Estonian investigators’ questioning styles with child witnesses.
Kristjan Kask* and Ray Bull

Introduction
It is found that open memory prompts tend to elicit longer and more accurate responses than do closed prompts. Reliance on open-ended questions during the early stages of interviews may not only produce greater amounts of uncontaminated information but also reduce acquiescence to misleading information introduced later in the interview. However, focused and closed questioning has been found to be dominant in forensic interviews of children in several countries.

Aim
The purpose of the present study is to examine the information provided by young children in Estonian police interviews of them. It is hypothesized that interviewers use more option-posing and direct questions than prompting children’s free recall and the proportions of usage of different questioning techniques will vary across time within interviews.

Method
Videotaped interviews with 17 children (mean age 8 years 10 months, range 5 to 13 years) were analyzed. The interviewers had received some formal training in interviewing but no special training for the questioning of child witnesses.

Results
A pattern of long interviewer questions and short child answers was often apparent. During the interview, with time the proportion of direct questions was found to decrease and the proportion of option-posing and suggestive questions to increase. Longer answers were provided in response to general or central invitations, whereas option-posing or closed questions produced less information.

Conclusions
When taking into consideration the frequency of the different interviewer utterance types, investigative interviews in Estonian sample share heavy reliance on directive and option-posing utterances found in the interviews conducted in other countries. Better police training in the adoption of best-practice guidelines in interviewing children is required. Therefore, more structured methods such as the NICHD protocol or cognitive interview are strongly recommended to structure the interviews, increasing both quality and quantity.

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Effects of collaboration with a non-witness on eyewitnesses’ recall correctness and metacognitive realism
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Introduction
Eye-witnesses to crimes often talk about the witnessed event with other persons. This issue is of great importance in forensic settings because of the effect that these retellings may have on the account of the event subsequently given by the witness in forensically important contexts.

Aim
To study the effects of interaction with a non-witness on eyewitnesses’ recall correctness and metacognitive realism.

Method
In this study the participants (n = 89) saw a short film of a staged kidnapping of a woman. The participants were randomly assigned to four conditions. In the lab-discussion condition the participants discussed the event five times in a two weeks period with a two-three days interval between each discussion and each time with a new confederate who asked non-prepared questions about the event. In the rehearsal condition the participants only told the event to a confederate five times in a two weeks period. In the family discussion condition participants discussed the event with a new family member or friend five times in a two weeks period. In the control condition participants did nothing during the two weeks time. After the 2 weeks all participants first gave a free recall and then answered focused recognition questions and three days later gave confidence judgments of their previous memory recall.

Results and conclusions
Results for the free recall showed that the participants in the four conditions differed significantly in their accuracy, confidence and calibration but not on over-/underconfidence and in their ability to discriminate correct and incorrect memories by means of the level of their confidence judgments. No significant differences were found for the focused questions. Thus, it may be that the effects of witnesses’ communication with other persons about a witnessed event may have greater implications for features of their subsequent free recall compared with their answers to focused questions.
Children’s and adults’ realism in their event-recall confidence in responses to free recall and focussed questions

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Introduction
The realism (also called accuracy) of children’s confidence in their recalled memories is an important issue in forensic psychology. In this context the effect of different question formats have too seldom be attended to.

Aim
In the present research we investigated the realism of 8-9 year old, 12-13 year old and adult witnesses’ confidence judgments of their memory performance, in relation to free recall and focussed questions pertaining to the witnessed event. In order to accomplish this purpose, we also analyzed the witnesses’ recall performance.

Method
Two experiments examined the realism in the confidence of the three age-groups in their memory performance after viewing a short video clip. A different video clip was shown in each experiment and the focussed questions differed in difficulty.

Results
In both experiments the youngest age group showed perfect realism (e.g., no overconfidence) in their confidence judgments for the free recall. The free recall results also showed, as expected, that the youngest group had lower completeness but similar accuracy as the adults. All age groups showed poorer realism for the focussed questions. When questions with content already mentioned in the free recall were excluded from the analyses of the focussed questions the differences in question format were accentuated. In addition, when the within-subject variation of the confidence judgments was analyzed the results showed question format differences but few age differences, indicating that the confidence judgment task was age appropriate also for the youngest children.

Conclusions
The study shows the importance of question format when evaluating the credibility of the confidence shown by 8-9 year old children in their own testimony.

