acts than men.

More recently, Pozzulo, Dempsey, Maeder, and Allen (2010) found that male defendants received more guilty verdicts than female defendants. Specifically in sex abuse cases, male defendants are considered more culpable than female defendants (McCoy & Gray, 2007; Quas Bottoms, Haegerich, & Nysse-Carris, 2002; Rogers & Davies, 2007). Men tend to be seen as more predatory than women in these types of cases.

Interestingly, Ahola, Hellstöm, and Christianson (2010) evaluated the role of defendant gender across 5 crime accounts: (a) vandalism, (b) arson, (c) child abuse, (d) child molestation, and (e) homicide. They found that, across all scenarios, judges and jurors evaluated the defendant more harshly if the defendant was the same gender as the evaluator. Additionally, non-evaluators, such as police officers, defense counselors, and students, judged the defendant more harshly if he were a male rather than female. This gender effect is expected to be present in the current study.

The Present Study

To date, this is the first study to investigate the role of regret proneness in jurors during the guilt phase of a trial. Predicting factors for verdict could influence the voir dire process and add to the existing literature of juror predispositions for certain verdicts. The current study aims to combine the role of the juror with the construct of anticipated regret. The purpose is to investigate decision-making in the context of evidence strengthening in a case involving the introduction of DNA evidence post-trial. In this context, various moderating and mediating factors will be examined: i.e., regret proneness, legal authoritarianism, defendant gender, and affect. We hypothesize the following:

H₁: Moderating effects of evidence strengthening on verdict from Time₁ to Time₂, such that DNA evidence will influence verdict at Time₂ as well as confidence levels in verdict. Specifically, DNA evidence will increase confidence in verdict at Time₂, regardless of guilt or innocence. Additionally, defendant gender and perceived responsibility are hypothesized to influence verdict, both at Time₁ and Time₂. Male defendants are expected to receive more guilty verdicts than female defendants at Time₁. Additionally, confidence levels in this verdict are expected to be higher if the defendant is male rather than female. Participants who believe they are solely responsible for the verdict will report lower confidence in their verdict at Time₁ and Time₂ than participants who are told that they are part of a jury.

H₂: Mediating effects of anticipated regret, and scores on PANAS on perceptions of the importance of DNA evidence in determining verdict. Individuals prone to experiencing regret will demonstrate lower confidence in their verdict when compared to individuals not prone to regret at both Time₁ and Time₂. Additionally, the DNA evidence, regardless on whether it strengthened guilt or innocence, will be considered reliable as evidenced by increased confidence

levels in verdicts after the additional evidence is introduced. However, participant's prone to regret will continue to have overall lower ratings of confidence in their verdicts. Finally, when the DNA evidence is incongruent with the initial verdict, the participant will report experiencing more overall negative affect and less overall positive affect. Conversely, if the DNA evidence is aligned with the initial verdict, participants will report more positive affect and less negative affect.

Method

Participants

Participants were 122 students from Roger Williams University. Seventy-four were female and 48 were male. They were all between 18 and 24 years of age and were predominantly Caucasian (89.3%). Over half (67.5%) identified themselves as "slightly liberal" or "liberal." Additionally, nearly half (51.3%) reported being employed or being a close friend or relative of someone who is employed by the justice system. Participants were tested during class time and participated in the study for extra credit or as part of a course requirement.

Materials and Procedure

Design. The present study is a 2 (Perceived Responsibility: Sole Decider v. Majority Decision) x 2 (Evidence Strengthening: In Favor of Guilt v. Innocence) x 2 (Defendant Gender: Male v. Female) x 2 (verdict at Time₁ and Time₂) Mixed Model design with verdict preference acting as the within-subject factor.

Materials. Materials included a signed informed consent form, (see Appendix A), the Maximization and Regret Scales, Legal Authoritarian Scale, Maximizing Tendency Scale, Juror Bias Scale, the Positive Affect Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS), and the Need for Closure Scale (short version). In addition, the questionnaires included a modified summary of the guilt

phase of the *Wilson v. United States* (2010) trial, including the perceived responsibility and defendant gender variable manipulations, as well as evidence strengthening scenarios after a verdict was rendered. Demographic information was also gathered. See Appendix B for sample participant packet.

Procedure. The sample was selected by a convenience sampling method from undergraduate students of psychology. Students opting to participate were given class time to complete the questionnaire. After obtaining informed consent, participants were given one of eight packets to complete. Each packet contained the pre-trial measures, individual difference measures, the experimental scenario and post-trial measures. Upon completion, participants were given a debriefing form and the opportunity to ask any questions. They were thanked for their time and their participation was noted to ensure they received course credit.

