

Hypothetical Sentencing Decisions Are Associated With Actual Capital Punishment Outcomes: The Role of Facial Trustworthiness

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Abstract

Recent research has highlighted a relationship between perceptions of trustworthiness from faces and capital sentencing outcomes. Here, we extended those findings by replicating the relationship between trustworthiness and the death penalty among a new sample of targets convicted of capital murder in Arkansas and by demonstrating that facial trustworthiness guides naive sentencing decisions. First, trustworthiness differentiated convicted murderers sentenced to life from those sentenced to death using a novel stimulus population. Next, we found experimental evidence that people used inferences of trustworthiness from faces when making hypothetical capital sentencing judgments for noncriminal targets presented as murderers. Finally, naive participants viewing photographs of actual convicted criminals without any additional information allocated hypothetical sentences that matched those that were actually received in court. Facial trustworthiness, but not other inferences (i.e., Afrocentricity, attractiveness, and maturity), accounted for this relationship. These data therefore suggest that perceptions of trustworthiness guide individuals' decisions about legal punishment.

Keywords

face perception, trustworthiness, legal processes, judgment

First impressions based on facial appearance are pervasive and can exert a powerful influence on important life outcomes (Rule et al., 2010; Zebrowitz, Voinescu, & Collins, 1996). For instance, perceivers evaluate others' trustworthiness from glimpses of their faces (Willis & Todorov, 2006), and these inferences impact individuals' behavior despite their questionable fidelity (Rule, Krendl, Ivcevic, & Ambady, 2013). Thus, unsurprisingly, perceptions of trustworthiness inform trust behavior: For example, people are less likely to invest money in partners who look untrustworthy in the trust game—even among young children (Ewing, Caulfield, Read, & Rhodes, 2015; Rezslescu, Duchaine, Olivola, & Chater, 2012; Van't Wout & Sanfey, 2008).

Although the influence of trust inferences on trust behavior is understandable, it is perhaps more interesting that perceived trustworthiness also affects the complementary act of punishment. For instance, several studies have shown that facial trustworthiness affects courtroom decision making. People deciding hypothetical verdicts require less evidence to convict individuals with untrustworthy faces (Porter, ten Brinke, & Gustaw, 2010), and facial trustworthiness predicts real sentencing outcomes after defendants' guilt has already been decided (Wilson & Rule, 2015). Recently, Wilson and Rule (2015) found that facial trustworthiness predicted capital sentencing outcomes

among a large sample of convicted murderers in the state of Florida. Furthermore, trustworthiness covaried with capital sentencing decisions even among innocent people who were ultimately exonerated of their crimes.

In the current work, we sought to expand beyond the observation that facial appearance correlates with criminal sentencing outcomes to understanding whether facial trustworthiness actually guides sentencing decisions. We therefore tasked perceivers with allocating hypothetical sentences to real murderers and measured their correspondence to the targets' actual sentences. Importantly, we did so without providing any additional information about targets' crimes. If sentence allocations based only on the face significantly correlate with actual sentences based on the volume of information that juries and judges review, it would help to complete the portrait of how facial appearance influences people's judgments of others by providing a link between behaviors and outcomes. Thus,

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understanding the extent to which inferences of traits from faces affect the decisions of the everyday people recruited to serve on juries may provide important information about potential subjective biases in courtroom decisions for which society relies on the ideal of objectivity. Although life without parole and execution represents imprisonment until death (and some prisoners may even prefer the death penalty; Ridgeway & Casella, 2014), this question is important because it involves the most extreme punishment that the American legal system can levy. Indeed, the death penalty is extreme enough that some federal courts have declared it unconstitutional (*Jones v. Chappell*, 2014), thereby warranting careful investigation of factors that may bias its administration.