Children’s truthful and deceptive testimonies: How camera perspective affects adult observers’ perception and assessment

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Introduction
Children seldom give their testimony live in court; instead they give their testimonies via CCTV or via video recorded interviews. The use of this technology serves the children’s interest well, but little is known about its psychological effects (e.g., how different camera perspectives affect the observers’ perception and assessments).

Aim
The study is an experiment investigating adults’ perception and assessments of children’s videotaped truthful and deceptive testimonies as a function of the camera shot (i.e., the distance between the camera and the child) and the camera focus (i.e., focus on child only or on both child and interviewer).

Method
Fourteen children (8-9 years old) either experienced an event (an interaction with a stranger) or heard about the event through hearsay. After two weeks, all children were interviewed about the event as having experienced it. The interviews were videotaped simultaneously by four cameras, each taking a different visual perspective (close-up shot/child only, medium shot/child only, medium shot/child and interviewer, and long shot/child and interviewer). Mock jurors (N = 256) watched the videotaped testimonies and rated their perception of the children’s statement and appearance, as well as assessed the children’s veracity.

Results
We found that the camera perspective affected the observers’ perception of the children’s appearance. Specifically, the observers in the ‘Long shot/child and interviewer’ condition rated the children as significantly more natural and relaxed than did the observers in the other conditions. In the same vein, the observers in the ‘Close-up shot/child only’ condition perceived the children as having to think harder than did the observers in the other three conditions. The adult’s deception detection accuracy was at chance level.

Conclusions
The results suggest that legal policy-makers should consider the outcome of psycho-legal research on camera perspective when establishing and/or reforming standards for police interviews and courtroom procedures.

Key words
Children’s testimony, Deception detection, Camera perspective, Camera shot, Camera focus

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Danish witness interview – in a cognitive psychological perspective.
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The aim of this research project is to evaluate the current practice of how witnesses and victims are interviewed by Danish police. The empirical basis for the project comprises 19 police interviews carried out by 13 different interviewers. I have been present during all the interviews and used tape recordings for further analysis. In my analysis I have compared my results to the results Fisher, Geiselman and Raymond got in their study of the interview style of American police in 1987. The fields I have chosen to study is: introduction, context reinstatement, free report, types of questions, interruptions and pauses. In the light of the study it can be concluded that in many cases the interviewers take too much control, and that the interviews are often carried out with a “question-and-answer” technique. For instance there is a high occurrence of short answers, and few answers lasting more than one minute. I argue that this may be a consequence of poor or no introduction. It may also be due to the fact that the interviewers ask many questions, but only a few questions that invite a free report – probably because the interviewers taking part know no other way to carry out their police interview. The participating interviewers stated that they have received very little or no formal training in interview techniques. Furthermore, it is my impression, that the way the interviews are conducted reflects the fact that the police report is written on a computer simultaneously with the interview being conducted. This entails that it is the structure of the police report, which determines the procedure of the interview, rather than the recollection of the individual witness or interviewee of the sequence of events they have witnessed.

Photo, video or live identification parades;
Which procedure provides the most reliable result when police officers conduct the interviews?
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Introduction
This experiment and its preliminary results was presented at NNPLs 3rd meeting in Turku 2006. The current presentation includes our results and conclusions.

Aim
The purpose of the experiment was to test whether eyewitness identification accuracy differs as function of whether the eyewitness attempts identification from photospreads, live or videotaped lineup. The study was designed to control for cross-racial, sequential vs. simultaneous and present vs. non present, variables.

Method
In our study 120 people (80 police officers and 40 civilian police staff) were exposed to two males, one of Pakistani (P), and one of Norwegian (N) origin. Thirty (30) participants were interviewed immediately after the exposure, the remaining 90, two months later. The participants were interviewed by "blind" police officers. Responses were coded and analysed.

Results
A rather high proportion (45% P, 40 % N) chose to respond “don’t know”, challenging the statistical power of the subsequent analysis. Compared to civilian employees, a significant higher proportion of the participants with formal police training responded “don’t know”. Of those who did provide an answer, 48, 5 % (P) and 57, 7 % (N) responded correct. However, only 21, 6 % managed to provide a correct response on both tests (P and N). The study did not reveal a cross – racial main effect. However, the interaction between ethnicity and test media revealed a significant cross – racial effect; the participants (99 % with Norwegian origin) viewing photospreads, scored significantly better when asked to identify the Norwegian male (present or not). As expected, those who were tested immediately after exposure scored significantly better than participants tested 2 months later with photospreads clearly most affected by space of time.