Results

A Chi-Square analysis revealed no difference in verdict preference for death-qualified and non death-qualified individuals at both the post-trial verdict (Time₁) and post-DNA verdict (Time₂, $p = .927$ and $.692$). Therefore, the entire sample was utilized for the analyses. A linear measure for verdict was created, incorporating verdict and the participant's level of confidence with their verdict. The new index ranged from -4 (high confidence in an innocent verdict) to +4 (high confidence in a guilty verdict).

To test the moderating effects of evidence strengthening, a Repeated Measures ANOVA was utilized, with verdict acting as the within subject variable. This was required, as the DNA evidence was not presented until after the initial verdict was rendered, thus it was the only manipulated variable presented to each participant between Time₁ and Time₂. Any change in verdict or confidence level between Time₁ and Time₂ can be reasonably attributed to the

Evidence Strengthening manipulation. A 2 x 2 x 2 x 2 Repeated Measures ANOVA was conducted, with the within-subjects factor as verdict rendered at Time₁ and Time₂. A significant Evidence Strengthening by Verdict effect was found: Wilks' Lambda = .53, $F(1, 114) = 101.97$, $p < .001$, $\eta p^2 = .47$. Evidence strengthening guilt revealed higher confidence in guilt verdicts post-DNA vs. pre-DNA (4.57 v. 2.59). The same pattern was found for evidence strengthening innocence (-3.23 v. 2.14; see Table 1). Additionally, a significant Gender by Verdict effect emerged such that decreases in verdict confidence were observed post-DNA for both male and female defendants, more so for females compared to males (pre-DNA = 3.10, post-DNA = .232 for female v. pre-DNA = 1.62, post-DNA = 1.11 for male), Wilks' Lambda = .92, $F(1, 114) = 10.44$, $p = .002$, $\eta p^2 = .084$ (see Table 2). A significant effect for Evidence Strengthening between subjects was also revealed, $F(1, 114) = 42.21$, $p < .001$, $\eta p^2 = .27$. More confidence was reported when the DNA evidence strengthened guilt versus innocence (3.58 v. -.54, see Table 1).

To test hypothesis 2, we conducted linear regressions to identify the mediating factors for perceptions of the importance of DNA evidence on verdict at Time₂, including our measures of dissonance, regret proneness and mood. We excluded the verdict at Time₁ since the DNA evidence was not introduced or mentioned until after the initial verdict was rendered. Additionally, participants who did not change their verdict between Time₁ and Time₂ were excluded from this path analysis. Given that there was no change in verdict, there would be minimal cause for dissonance, particularly if the DNA evidence strengthened their initial verdict. Therefore, 42 participants were included in the analysis (34.1%). Linear regressions revealed partial mediation for Negative Affect and verdict + confidence index at Time₂ approaching significance, $\beta = -.29$, $p = .06$, $r^2 = .08$, $R = .29$ (see Figure for display of path analysis).

Additional linear regressions revealed defendant gender and verdict as significant predictors of regret. Guilty verdicts predicted higher levels of regret proneness compared to not guilty verdicts at Time₁, $\beta = .26$, $p = .003$, $r^2 = .05$. The same effect was found for guilty versus not guilty verdicts at Time₂, $\beta = .26$, $p = .004$, $r^2 = .07$. Furthermore, higher levels of regret proneness were predicted when the defendant was female compared to male, $\beta = -.20$, $p = .025$, $r^2 = .05$. A subsequent *t*-test also revealed significant within-group differences in verdict confidence. Individuals high in regret proneness reported less confidence with post-DNA verdict compared to pre-DNA evidence ($M = 1.25$ v. $M = 3.21$): $t(121) = -2.71$, $p = .009$.

Discussion

Support for moderating effects for evidence strengthening and gender in the context of a criminal trial is provided through our findings. The results from this study indicate that jurors perceive DNA evidence as reliable, regardless of whether it strengthened guilt or innocence. However, more confidence was reported when the evidence strengthened a guilty verdict rather than a not guilty one. The DNA evidence strengthening guilt could have acted as a justification for participants who were unsure about their decision to render a guilty verdict, providing them with some piece of evidence to defend their decision. Interestingly though, higher levels of regret proneness were found in participants who rendered a guilty verdict, both at Time₁ and Time₂. Taken together, these results indicate that while participants are indeed reporting higher levels of confidence based on the DNA evidence, they are still experiencing some level of dissonance in convicting a person of a capital felony. The DNA evidence is the basis for their decision, but the possibility of an erroneous verdict still remained in the minds of our participant-jurors.