We therefore investigated the degree to which the death penalty may to some extent be a punishment for looking untrustworthy in three studies. We set the foundation for the work in Study 1 by first replicating the relationship between capital sentencing and facial trustworthiness originally found by Wilson and Rule (2015) with a novel stimulus database. We thought it important to determine whether those findings generalized beyond criminals convicted in the state of Florida, whose inmates have been sampled in several past studies (e.g., Blair, Judd, & Chapleau, 2004), particularly as judicial norms, procedures, and precedents can vary widely between states (e.g., Jacobs & Carmichael, 2001). Thus, we downloaded the photographs of every Death Row inmate in Arkansas as of July 2015. Although the Arkansas database was much smaller than the Florida database (with only 33 targets sentenced to death), using it provided several benefits. First, it permitted replication and extension of the previous research with a new target population. Next, it allowed us to implement a fully within-subjects design in which we gathered trait ratings for every face from every rater, rather than needing to divide the stimuli into subsets as Wilson and Rule did. Finally, Arkansas houses all of its Death Row inmates at the same facility, eliminating the noise that comes from sampling inmates from different prisons and facilitating the collection of control images from life-imprisoned convicts at the same prison.

We then experimentally tested whether manipulating trustworthiness would affect individuals' decisions about criminal sentences in Study 2. There, we used photos from a laboratory database of noncriminals previously rated high or low in trustworthiness. Claiming that the targets were actually convicted murderers, we asked participants to simulate assigning sentences to each one. Consistent with the past work reviewed above, we expected that participants would "sentence" the untrustworthy-looking individuals to death versus life-imprisonment more frequently than the trustworthy-looking individuals.

Finally, in Study 3, we integrated the designs of Studies 1 and 2 by asking participants to assign hypothetical sentences to the faces of the actual murderers examined in Study 1. Critically, we investigated whether perceptions of the inmates' trustworthiness would account for the relationship between the sentences assigned to them by the participants and those that they actually received in court. We also examined the possible

role of other facial traits linked to sentencing in past work to determine whether trustworthiness plays a unique role in sentencing decisions. Thus, collectively, we sought to gain a more complete understanding of the previously observed relationship between facial trustworthiness and criminal sentences by investigating the path through which individuals' perceptions of convicts' faces can lead to biases in the sentences that they receive.

Study 1

In Study 1, we replicated the findings of Wilson and Rule (2015) with a new sample of stimuli: the population of current Death Row inmates maintained by the state of Arkansas. As in the previous work, we tested whether perceivers' ratings of trustworthiness would differ between convicted murderers sentenced to death and a comparison group of murderers sentenced to life.

Method

Stimuli

We selected the entire population of Death Row inmates in Arkansas as of July, 2015 ($n = 33$, all male; 18 Black, 15 White; all convicted for capital murder) and a set of 33 race-matched control targets convicted of the same crime but sentenced to life. We restricted our control targets to inmates housed at the same facility as the Death Row inmates (the Varner Unit of the Arkansas Department of Corrections) to avoid inconsistencies in photo background color, frame (e.g., some other Arkansas prisons included full-torso photographs) and other potential confounds that might differentiate the life-imprisoned and Death Row inmates. Because the database is organized alphabetically, we selected the first 18 Black and 15 White men serving sentences of life without parole for capital murder (approximately one third of all men sentenced to life without parole in this facility). The two groups did not differ in age, $t(64) = 0.44$, $p = .66$, $d = 0.11$; five wore glasses and one had a visible tattoo in each sample (see Hellström & Tekle, 1994; Funk & Todorov, 2013 for the respective influence of each in person perception). The images were full color and sized to 175 pixels high with width varying between 133 and 200 pixels (72 pixels/inch), as images were not completely standardized for size in the database.