Conclusions
The study did not reveal a main affect across test media. However, photospreads seems to be more vulnerable to cross – racial effects and space of time. Unlike most previous research, but in accordance with a bulk of criminal offences, our witnesses were exposed to more than one “perpetrator”; a possible explanation to why positive responses and hit rates in our study seems lower than previously reported, raising ecological questions in need for attention in future research. The literature review exposed serious shortcomings in existing guidelines in Norway, dating back to 1933, updated in 1973.
Psychopathy in Finnish homicides: implications for criminal investigation

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Psychopathy is defined as a constellation of affective, interpersonal, and behavioral characteristics including impulsivity, irresponsibility, shallow emotions, lack of empathy, guilt or remorse, pathological lying and the persistent violation of social norms. The society in general and law enforcement personnel in particular should be aware of the prevalence of psychopathy in offender populations as well as the qualitative differences in homicidal behaviour between psychopaths and non-psychopaths.

A group of studies from a large-scale psychopathy & homicide project are presented that aim to examine the prevalence of psychopathy in Finnish homicide offenders in general as well as in specific offence groups such as homicides with mutilation of the victim's body, sexual homicides, and homicides in which the victim's body has been transported and disposed of to a terrain area. Furthermore, psychopathy is studied in relation to specific features in homicides: e.g. distance patterns in terrain area homicides and claiming for amnesia.

Crime reports and forensic examination reports of all homicide offenders prosecuted and subject to forensic examination in 1995-2004 (n=759) were retrospectively analysed for over 400 variables regarding crime scene behaviour and offender characteristics. The Psychopathy Check List Revised was used for scoring psychopathy.

The results showed that the prevalence of psychopathy in Finnish homicide offenders is higher than previously reported in other countries. In specific offence and offender groups the prevalence is significantly higher than in the general homicide offender population. Psychopathy is also related to certain features of homicides such as distance patterns in terrain area homicides. However, psychopathy was not related to claiming for amnesia.

The present results have several implications for law enforcement work that will be discussed along the presentation.

The relationship between attributions and personality in Finnish violent offenders

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INTRODUCTION
Previous research indicates that the way in which offenders attribute blame for their criminal acts is an important process in ascribing responsibility for actions of oneself and those of the others.

AIM
The aim of the present study is to examine the relationship between attribution of blame and offender characteristics and personality in a sample of Finnish prisoners, convicted of violent crimes (n=195, 12 % females).

METHOD
As a part of a larger survey study the participants completed a set of self-report questionnaires including Multidimensional Anger Inventory (MAI), Novaco Anger Scale (NAS), Barrat Impulsiveness Scale (BIS –11) and Blame Attribution Inventory (BAI).

RESULTS
The results showed that homicide offenders, compared to other violent offenders, assigned blame for their acts to a larger degree to internal factors. A similar result was found for offenders with no criminal background. No gender differences were found in blame attribution, but the age of the offender and female gender of the victim correlated significantly with internal attribution and feelings of guilt. Also, victim-offender relationship was significantly associated with blame attribution. The results are further presented in relation to offender personality.

CONCLUSIONS
The results suggest that from the offenders’ perspective a Finnish homicide is usually portrayed as a tragedy where the violent act happens because of sudden loss of control and the offenders often feel they acted against their nature. In relation to guilt attribution, one in three of the homicide offenders reported hating themselves due to committing the crime and nearly a half (41 %) reported that they will never be able to forgive themselves. Also, nearly a half feared that people at large would never accept them because of their crime. These results are to be considered and kept in mind when developing offender intervention programmes.
The nature of stalking and coping among Finnish university students

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Introduction: Three studies investigated the nature of stalking and coping among university students in Finland.

Aim: The aim was to gather information about coping prevalence, coping strategies and stalking behavior, which could serve as base for therapeutic interventions and a screening tool.

Method: 615 Finnish university students responded a stalking survey. Those who reported having been subject to stalking were divided in two samples: those who had been stalked once for the first study (n=137) and those who had been stalked once or more during their lifetime were selected to the two other studies (n=298). The data was collected with an electronic stalking questionnaire complemented with a list of coping behaviors and the Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ). The data analysis consisted of i.e. frequencies, ANOVA and multidimensional scaling (MDS).

Results: About a fourth of the students had been subjected to stalking either once or several times. The students tried to cope with the stalker by ignoring, avoiding or confronting the stalker but they seldom sought professional help. The mean length of stalking was almost one year, acquaintances or an ex-partners being the most persistent stalkers. Stalking behaviour could be divided in contact seeking, surveillance and violence.