The defendant's gender was also found to play a role in verdict preference when DNA evidence is introduced. Overall, confidence in verdict declined for both male and female

defendants, but more so for females compared to males. This result lends support to previous research findings that female defendants receive convictions for lesser charges (manslaughter v. murder) and shorter sentences than male defendants (Finkelhor & Redfield, 1984; Hetherington & Beardsall, 1988; Cheyne & Dennison, 2005). Additionally, in our study higher levels of regret proneness were found in participants who rendered a verdict for a female defendant. The verdict was only rendered for the charge of first-degree murder, an extremely serious offense. No other charges were included that would result in a shorter sentence. Therefore, in light of the evidence, participants alleviated their feelings of dissonance (i.e., rendering a verdict but wanting to convict on a lesser charge) by indicating that they were less confident in their verdict for female defendants. Had another option been available, it is possible that female defendants would be more likely to receive the lesser charge.

We also found that regret alone does not mediate perceptions of DNA importance. In fact, as regret proneness increased, DNA evidence was considered to be less convincing. This result could be attributed to regret-prone participants perceiving the DNA evidence more selectively compared to participants with low levels of regret, supporting the importance of identifying individual difference factors prior to trial. In fact, participants prone to regret actually reported less confidence in their verdict after reading the DNA evidence, regardless of whether this evidence was in support or opposition to their original verdict. This finding supports the conclusions of Schwartz, et al. (2002), such that individuals prone to regret are more likely to report less overall satisfaction with their decisions as well as increased difficulty in decision-making. Furthermore, Larrick and Boles (1995; see also Ritov 1996; Ritov & Baron, 1995; Zeelenberg, Van Dijk, & Manstead, 1998) found that, when faced with a difficult decision, individuals tend to choose the option that would allow them to avoid feedback that could cause

regret. Since the DNA evidence was not anticipated, nor was it avoidable, participants could have rationalized their decision by placing less confidence in the DNA evidence. It is possible that they anticipated even more evidence to be presented and were attempting to neutralize their decision at Time₂ in case the additional evidence contradicted their Time₂ verdict. Markman, et al. (1993) had similar findings, such that individuals were fearful of repeating their mistakes, particularly if they believed they would have to make a similar decision in the future.

Interestingly, we found that negative mood accounts for nearly all the variability in perceptions of DNA importance. This finding suggests that participants found DNA evidence more convincing if their mood was more neutral. This could be explained by an attempt to rationalize their change in verdict and to alleviate their dissonance over rendering an incorrect verdict at Time₁. This rationalization allowed them to attribute their change in verdict to the presentation of “hard” evidence for or against the defendant. Those participants who did not consider the DNA evidence to be convincing, yet still changed their verdict, were more likely to be experiencing dissonance that could not be accounted for. This lends support to the findings of Watson, et al. (1988), where negative affect reflected the individual’s level of distress.

The results from this study have several implications for understanding the juror decision-making process. The presence of DNA evidence and the gender of the defendant should be considered during the voir dire process. Given the present findings in conjunction with the severity of the charges, these factors could prove to be reliable mediators of verdict. Additionally, potential jurors should be screened for regret proneness in addition to the other known factors that are known to influence verdict preference (i.e. authoritarianism, death qualification).

There are several limitations to this study. To begin, we believe that the perceived responsibility manipulation was not strong enough to produce the expected results. Future research should make the distinction clearer, as the term “juror” implies one of a group. Research has found that personal responsibility has a direct effect on reported levels of regret and happiness (Gilovich & Medvec, 1994; Zeelenberg, Van Dijk, & Manstead, 1998). Therefore, stronger manipulations of the perceived responsibility variable could produce interesting results regarding regret proneness and confidence in verdicts and should be pursued in future studies. As stated before, this study did not allow for a conviction on a lesser charge, which could influence verdict preference and alleviated some of the dissonance reported by our participants. In an actual criminal trial, jurors are often allowed to convict a defendant on a lesser charge (manslaughter instead of murder) so adding this option to our current paradigm would add ecological validity to the study.

This study is the first to investigate regret proneness and other mediating and moderating factors influencing verdict during the guilt phase of a trial. Further research could expand this study by investigating factors influencing the severity of the sentence handed down by the judge after a guilty verdict. Additionally, future research should investigate the findings of Cheyne and Dennison (2005), where lesser charge options are available to the juror. It would be interesting to consider the factors that influence that decision, including the presence of DNA evidence and the defendant’s gender. Finally, this study could be applied to a civil trial, where the repercussions are more varied than simply jail time. Civil trials can result in punitive or compensatory damages or injunctive relief. While a criminal conviction carries a social stigma, civil trials should also be investigated to shed more light on the role of regret proneness on decision making.