Participants and Procedure

We recruited 40 U.S. residents from Mechanical Turk (MTurk; 22 male, 18 female, $M_{\text{age}} = 29.3$ years, $SD = 7.6$) to rate each face from 1 (*not at all trustworthy*) to 7 (*very trustworthy*) in random order within a single block.¹ Our primary analytic approach was to use the perceiver as the unit of analysis; accordingly, our sample size provided more than 99% power to detect an effect of equivalent size to that observed in Study 2 of Wilson and Rule (2015; $d = 1.16$) using a paired-sample

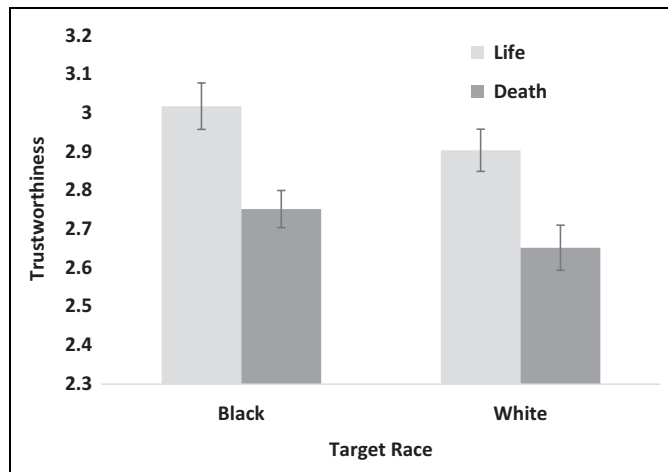


Figure 1. Perceived trustworthiness of Black and White targets sentenced to life or death. Error bars represent ± 1 within-subjects standard error.

test. Participants were not told that the targets had been convicted of any crimes.

Results

Because the database contained both White and Black targets, we subjected trustworthiness ratings to a 2 (sentence) \times 2 (target race) repeated-measures analysis of variance to account for any possible racial differences. Confirming our prediction, we observed a main effect of sentence, $F(1, 39) = 24.53, p < .001, \eta^2_{\text{partial}} = .39$, such that participants rated targets sentenced to life ($M = 2.96, SE = .15$) as more trustworthy than targets sentenced to death ($M = 2.70, SE = .14$), 95% confidence interval (CI) of difference [.15, .37].² There was no main effect of target race, $F(1, 39) = 1.40, p = .24, \eta^2_{\text{partial}} = .04$, 95% CI of difference [-.08, .29], nor did race and sentence interact, $F(1, 39) = 0.04, p = .84, \eta^2_{\text{partial}} = .001$.³ See Figure 1 for mean trustworthiness ratings for each target subgroup.

Summary

Perceivers rated targets sentenced to death as less trustworthy than targets sentenced to life, replicating previous research with a new sample from a different state (Wilson & Rule, 2015). These results suggest that the relationship between facial trustworthiness and extreme sentencing outcomes generalizes to new populations. Thus, despite variations in sentencing procedures and capital punishment laws, people perceive individuals sentenced to death as less trustworthy than those sentenced to life across multiple states with differing laws and penal systems.

We next wanted to investigate the extent to which facial trustworthiness might guide sentencing decisions in an experimental context. That is, although these data reinforce that people sentenced to death may look less trustworthy than people sentenced to life, we lack experimental evidence that

individuals use trustworthiness to inform how they make sentencing decisions. We therefore conducted experiments in Studies 2 and 3. In Study 2, we engaged participants in a hypothetical sentencing task in which we manipulated the trustworthiness of target faces, so that we could directly test whether facial trustworthiness causes variability in sentencing. We then returned to actual offender photographs in Study 3, attending to the relationship between trustworthiness, hypothetical sentences, and actual sentences. Critically, we considered not just trustworthiness but also other facial traits associated with sentencing in previous work, namely, Afrocentricity (Blair, Judd, et al., 2004), attractiveness (Stewart, 1980), and maturity (Berry & Zebrowitz-McArthur, 1988).

Study 2

Previous work strongly suggests that facial trustworthiness may inform sentencing decisions. Here, we wanted to directly test whether perceptions of trustworthiness impact the sentencing decisions that people make. We therefore presented participants with consensually trustworthy and untrustworthy noncriminal faces borrowed from previous work, telling them that all of the targets were criminals convicted of murder and asking them to allocate a sentence of life imprisonment or execution to each. We predicted that participants would be more likely to hypothetically sentence untrustworthy-looking targets to death, thereby bridging the gap between trustworthiness judgments and sentencing outcomes by showing that facial trustworthiness not only correlates with sentences but also affects sentencing decisions.