Conclusions: These preliminary findings suggest that stalking is a quite widespread phenomenon also among Finnish university students. Certain stalking styles could be found concerning stalking behaviour, which can be of help when trying to predict the duration of stalking. The findings are consistent with previous studies in showing that the victims often know their stalkers and that violence occurs in the context of stalking. Only a minority of the victims reported seeking professional help as a way of coping with stalking which can be seen as a challenge for the health care setting.

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Behaviours indicative of bullying among Icelandic offenders: a study of perpetrator and victim characteristics.

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The actual characteristics of Icelandic adult offenders involved in bully behaviours have not been researched and there is no research to date that has focused on prison-based behavioural characteristics in Icelandic prisons. The aim of the research was to get information about the nature and extent of bullying behaviour in prisons in Iceland. The intent was also to explore characteristics of offenders involved in bully behaviours and the relationship of bullying behaviour to psychological dysfunction.

All Icelandic offenders in prisons were initially approached to take part in the study. Of these 19 refused to take part or the questionnaires were incomplete or defaced. The final sample comprised of 63 offenders, thereof 4 female prisoners and 59 males, most of them between 21 – 35 years old (66%). Sixty-three Icelandic offenders completed a revised version of the Direct and Indirect Prisoner behaviour Checklist (DIPC-R). The DIPC-R is a behavioural checklist that avoids use of the term bullying, instead presenting participants with a series of discrete behaviours indicative of either “bullying others” or of “being bullied.” Fifty-four of the offenders completed also the Basic Personality Inventory (BPI). The BPI is a 240-item, true/false, self-report inventory of psychopathology with 12 scales, 11 clinical scales and one critical item scale.

Offenders were classified into one of four categories: “pure bullies” (solely reporting behaviours indicative of bullying others), “bully/victims” (reporting behaviours indicative of bullying others and of being bullied), “pure victims” (only reporting “victim” behaviours), and “not involved” (not reporting any “bully” or “victim” behaviours).

The study is ongoing and therefore the results are preliminary. Overall, 57 percent of offenders reported at least one behaviour indicative of “being bullied”, with 56 percent of the sample reporting indirect bullying and 27 percent direct bullying. Regarding direct bullying, 8 percent of offenders reported at least one incidence of physical victimization, 13 percent of psychological bullying, 18 percent verbal bullying, 10 percent theft-related and 6 percent sexual.

In general 48 percent of offenders reported at least one behaviour that was indicative of “bullying others”: 44 percent reported indirect bullying and 18 percent reported direct bullying. Regarding direct bullying 5 percent of offenders reported at least one incidence of physical bullying, 6 percent psychological bullying, 14 verbal bullying, 5 percent theft-related and 2 percent sexual.
Children’s disclosure of child sexual abuse: what are the predictors of non-disclosure among Icelandic adolescents?

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Introduction
Since children’s statements often represent the central evidence for judging the occurrence of child sexual abuse, empirical research on disclosure processes and its’ reliability is of great importance. There has been a debate on how children disclose their abuse and what factors increase/decrease the likelihood of disclosure. It has for example been suggested that children that are victims of intrafamilial abuse may be less likely to disclose the abuse than other children but empirical evidence for this assumption are still lacking.

Aim
The purpose of this study is to investigate predictors of non-disclosure of child sexual abuse among young people in Iceland. In particular socioeconomic status of the family, gender, characteristics of the abuse (such as intrafamilial abuse, severity of abuse and age of onset of abuse) and attachment to family and friends will be studied as possible predictors of non-disclosure.

Method
The main data set used in the study is a population-based survey among 16-24 year old students. Anonymous questionnaires were administered to students present in class in all high schools in Iceland on the 20th of October 2004. The participants were 10,472, which represented approximately 80% of all full time students in further education in Iceland. There were 5,129 (4.2%) males and 5,303 (50.8%) females in the study (38 did not specify their gender). The average age for the entire sample was 17.7 years (range 16-24, SD = 1.8). In total of 12.5% girls (n=619) and 2.4% boys (n=107) said they had been persuaded, pressed or forced to participate in sexual activities before age of 18 years.

Results
The analysis has not been conducted. Preliminary analysis and results will be presented at the meeting.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Comorbid disorders in Icelandic Prison Population

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Background: Studies on ADHD have indicated that the disorder can predict future antisocial behaviour. Studies among adult offenders aren’t many and even fewer have been made on the disorder among prison inmates. Because of that it is important to investigate the prison population in regard to ADHD.