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Table 1. *Verdict Confidence Changes between Time₁ (Pre-DNA) and Time₂ (Post-DNA) for Evidence Strengthening*

Within Subjects	Evidence Strengthening	
	Guilty	Not Guilty
Pre-DNA	2.59	2.14
Post-DNA	4.57*	-3.23*
Between Subjects	3.58*	-.54*

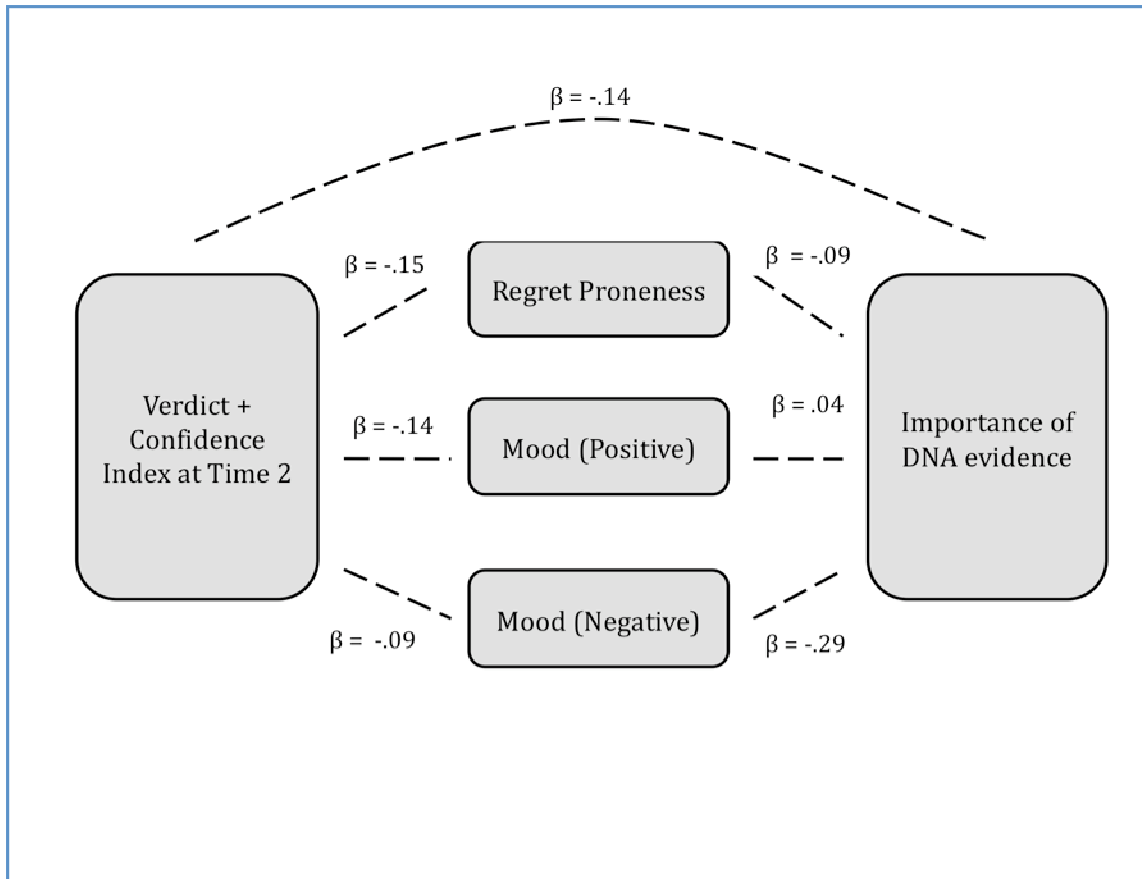
* *Statistically significant change from Time₁ (Pre-DNA) to Time₂ (Post-DNA), $p < .05$*

Table 2. *Verdict Confidence Changes between Time₁ (Pre-DNA) and Time₂ (Post-DNA) for Defendant Gender*

Within Subject	Defendant Gender	
	Male	Female
Pre-DNA	1.62	3.10
Post-DNA	1.11*	.23*

* *Statistically significant change from Time₁ (Pre-DNA) to Time₂ (Post-DNA), $p < .05$*

Figure. Path Model depicting Mediating Effects of Regret Proneness, Positive Mood, and Negative Mood on Importance of DNA Evidence.