Method

Stimuli

We borrowed 40 gray scale images from a set of 59 White male faces with neutral expressions sized at 256 \times 256 pixels (72 pixels/inch) rated for trustworthiness in a previous study (Rule, Ambady, & Adams, 2009). From these, we selected the 20 faces with the highest ($M = 4.39, SE = .06$) and lowest ($M = 2.88, SE = .08$) trustworthiness scores; Rule, Slepian, and Ambady (2012) used these same 40 faces to examine the effects of trustworthiness on memory.

Participants

Although we recruited 60 U.S. residents from MTurk, 63 participated (40 male, 23 female; $M_{\text{age}} = 28.2$ years, $SD = 6.2$), providing more than 95% power to observe an effect as large as the main effect of sentence in Study 1 under the current design, even when allowing for attrition from participants unwilling to assign anyone to death.

Procedure

Participants recruited for a study on criminal sentencing read that they would view a series of “mug shots” belonging to

people convicted for murders of varying severity, but that they would not receive any further information about them. We informed them that all targets had been sentenced to either life without parole or the death penalty, emphasizing that none would ever leave prison (i.e., they would never be able to reoffend). We then asked them to adopt the mind-set of a juror tasked with sentencing the men and to choose a sentence of either life without parole or death for each face. They viewed the 40 faces individually in random order.

Results

We used generalized estimating equations to analyze the relationship between trustworthiness and the binary sentence outcome. First, we eliminated the responses of 24 participants who did not choose the death penalty for any targets and two additional participants who chose the death penalty for every target. We analyzed the data of the remaining 37 participants who gave variable responses, regressing their hypothetical sentence decisions (1 = *death*, 0 = *life*) onto target trustworthiness (0.5 = *trustworthy*, -0.5 = *untrustworthy*). Consistent with our hypothesis, more trustworthy faces were less likely to be assigned the death penalty, Wald $\chi^2(1) = 37.50$, $B = -.50$, $SE = .08$, $p < .001$, odds ratio = 0.61, 95% CI [.52, .71].

Summary

Participants in Study 2 were more likely to sentence untrustworthy-looking targets to death in a hypothetical sentencing task. This difference emerged despite an emphasis on the permanent nature of the targets' incarceration. Thus, it is highly unlikely that participants allocated sentences based on the desire to prevent future harm, as we explicitly stated that the targets would not be eligible for parole. Rather, it is more likely that the participants overgeneralized the perceived trustworthiness of the targets' facial appearance to determine how to punish them for their crimes.

We next wanted to link the sentence allocation results from this study to the use of real offender photos in Study 1. We were specifically interested in whether perceivers viewing photographs of actual inmates sentenced to either death or life without parole would assign them hypothetical sentences that matched their actual sentences. Critically, they would be doing so without information about the targets' crimes. Consistency between the actual sentences assigned by well-informed judges or juries and those allocated by naive perceivers simply viewing faces would thus suggest further evidence for the misuse of facial information in real-world sentencing decisions.

Study 3

In Study 3, we combined the methods used in Studies 1 and 2 by asking participants to assign sentences to the Arkansas inmates absent knowledge of their criminal status. Based on the results above, we predicted that sentences assigned by participants in the lab would correlate with those actually received in

court. Furthermore, we predicted that perceived trustworthiness would statistically account for the relationship between the hypothetical and actual sentences. This would show (a) that members of the general public uninformed about targets' crimes give sentences consistent with those delivered by jurors who have the complete facts of the crime at their disposal and (b) that perceptions of trustworthiness account for the link between these two (naive/hypothetical vs. informed/actual) sets of judgments, suggesting that facial trustworthiness may contribute to both.