Aims: The main purpose of this study is to screen for ADHD among Icelandic prison inmates and investigate the comorbidity of the disorder to other mental disorders in the prison population.

Method: All inmates were asked to participate in the research. In all 94 male Judgment debtors incarcerated in Icelandic prisons agreed to participate in the research. Age ranged from 19 to 56 (M= 30.7 years and SD=9.7). Participants where individually interviewed within 10 days from their arrival in prison. The interview consisted of a standardised diagnostic interview for mental disorders, self report questionnaires and psychological assessment.

Results: Fourteen (14.9%) inmates fulfilled criteria for ADHD as adults. Half (50%) met diagnostic criteria for ADHD in childhood. Of the inmates 78 (83%) where diagnosed with at least one other current mental disorder. Most common other current mental disorders where substance use disorders (71; 77.2%), anxiety disorders (38; 41.3%) and mood disorders (31; 33.7). Association was found between ADHD in childhood and hypomania/mania, drug abuse/dependence and antisocial personality disorder. An association was found between adult ADHD and any current mental disorder, current mood disorders and current anxiety disorders.

Conclusions: The main conclusions are that ADHD is a common disorder among Icelandic prison inmates as well as other mental disorders. The association between ADHD and other mental disorders among the inmates indicates a poor state of prisoners with ADHD. In the light of these results it is important to screen especially for ADHD among inmates and be aware of the high frequency of other mental disorders in designing a treatment program for prison inmates.
“PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON GROOMING IN SEXUAL ABUSE OF CHILDREN”
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Introduction: Though no exact agreed definition of grooming exists, it has become a well know fact that grooming is an issue through various internet grooming stories that have reached the media. However, grooming does not only exist online. Research suggest that most children are sexual abused by someone close to them like a relative or friend of the family. With this study I want to look into the problem of grooming to support Save the Children’s campaign on criminalizing grooming in Denmark.

Aim: The aim is to define and disseminate a practical policy that addresses the lack of protection of Danish children with regards to grooming by potential sexual offenders. I seek to develop an operational definition of grooming. A comparative study of the legislation and policies in other countries on this area together with my own quantitative and qualitative research will be the foundation for discussing a policy recommendation and strategy unique to the Danish criminal justice system

Method: Among other things, an analogue study will be conducted in two Danish Primary Schools. Two groups of kindergarten children will watch either their class teacher or a stranger (a nurse) take a cleaning lady's watch and are told not to tell anyone. The children are interviewed afterwards. The hypothesis is that when an adult has established a relationship of trust with a child, it is less likely that the child will disclose on any transgressions the adult has committed if told not to do so.

Results: So far only half the children have been tested so inconclusively, there seems to be a difference in children’s willingness to disclose on the observed “theft”. The children that saw the stranger steal are much more willing to disclose on her, while the children that saw their class teacher, had to be asked directly if they knew where the watch was. Only then would 50% of the children reluctantly disclose on their teacher.

Conclusions: Criminalizing grooming is a controversial subject. Though the UK has tried to set an example, their legislation has been criticized for not criminalizing grooming itself but only the act of meeting up with a child after grooming it. One should also take into consideration that criminalization of grooming could lead to an increase of miscarriages of justice and also that more men would refrain from working with children out of fear of so called witch-hunting. But more importantly, grooming is a serious and widespread problem that cannot be ignored.

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Occupational Norms and Norm Activation: Effects on Police Investigators’ Processing of Evidence
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Introduction:
The most prevalent social norms within the police organization put a premium on decisiveness and effectiveness, which may promote a simplified and heuristic mode of thinking. However, fair and objective investigative work requires carefulness and systematic analysis. The occupational culture of the police may thus counteract the quality of criminal investigations.

Aim:
Norm activation theory predicts that the temporary salience of a social norm determines the extent to which the norm will affect human behavior. The objective of this study was to test whether the activation of norms pertaining to the occupational role of criminal investigators influences the process by which crime-related information is evaluated.

Method:
An experiment was conducted with 68 experienced criminal investigators as participants. Social norms were activated by letting investigators read and compare themselves with statements said to represent their colleagues’ conception of a “good investigator”. The statements expressed norms related to either decisiveness (e.g., “a good investigator is decisive”) or carefulness (e.g., “a good investigator is patient and systematic”). Ostensibly as part of a second unrelated study, investigators then read a summary of an assault case and rated it on several dimensions, including the likely guilt of a suspect.