Appendix A Informed Consent Form

Principal Investigators: Stephanie Oglesby and Judith Platania, Ph.D.

1. Purpose of the Study: This study will examine anticipated regret in juror decision making during a criminal murder trial. A minimum of 100 participants will be included in this study.

2. Procedures Experienced by Participants: By participating in this study, you will be asked to view a summary of a criminal murder trial. You will then fill out a questionnaire regarding your attitudes toward the amount of regret you experience surrounding your vote for verdict. Participation should take approximately an hour, and the questionnaires will be completed in the given time today.

3. Confidentiality and Anonymity: Only the investigators listed above will have access to your responses, which will ensure your confidentiality. Additionally, your name will only be written on your consent form, which will be collected and maintained separately from your questionnaire. Thus, your responses will remain anonymous.

4. Your Rights: You have the right to decline participation without any penalties or prejudice because participation is strictly voluntary. Additionally, at any point in the study if you do not feel comfortable or no longer want to participate, you have the right to withdraw from the study without prejudice or penalty. You may also ask questions at any time during the course of the study and you may contact the primary investigator (whose name, email address and telephone number appear at the bottom of this form) at any time after you have participated in the study.

5. Compensation for Participation: Upon completion, participation in this study will be compensated in the form of \$75.00 cash.

6. Risks and Benefits of being a Participant: No physical, psychological, or emotional risks are associated with this study. At any time during your participation, you are allowed to withdraw from this study without facing any penalties. A potential benefit is that you might have a better understanding of how psychological research is conducted.

More Information: After participation, please feel free to contact Dr. Judith Platania in FCAS 106, by email at jplatania@rwu.edu, or telephone 254-5738 should you have any additional questions.

This certifies that I _____ have given my full consent to participate
Print your name

in this study. I am at least 18 years of age or older. I have read this form and fully understand the content.

Participant's Signature Date

This certifies that I have defined and informed the participant named above of all elements pertaining to this research study.

Principal Investigator Date

Appendix B

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS ANONYMOUS SO PLEASE DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ANYWHERE ON IT. WE ASK THAT YOU RECORD ONLY YOUR PARTICIPANT NUMBER. PLEASE READ EACH ITEM CAREFULLY AND ANSWER AS HONESTLY AND ACCURATELY AS YOU CAN. PLEASE READ EACH ITEM AS IT IS PRESENTED AND DO NOT GO BACK TO CHANGE YOUR ANSWERS.

The following questions are about how you make decisions. Please consider each item carefully before responding. Rate your responses on a scale of 1 to 7, with 1 = completely unlike me and 7 = completely like me. When you have completed the entire questionnaire, please return them to the researcher.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>completely unlike me</i>						<i>completely like me</i>

_____ When I watch TV, I channel surf, often scanning through the available options even while attempting to watch one program.

_____ When I am in the car listening to the radio, I often check other stations to see if something better is playing, even if I'm relatively satisfied with what I'm listening to.

_____ I treat relationships like clothing: I expect to try a lot on before I find the perfect fit.

_____ No matter how satisfied I am with my job, it's only right for me to be on the lookout for better opportunities.

_____ I often fantasize about living in ways that are quite different from my actual life.

_____ I'm a big fan of lists that attempt to rank things (the best movies, the best singers, the best athletes, the best novels, etc.).

_____ I often find it difficult to shop for a gift for a friend.

_____ When shopping, I have a hard time finding clothing that I really love.

_____ Renting DVD's is really difficult. I'm always struggling to pick the best one.

_____ I find that writing is very difficult, even if it's just writing a letter to a friend, because it's so hard to word things just right. I often do several drafts of even simple things.

_____ No matter what I do, I have the highest standards for myself.

_____ I never settle for second best.

_____ Whenever I'm faced with a choice, I try to imagine what all the other possibilities are, even ones that aren't present at the moment.

_____ Whenever I make a choice, I'm curious about what would have happened if I had chosen differently.

- _____ Whenever I make a choice, I try to get information about how the other alternatives turned out.
- _____ If I make a choice and it turns out well, I still feel like something of a failure if I find out that another choice would have turned out better.
- _____ When I think about how I'm doing in life, I often assess opportunities I have passed up.
- _____ Once I make decisions, I don't look back.
- _____ No matter what it takes, I always try to choose the best thing.
- _____ I don't like having to settle for "good enough".
- _____ I am a maximizer – I take advantage of every opportunity presented to me.
- _____ I will wait for the best option, no matter how long it takes.
- _____ I am uncomfortable making decisions before I know all of my options.
- _____ I never settle.