Although we expected participants to allocate sentences that correlated with targets' actual sentences because of the link between perceived trustworthiness and sentencing outcomes previously observed (e.g., Wilson & Rule, 2015), there is some reason to believe that this might not occur. For instance, Bonafon, Hopfensitz, and De Neys (2013) found a disjunction between perceived trustworthiness and trust behavior in the trust game: Although people's decisions about whom to trust tended to be somewhat accurate, their explicit ratings of trustworthiness were not. Similar inconsistency between trust perceptions and trust decisions could therefore also occur here.

Moreover, given their role in both face processing and perceptions of culpability, we also examined whether any of Afrocentricity, attractiveness, or facial maturity might mediate the relationship between inmates' actual sentences and participants' naive sentencing decisions (Berry & Zebrowitz-McArthur, 1988; Blair, Judd, et al., 2004; Stewart, 1980). We used a mixed model approach that nested stimuli within participants while controlling for Afrocentricity, attractiveness, facial maturity, and trustworthiness to determine whether they might account for the relationship between the targets' actual and hypothetical sentences.

Method

Participants

We planned to recruit 80 U.S. participants from MTurk, providing more than 98% power to detect an effect the size of that observed in either Study 1 ($d = 0.81$) or Study 2 ($d = 0.63$) under the current design. Because of the high rate of participants in Study 2 giving uniform responses, we asked participants in the initial screening phase to not continue with the study if they would be unwilling to assign the death penalty to any targets to avoid attrition. Despite these instructions, 26 participants provided the same response for every target (22 giving all life sentences, 4 giving all death sentences), and so we continued to recruit participants until 80 participants (42 male, 38 female; $M_{\text{age}} = 34.0$ years, $SD = 10.3$) without uniform responses had completed the study.

Procedure

Using the same stimuli as in Study 1, we instructed the participants that they would view faces of people convicted of murder and would assign each a sentence of either *life without parole* or *death*, as we were interested in people's sentencing decisions

Table 1. Unstandardized Parameter Estimates and Goodness of Fit Tests for a Nested Taxonomy of Logistic Regression Models Predicting Hypothetical Sentencing Decisions (1 = *Death*, 0 = *Life*) in Study 3.

Predictor	Base Model		Trustworthiness Added		All Traits	
	B (SE)	95% CI	B (SE)	95% CI	B (SE)	95% CI
Intercept	-.56 (.20)**	-.95, -.18	-.52 (.18)**	[-.93, -.22]	-.57 (.18)**	[-.93, -.22]
Race	-.62 (.24)**	[-1.09, -.016]	-.50 (.18)**	[-.86, -.14]	-.50 (.19)**	[-.88, -.12]
Actual sentence	.40 (.19)*	[.03, .77]	.08 (.12)	[-.15, .31]	.11 (.12)	[-.12, .34]
Trustworthiness			-1.25 (.12)***	[-1.48, -1.02]	-1.24 (.13)***	[-1.49, -0.99]
Afrocentricity					.10 (.06)	[-.02, .21]
Attractiveness					.23 (.18)	[-.12, .58]
Maturity					.15 (.09)	[-.03, .33]
-2 LL	5,519.90		5,454.00		5,448.50	
Δ -2 LL			65.9***		5.5	

Note. Afrocentricity ratings normalized within race. CI = confidence interval.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

based on very little information. We presented targets individually in random order.

We also recruited three separate samples of 40 participants to provide ratings of Afrocentricity (normalized within target race), attractiveness, and facial maturity. We used targets' consensus (mean) ratings on these traits in the analyses (all inter-rater reliability Cronbach's $\alpha \geq .94$).

Results

We first tested whether targets' actual sentences (0.5 = *death*, -0.5 = *life*) predicted participants' hypothetical sentences (1 = *death*, 0 = *life*). Following Judd, Westfall, and Kenny's (2012) recommendations, we constructed a model with actual sentence as a fixed factor, hypothetical sentence as the outcome, and both participants and targets as random factors using an unstructured variance matrix, so that all possible random effect covariances were estimated. We additionally included target race as a fixed factor (0.5 = *Black*, -0.5 = *White*) to estimate its possible influence on sentence allocations and conducted a series of regression models with model fit comparisons to assess the explanatory value of adding the trait ratings (all mean centered).