Results:
As predicted, investigators who had been reminded of effectiveness (vs. carefulness) norms took less account of a witness statement that was diagnostic with regard to the guilt of the suspect, indicating a less systematic processing strategy. The effect occurred even though participants were unaware of the influence and reported not to deliberately try to conform to the norms.

Conclusions:
These findings suggest that undesirable influence from investigators’ social environment is subtle and hard to detect, but that the influence can be counteracted through active promotion of alternative norms.

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Children’s memory and social influence: 
Mapping the relation between omission and commission errors
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Introduction and Aim
Research has shown that social influence can create false memories. To a large extent this research has focused on how and when false memories can be planted (commission errors). There has been much less focus on the extent to which true memories can be ‘erased’ (omission errors) as a result of social influence. This is noteworthy since both commission and omission errors are of crucial importance in forensic settings. Hence, in the present study we used a design which allowed us to examine the relation between the two types of errors with respect to children’s memories of a real-life event.

Method
174 children (7 or 12 years old) individually participated in a staged event (an interaction with a stranger outside his car), and two weeks later they were interviewed about their memory of the event. Before the interview, the children where subjected to misinformation (social influence) with respect to the event.

Results
The results showed that the children were more sensitive to social influence that aimed at planting ‘new’ information, than social influence that aimed at erasing ‘old’ information. Hence, with respect to the critical information studied, the children committed many more commission errors than omission errors. We also found that the children committed more commission errors with respect to peripheral details, compared to central details. The younger (7 yrs) and the older (12 yrs) children were equally sensitive to the social influence introduced.

Conclusions
Our study show an asymmetric memory effect due to social influence; much more commission errors than omission errors. Both the theoretical and applied contributions will be discussed.

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Children’s memory of traumatic separations. An investigation of children removed from their biological parents by the Child Protective Services (CPS).
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INTRODUCTION
There have been a considerable debate in the last decade whether traumatic experiences in childhood is better remembered than neutral events, or whether traumatic experiences is repressed or lost and not remembered. Further, how a stressful separation from biological parents influences a child’s basic memory functions are not, to our knowledge, yet conducted.

AIM
The aim of the present study is to shed light over how two different removal situations, acute vs. planned, accomplished by the CPS, affect children aged 3-12 years old, cognitively emotionally and socially, with focus on the children’s memory functions.

METHOD
The investigation is outlined as an experimental study within a cognitive developmental perspective. Specifically, the examination is a 2 (removal condition; acute removal vs. planned removal) x 3(age: 3-5, 6-9, 10-12 years old) x 3 (interview/observation; one week after the removal vs. 3 months after vs. 1 year after) mixed factorial design. The two first factors are between subjects, and the last factor is within subjects. Control over the experimental situation is guaranteed through the presence of researcher during all of the removals, using a sequential observation scheme. The follow-ups include memory interviews, checklists for general function and trauma symptoms, measure of attachment style and tests of expressive language and general memory and cognitive function.

RESULTS
So far the data include 10 removal situations, 3 planned and 7 acute, with the one week and 3 month follow-up. No analysis is executed so far. However there is a tendency in the interviews of the children, that more central information and less peripheral information is recalled when comparing the observation scheme from the removal situation. Further analysis and results will be presented in connection to additional removals.
Icelandic law enforcement personnel beliefs about cues to deception
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Purpose. This paper is a survey examining beliefs about cues to deception held by police officers (47), detectives (53), customs officers (42) and students (50). In line with previous studies it is assumed that the knowledge of the Icelandic law enforcement officers and students is similar to those of their counterparts in other countries, that is, that their knowledge is not consistent with the literature on deception (Granhag et al., 2004; Granhag et al., 2005; Strömwall og Granhag, 2003), that law enforcement personnel are not better informed about cues to deception than students (Granhag et al., 2004; Granhag et al., 2005; Strömwall og Granhag, 2003), and that all participants believe that their knowledge about cues to deception is good (DePaulo et al., 1997).

Method. A total of 192 participants filled out a questionnaire containing questions about cues to deception. The sample consisted of 100 police officers, 42 customs officers and 50 students. Both between-group and within-group analyses were conducted.

Results. In line with previous surveys, police officers, detectives, customs officers and students held stereotypical and wrongful beliefs about cues to deception. There was a difference between the students and others on several factors; details, verbal vs. nonverbal cues, gender, mental effort and planning. The participant’s knowledge about cues to deception was not good, however they believed it was average.

Conclusions. The results indicate that law enforcement personnel have relatively more insight into the psychology of deception than students. However they hold wrongful beliefs that could have detrimental effect on their job performance and might benefit from additional training.

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