For the following questions, please use the rating scale below:

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Somewhat Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Somewhat Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>

- _____ Appointed judges are more competent than elected judges.
- _____ A suspect who runs from the police most probably committed the crime.
- _____ A defendant should be found guilty if only 11 out of 12 jurors vote guilty.
- _____ Most politicians are really as honest as humanly possible.
- _____ Too often jurors hesitate to convict someone who is guilty out of pure sympathy.
- _____ In most cases where the accused presents a strong defense, it is only because of a good lawyer.
- _____ In general, children should be excused for their misbehavior.
- _____ The death penalty is cruel and inhumane.
- _____ Out of every 100 people brought to trial, at least 75 are guilty of the crime with which they are charged.
- _____ For serious crimes like murder, a defendant should be found guilty if there was a 90% chance that he committed the crime.

- _____ Defense lawyers don't really care about guilt or innocence, they are just in business to make money.
- _____ Generally, the police make an arrest only when they are sure about who committed the crime.
- _____ Circumstantial evidence is too weak to use in court.
- _____ Many accident claims filed against insurance companies are phony.
- _____ The defendant is often a victim of his own bad reputation.
- _____ If the jury recommends that a person be brought to trial, then he probably committed the crime.
- _____ Extenuating circumstances should not be considered – if a person commits a crime, then that person should be punished.
- _____ Hypocrisy is on the increase in society.
- _____ Too many innocent people are wrongfully imprisoned.
- _____ If a majority of the evidence – but not all of it – suggest that the defendant committed the crime, the jury should vote *not guilty*.
- _____ If the defendant committed a victimless crime, like gambling or possession of marijuana, he should never be convicted.
- _____ Some laws are made to be broken.

For the following items, please check the box most appropriate for you.

Are you 18 years old or older?

- No [1]
- Yes [2]

Are you a United States citizen?

- No [1]
- Yes [2]

Are you registered to vote?

- No [1]
- Yes [2]

Do you feel that your views on the death penalty, either in favor or opposed, would prevent or substantially impair your ability to act as a fair and impartial juror in this case?

- No [1]
 Yes [2]

Please read through the following summary of a criminal trial. After reading the summary you will be asked to determine a verdict. Your will be one of twelve individuals currently reading through the summary and casting your vote in the case. The simple majority (7 of 12 individuals) will decide the verdict in this case.

MODIFIED TRIAL SUMMARY OF *WILSON V. UNITED STATES*

On the morning of December 13, 2003, Amanda Wilson was found dead in the passenger seat of her Ford Expedition, which was parked in the 3000 block of West Street. She had been shot in the head and died sometime around midnight on December 13, 2003. After police arrived on the scene, they discovered that both the vehicle and Mrs. Wilson had previously been reported missing. Police contacted the woman's husband, Jeff Wilson, to inform him of his wife's death and later that day interviewed him to gather information regarding the woman's death. Mr. Wilson was arrested for the murder in the first degree of his wife. In addition, the prosecution is seeking the death penalty in this case against Mr. Wilson.

During the trial, Detective Blackwell testified that Mr. Wilson told him that on the evening of December 12, 2003, he and his wife went to dinner at an Olive Garden restaurant and then to a movie. According to Mr. Wilson's account, when they arrived at their home just after 11:00 p.m., his wife said she wanted something sweet to eat. Mr. Wilson remained at home while his wife went to a Shell gas station about a quarter-mile away to purchase candy. He fell asleep on the couch and when he woke up, his wife had not returned. When she did not answer her cell phone, he got into his car and drove by the gas station and around the neighborhood, searching for her. Mr. Wilson told police that he could not recall the name of the movie he and his wife saw and that he was not in the area she was found that evening.

On December 31, 2003, an FBI Agent interviewed Mr. Wilson. During that interview, Mr. Wilson told the Agent that after dinner at the Olive Garden, he and his wife had seen the 9:30 p.m. showing of the movie "Bad Santa". Mr. Wilson repeated the account he had given Detective Blackwell about the couple returning home around 11:00 p.m. about Amanda Wilson going to the Shell station to purchase a sweet snack; Mr. Wilson falling asleep, waking to discover that his wife was not home, and placing a call to her (which he said went directly to her voice mail); and going out to search for her in the neighborhood around his home and the adjacent neighborhood. In addition, he told the Agent that while searching for his wife, he saw a woman in the parking lot of the Shell station changing her car tire and he

offered assistance. After he changed the tire, the woman gave him a ride to his house Mr. Wilson reports that he called his mother, continued the search for his wife, and, at around 3:30 or 3:40 a.m., called 911 to report his wife missing.