Targets actually sentenced to death were more likely to receive hypothetical death sentences by our participants (see Table 1). Moreover, Black targets were less likely to be given hypothetical death sentences, suggesting that participants might have attempted to control their racial bias or appear unprejudiced (e.g., Olson & Fazio, 2004; Plant & Devine, 2009). The overall model fit improved when we added trustworthiness, with less trustworthy targets more likely to receive hypothetical death sentences, as predicted. In this model, actual sentence no longer significantly predicted hypothetical sentence (though the effect of target race remained significant). Adding Afrocentricity, attractiveness, and maturity did not result in a better-fitting model, as none predicted hypothetical sentences. Importantly, however, the effects of trustworthiness and target race remained significant.

Summary

The sentences that naive observers allocated to convicted murderers were similar to those that these murderers had actually received in court, even though these hypothetical sentences were rendered solely from facial information. Critically, the relationship between hypothetical and actual sentences became nonsignificant when controlling for targets' mean trustworthiness ratings from Study 1, whereas accounting for Afrocentricity, attractiveness, and facial maturity did not impact this relationship or explain additional variance. This suggests that trustworthiness uniquely accounted for the relationship between actual and hypothetical sentences, confirming our hypothesis.

These results notably extend the findings of Study 2 to a set of real capital sentencing decisions. Although it may not be particularly surprising that participants in Study 2 gave harsher punishments to untrustworthy-looking people when no other information was available, it is striking that this same tendency predicted sentences rendered by juries who ostensibly sat for hours or days learning the details of the crimes in question. This suggests that decision makers in the criminal justice system may be biased by the visual appearance of targets' faces; we discuss this further below.

General Discussion

Inferences about people's characteristics from their faces can influence their life outcomes in a variety of ways. Recent research found a correlation between perceptions of trustworthiness from convicted felons' faces and the sentences that they received in court (Wilson & Rule, 2015). Here, we replicated these results in a new sample with additional controls. More important, we accumulated evidence about the potential direction of the relationship between trustworthiness and sentence outcomes by finding that participants assigned harsher hypothetical sentences to untrustworthy-looking people. Trustworthiness furthermore proved to be a unique and critical

linking variable between participants' naive sentencing judgments and those actually delivered by well-informed jurors. These data therefore suggest that people who look untrustworthy may be punished more severely than is warranted or, depending upon one's perspective, that people who look trustworthy may not be punished enough.

Here, naive perceivers exposed to only the faces of convicted murderers chose sentences that correlated with the actual sentences that those criminals received in court. This serves as further evidence that legal decision making may be subject to the same biases that affect myriad other aspects of social perception. For example, just as facial appearance can impact electoral outcomes (Little, Burris, Jones, & Roberts, 2007; Rule et al., 2010; Todorov, Mandisodza, Goren, & Hall, 2005), leadership in business (Rule & Ambady, 2008), and decisions about peer-to-peer lending (Duarte, Siegel, & Young, 2012), it may also influence legal outcomes (Blair, Judd, et al., 2004; Eberhardt, Davies, Purdie-Vaughns, & Johnson, 2006; Zebrowitz & McDonald, 1991). Existing work has shown that people are more often judged guilty when their appearance matches the stereotype of the crime of which they are suspected (Dumas & Teste, 2006; Macrae & Shepherd, 1989; Zebrowitz & McDonald, 1991), and that untrustworthy-looking people are disadvantaged even when adjudicators consider the facts of a case (Porter et al., 2010). Notably, these results held above and beyond the possible influence of other facial traits linked to similar judgments and outcomes in previous work (i.e., Afrocentricity, attractiveness, and maturity). Although these traits are important for social perception, perhaps trustworthiness more effectively captures variability in appearance-based bias because it is so basic to the social perception of faces (Todorov, Said, Engell, & Oosterhof, 2008); future work could test this speculation.

