

The View of Criminal Profiling by Laypeople, Law Enforcement, and Judges: Is it Helpful or
Harmful?

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ABSTRACT

Criminal profiling or criminal behavior analysis is a relatively new field that is still being expanded, so it needs to be critically examined. The public has been fed unrealistic information about profiling that has led them to want forensic evidence for most cases and this may affect their decisions on whether or not to convict an offender. Also, law enforcement and judges are more likely to having a different view than the public about criminal profiling. Judges and investigators are more likely to use a profile for helping narrow down suspects than to use it as evidence in court or to single out one individual responsible for the crime; which is how the public thinks profiles are used due to media portrayals. The media coverage has granted criminal profiling as interesting to the public, but it has also been shown that more research should be done to create legitimacy for the use of profiles in the court room and in investigations.

Keywords: criminal profiling, juries, law enforcement, validity, media

The View of Criminal Profiling by laypeople, law enforcement, and judges:

Is it helpful or harmful?

The field of Criminal Behavioral Analysis is a relatively new field that includes areas of study such as crime scene analysis and making criminal profiles based on behavioral details at a crime scene. The field gets criticized often because many people do not believe that it is legitimate and should not be used in courts, while others strongly oppose this view. The public view of criminal profiling is skewed from what law enforcement actually do, mostly due to media interpretations of what they believe profiling is, such as Criminal Minds. Officers that are not familiar with the area may take on a similar view as the public, but they may have more exposure than the public and oppose it as a legitimate means to help find a criminal.

Criminal profiling is defined as “inferring the traits of an individual responsible for committing criminal acts,” (Turvey, 2012, p. 655). Profiling is based on assumptions about the characteristics of an offender based on the crime scene evidence, the way the crime was committed, where it was committed (geographic profiling), and then an assumption about the offender’s personality is made that can also include what their background might have been. The information that the profilers base their knowledge on is statistics about what type of individuals commit certain crimes and how they do it, that means that criminal profiling is not always going to be accurate because the statistics are just looking at the averages. Therefore, some of the rarer cases a profiler would use their sense of what they think the offender is like and make an educated guess about the offender.

Some of the research clashes with the textbook on Criminal Profiling by Turvey, but that is due to the never ending updated methods for this new field and it is also due to the fact that

there is not one path to becoming a profiler or how to profile. The FBI used to use the Organized versus Disorganized offender when classifying offenders, but they do not use it anymore because it is inaccurate to assume that an offender falls in either category and not just on the middle. So many profilers that have not looked at new research may still be using that categorization which is wrong to help provide a profile, (Turvey, 2012). The FBI today primarily uses the CIA or Criminal Investigative Analysis as their approach to criminal profiling and little evidence has shown that this method is even reliable. There has been much criticism toward the FBI for using the CIA approach because the methods are not reliable and the practice is obsolete, they have to come up with or adopt a different approach that works better. In the late 1980's the FBI failed to get approval from the Justice Department to publish their findings in the government literature because their statistics and methodologies were concerning (Turvey, 2012, p. 80). Also, in 1995 a study was done and out of 192 cases that had a criminal profile done, only 15 of them proved useful to help catch a suspect, therefore the FBI puts a warning with the profile that it should only be used as an investigative tool since they profile is not necessarily reliable. In many cases the profiles have been missing: "lack of reliability, uncritical reliance upon law enforcement theories, and opinions as facts, failure to compare profiles with actual offenders when outcomes are known, failure to be forthcoming about the weaknesses of opinions and conclusions," (Turvey, 2012). All of the information points to the conclusion that there needs to be a new method and more research done to make even the professionals believe that criminal profiling is legitimate and reliable practice that is worthwhile to use.

Some federal law enforcement agencies, are more likely to understand and accept the use of profiling because it was developed mostly in the FBI in the 1970s. Before the 1970's some individuals had started researching ideas dealing with criminal profiling and some even making

criminal profiles before it was even a field or thought about, such as: a psychiatrist by the name of James A. Brussels in the 1940's and 50's, Dr. and Dr. Hans Gross in the mid 1800's, and a few others that made a contribution to the field of criminal profiling. However, even with some other people looking into the field of criminal profiling before its time does not mean that law enforcement approves of profiling's use, due to the fact that it sometimes leads them away from their suspect because they did not match their profile.

Despite criticisms the FBI has been the pushing factor for criminal profiling to be a forensic science field and a valid means of narrowing down suspects. One man named Howard Teten that was a police officer in California talked with many influential individuals that were tied into the criminal profiling, like Dr. Brussels. before he was a special agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In 1970 Mr. Teten started teaching and making some of the first criminal profiling classes and profiles. Then Pat Mullany joined the team to help give abnormal psychology connections as needed in criminal profiles so that the behaviors could be classified as abnormal and be proven by the evidence from the crime. More FBI resources were added to develop criminal profiling because the pair taught all over the country, did research in their spare time, and provided some criminal profiles to law enforcement agencies that asked for the. Once some of the investigations had been aided by the FBI's criminal profiles more law enforcement departments were asking more frequently to be provided with a criminal profile in the mid 1970's, after the creation of the Behavioral Science Unit, BSU, in the FBI in 1972 (Turvey, 2012).