The prosecution presented testimony by Renee Johnson, Mr. Wilson’s former co-worker, with whom he began an ongoing romantic relationship in June 2003. Ms. Johnson testified that Mr. Wilson told her that he was not happy in his marriage and that he was planning to leave his wife. The couple was seen out together on numerous occasions.

Another FBI Agent testified that during the investigation of Mrs. Wilson’s death, one of Mr. Wilson’s friends, Robert Thompson, told investigators that he had given Mr. Wilson a gun. The Agent further testified that Mr. Thompson offered to allow FBI agents to place video and audio recording equipment in his car and to engage Mr. Wilson in a conversation that investigators could record. During a recorded conversation that took place on January 6, 2005, Mr. Wilson denied killing his wife but told Mr. Thompson that he had thrown the gun that Mr. Thompson had given him into the local river right after the police called him to inform him that his wife's body had been found. The government relied on the videotape to prove that Mr. Thompson gave Mr. Wilson a gun a week before Amanda Wilson's murder.

An insurance company officer testified that on December 19, 2003, the company received an application from Mr. Wilson to purchase a life insurance policy on his wife. The application had been completed on December 7, 2003. The government also presented the testimony of a cell phone expert who stated that Mr. Wilson’s cell phone was in the area where Mrs. Wilson’s body was found around the time of death.

Based on the information presented above, Mr. Wilson is:

- Not Guilty [1]
- Guilty [2]

of first degree murder of Mrs. Wilson

I am satisfied with my verdict.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>not at all</i>						<i>completely</i>

The result of this case is reasonable.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>not at all</i>						<i>completely</i>

The witnesses are believable.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>not at all</i>						<i>completely</i>

The prosecution proved their case.

1
not at all

2

3

4

5

6

7
completely

Additional Evidence

One year after the trial, a DNA expert discovered that DNA from Mr. Wilson was found on the underside of Amanda Wilson's fingernails. The prosecution presented evidence that Mr. Wilson had gun shot residue on his hand when he was interviewed on the day his wife's body was found. Bobby Jones and his son Travis testified that at approximately 12:45 or 1:00 a.m. on December 13, 2003, they were walking home from a bus stop and saw a Ford Expedition parked on the 3000 block of West Street. Mr. Jones testified that he saw a man and a woman inside the car talking. Both Mr. Jones and Travis testified that Mr. Wilson was the person they saw inside the car.

Based on the additional information presented above, the defendant is:

- Not Guilty [1]
 Guilty [2]

of first degree murder of Mrs. Wilson.

I am satisfied with the outcome of this case.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all *completely*

The witnesses are believable.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all *completely*

The DNA evidence was convincing.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
not at all *completely*

Please use the following scale to indicate your feelings towards each of the statements below.

- | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---------------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| <i>Strongly
Disagree</i> | | | | | | | <i>Strongly
Agree</i> |
-
- _____ Our country needs a powerful leader, in order to destroy the radical and immoral currents prevailing in society today.
- _____ Our country needs free thinkers, who will have the courage to stand up against traditional ways, even if this upsets many people.
- _____ The “old-fashioned ways” and “old-fashioned values” still show the best way to live.
- _____ Our society would be better off if we showed tolerance and understanding for untraditional values and opinions.
- _____ God’s laws about abortion, pornography and marriage must be strictly followed before it is too late, violations must be punished.
- _____ The society needs to show openness towards people thinking differently, rather than a strong leader, the world is not particularly evil or dangerous.
- _____ It would be best if newspapers were censored so that people would not be able to get hold of destructive and disgusting material.
- _____ Many good people challenge the state, criticize the church and ignore “the normal way of living”.
- _____ Our forefathers ought to be honored more for the way they have built our society, at the same time we ought to put an end to those forces destroying it.
- _____ People ought to put less attention to the Bible and religion, instead they ought to develop their own moral standards.
- _____ There are many radical, immoral people trying to ruin things; society ought to stop them.
- _____ It is better to accept bad literature than to censor it.
- _____ Facts show that we have to be harder against crime and sexual immorality in order to uphold law and order.
- _____ The situation in the society of today would be improved if troublemakers were treated with reason and humanity.
- _____ If the society so wants, it is the duty of every true citizen to help eliminate the evil that poisons our country from within.