Importantly, despite the naive nature of participants' judgments, we drew all of our participants from an Internet-based community of U.S. residents consisting of individuals who themselves could feasibly serve, have served, or may have even been serving on actual juries. The participation of average citizens in the judicial process is a cornerstone of the American legal system (Hans & Vidmar, 1986). Thus, the participants in our studies are not likely to differ from those rendering real decisions in court. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that the hypothetical decisions here corresponded to the actual sentences that targets received. Yet, it is considerable that their decisions were based on so much less information than they would be in court. Not unlike past studies showing the primacy of visual and facial information on inferences and judgments about other people (e.g., Blair, Chapleau, & Judd, 2005; Rule, Tskhay, Freeman, & Ambady, 2014), the present findings suggest that facial appearance can guide individuals' behavior even for very important (literally life-and-death) decisions.

Of course, one prominent question raised by this and similar work is whether individuals sentenced to death may be somehow more culpable than those receiving life sentences. Despite having committed the same crimes (here, first-degree murder), perhaps individuals sentenced to death were somehow more

heinous than those sentenced to life imprisonment and this manifests in their faces. Although possible, this is unlikely to fully explain the relationship between facial appearance and sentence outcomes. Most notably, Wilson and Rule (2015) found that even innocent individuals exonerated of their crimes were more likely to receive death sentences as a function of how (un)trustworthy they looked. Moreover, the relationship between looking trustworthy and behaving trustworthy is not strong (see Rule et al., 2013), eroding confidence in the possibility that one's face reflects his or her criminal culpability. Rather, the present data suggest that individuals are biased toward allocating harsher punishments to people who look untrustworthy—consistent with several past studies using economic games (e.g., Ewing et al., 2015). Thus, if juries deem individuals who receive the death penalty versus a life sentence as more villainous, it appears likely that such a conclusion may result from an inference made from their faces.

We hope that raising awareness of perceivers' susceptibility to facial trustworthiness can be a starting point in efforts to reduce its impact on such important outcomes. Some research in the legal domain, for example, has shown that racial bias can be reduced with proper knowledge and motivation. In one study, American judges showed implicit racial bias of similar or higher magnitude than typical participants did but were capable of compensating for that bias (Rachlinski, Johnson, Wistrich, & Guthrie, 2009). Thus, knowledge about trustworthiness-related bias could be an important tool for reducing its impact on important judgments like those investigated here (but see Blair, Judd, & Fallman, 2004, for possible limitations regarding the controllability of appearance-based biases).

Although the current work deals with one specific time point in the judicial process that begins with committing a crime and ends with executing a sentence, it contributes to a greater body of knowledge on how facial trustworthiness affects several steps along that path. For example, multiple studies have shown that trustworthiness can influence face memory (Rule et al., 2012) and eyewitness lineup selection (Flowe & Humphries, 2011), suggesting that the bias against untrustworthy-looking targets may begin at the point of entry into the criminal justice system. Such results highlight the need for better understanding how apparent trustworthiness impacts perceivers' thoughts and behaviors. The present findings add urgency to this need by contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of how trustworthiness operates in person judgments and by demonstrating that the consequences of perceiving someone as trustworthy or untrustworthy may be lethal.

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Notes

1. We did not have enough non-White participants in any of the present studies to test for participant race differences.
2. Aggregating ratings for each target and submitting these data to an independent samples *t*-test showed a similar difference, $t(64) = 2.11$, $p = .04$, $d = 0.52$.
3. To be comprehensive, we conducted a replication study with 40 participants in which we used every single person at Varner Unit sentenced to life without parole for capital murder as a control group ($n = 96$). We again found that participants rated Death Row inmates ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 0.86$) as significantly less trustworthy than individuals sentenced to life imprisonment ($M = 2.74$, $SD = 0.90$), $t(39) = 4.65$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.74$. This pattern also appeared when we aggregated participants' ratings and submitted the targets' mean trustworthiness ratings to an independent samples *t*-test, $t(127) = 2.06$, $p = .04$, $d = 0.42$.

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