This scale consists of a number of words and phrases that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you feel this way right now. Use the following scale to record your answers:

1	2	3	4	5
<i>very slightly or not at all</i>	<i>a little</i>	<i>moderately</i>	<i>quite a bit</i>	<i>extremely</i>

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> attentive | <input type="checkbox"/> strong |
| <input type="checkbox"/> irritable | <input type="checkbox"/> inspired |
| <input type="checkbox"/> afraid | <input type="checkbox"/> alert |
| <input type="checkbox"/> upset | <input type="checkbox"/> active |
| <input type="checkbox"/> guilty | <input type="checkbox"/> nervous |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excited | <input type="checkbox"/> hostile |
| <input type="checkbox"/> proud | <input type="checkbox"/> jittery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ashamed | <input type="checkbox"/> scared |
| <input type="checkbox"/> enthusiastic | <input type="checkbox"/> distressed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> determined | <input type="checkbox"/> interested |

Please use the following scale to indicate your feelings towards each of the statements below:

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---------------------------|
| <i>Strongly
Disagree</i> | | | | | <i>Strongly
Agree</i> |
- I find that a well ordered life with regular hours suits my temperament.
- My personal space is usually messy and disorganized.
- I believe that orderliness and organization are among the most important characteristics of a good student.
- I find that establishing a consistent routine enables me to enjoy life more.
- I enjoy having clear a clear and structured mode of life.
- I don't like situations that are uncertain.
- I like to have friends who are unpredictable.
- I enjoy the uncertainty of going into a new situation without knowing what might happen.
- I dislike unpredictable situations.

- _____ I don't like to go into a situation without knowing what I can expect from it.
- _____ When faced with a problem I usually see the one best solution very quickly.
- _____ I usually make important decisions quickly and confidently.
- _____ I would describe myself as indecisive.
- _____ I tend to struggle with most decisions.
- _____ When trying to solve a problem I often see so many possible options that it's confusing.
- _____ I dislike it when a person's statement could mean many different things.
- _____ It's annoying to listen to someone who cannot seem to make up his or her mind.
- _____ I feel uncomfortable when someone's meaning or intention is unclear to me.
- _____ In most social conflicts, I can easily see which side is right and which is wrong.
- _____ Even after I've made up my mind about something, I'm always eager to consider a different opinion.
- _____ When considering most conflict situations, I can usually see how both sides could be right.
- _____ When thinking about a problem, I consider as many different opinions on the issue as possible.
- _____ I always see many different solutions to problems I face.
- _____ I do not usually consult many different opinions before forming my own view.

Please indicate your gender.

- Male [1]
- Female [2]

What race/ethnicity do you most identify with?

- White/Caucasian [1]
- Black/African-American [2]
- Hispanic/Latino [3]
- Asian [4]
- Other [5]

What is your class year?

- Freshman [1]
- Sophomore [2]
- Junior [3]
- Senior [4]
- Other [5]

What is your religious affiliation?

- Catholic [1]
- Protestant [2]
- Jewish [3]
- Muslim [4]
- Other [5]

How would you evaluate your political views?

- Liberal [1]
- Slightly Liberal [2]
- Slightly Conservative [3]
- Conservative [4]

Are you, a close friend of, or related to, anyone employed in the justice system? (police officer, judge, attorney, etc.)

- No [1]
- Yes [2]

Appendix C



ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY
HUMAN SUBJECT REVIEW BOARD
COVER SHEET FOR NEW INDIVIDUAL RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSALS

Name of Principle Investigator: Stephanie Oglesby
 Date of Submission: June 15, 2010
 Department: Psychology
 School: Feinstein College of Arts and Sciences
 Name of Principle Investigators: Stephanie Oglesby and Judith Platania, Ph.D.
 Name of Faculty Advisor: Judith Platania, Ph.D.
 (required for students)
 Title of Research Project: *Regret Proneness and the Death Qualification Juror: An Analysis of Factors Contributing to Dissonance*
 Grant funding support for study: None

Researcher code of ethics: I declare that I have read the Roger Williams University Statement of Researchers' Ethical Principles for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research and am familiar with my obligations hereunder. Furthermore, I agree to abide by that Statement of Ethical Principles adopted by Roger Williams University as part of the Human Subject Review Board policy.

Dr. Judith Platania
 Investigator's signature

Review status sought by principle investigator. Circle one using the guidelines published by the HSRB. Note that the HSRB may change the status of the review.

EXEMPT EXPEDITED FULL

Signature of Department Chair (where applicable): Janet Levin

Signature of Dean: Janet Levin 6/17/10

For HSRB Board use only:

Committee decision regarding review status:

EXEMPT EXPEDITED FULL

Approved

Resubmit

[Signature] 7/1/10
 Signature of HSRB Chairperson Date