Unfortunately, in the early 2000's the FBI was split between the personnel that was doing research and teaching and the portion that was putting together evidence for actual cases, the two opposing sides did not want to work with each other. The Behavioral Analysis Unit, BAU, was

created and separated from the BSU so that the research/teaching aspect was the BSU and the BAU help law enforcement which may be seen in some of the older techniques that do not work as well as they should for the amount of time there has been to do research, (Turvey, 2012). Maybe if the rift had not happened and there was more communication between the two parts of the field there would be more research on the actual validity and answers as to how to improve the field. Ignoring the problem would be to possibly condemn the future of criminal profiling, if a better method that universally accepted comes then maybe more people will believe in the field's validity.

Luckily for the field some individuals saw the usefulness of the practice and created the Academy of Behavioral Profiling, ABP, to include a standard method of testing, ethics, and guidelines on how to practice. There is progress to get the field professional and everyone with the same knowledge and skills to improve the validity. Therefore, all profilers should use the same methods and not be relying on "gut" instinct, which will help their public appearance as a valuable tool. However, the general knowledge exam is only for the organization and not for the entire community to become legitimate profilers, so there is still more to do before the field is practicing uniformly (Turvey, 2012).

The public, laypeople, believe that criminal profiling is something that is very cool and exciting and that it can be extremely useful and accurate. Laypeople may watch shows such as *Criminal Minds*, *CSI*, *Mindhunters*, and *Silence of the Lambs* and it can potentially be harmful when they get called in for jury duty. According to Roberts (2017), the CSI Effect is when American people serving on juries expect more forensic evidence to convict a criminal due to them watching television shows about forensic science and the belief is usually held by criminal investigators and legal professions. The problem with television portrayals of forensic science is

that advanced technology that is very expensive and criminal profilers can put together all the evidence quickly to solve the crime. However, the portrayal is highly inaccurate and gives the public the belief that understanding behavioral evidence is easy and is almost never misleading. In *Criminal Minds* the team always gets the offender by the end of the show by using their criminal profile, but they also use hunches that are not scientific. The whole teams of profilers go through from start to finish profiling and then catching the offender, but in reality they are only given the information by other law enforcement that they sort through. Also, profilers give their professional observations to help the investigators. The tv shows do tell of the profilers using their “gut” instincts to profile an offender, which is supported by Wafler and Shaw (2011) that said, “a significant concern has also been raised regarding the subjective nature of profile construction, which often relies heavily on personal experience and “common sense,” rather than scientifically backed methods.” Other reasons for public misconception can be that the police do not release any information about the accuracy of the profiles when they are used. That means that the public is only getting their facts from the media and a small fraction will look at actual research, but even then the data does not point in a clear path of whether or not criminal profiling is a valid tactic to use.

For law enforcement they may accept profiling to some extent because there have been successful cases like the “Mad Bomber” in NY that have used a profile to aid in the arrest of the perpetrator, but there also others such as the DC sniper case that lead the police in the wrong direction, (Wafler & Shaw, 2011). The “Beltway Sniper” in Washington D.C. was an example of when criminal profiling went wrong. The profile suggested that there was one perpetrator that was a white male that was a disgruntled worker, and likely in a white panel van. However, during the investigation the two males that committed the crime were pulled over before another

attack, but then let go since they did not match the profile, (MacMillan, 2017). The actual perpetrator of the crime were two African American men. One man was in his forties and the other was a teenager, unlike the 20 or 30-year-old the police were looking for. Also, the men were driving a blue car not a white van. The Beltway Sniper is an example of when criminal profiling was not done by trained professionals and should not represent the entire field, however when there are different ways to become a profiler sometimes there may be mistakes that would not be done by trained FBI professionals. Jack Levin was a professor from Northeastern University that had written about criminal profiling who was not necessarily a criminal profiler like many others that wanted to be seen as helping on the case popped up to provide a specific suspect. In their rush to use media information and also statistics such as most serial killers have been white they sent the public and others looking in the wrong direction. Some of them justify it by saying it helped the public by knowing the type of person to be on the lookout for, but is harmful to the field of criminal profiling (Turvey, 2012). Also, there are cases that the misconception about criminal profiling makes the profile fail or prolong the case, the misconception is that the “main purpose is to achieve a static, inflexible result, not unlike a clinical diagnosis,” (Turvey, 2012, p. 125). Turvey continues to write that the result of criminal profiles are thought to point at the exact who had committed the crime or crimes, which is not the case when using the Behavioral Evidence Analysis to profile. There are many goals of criminal profiling, but pointing exactly at one person is not it. However, the profile should narrow down the suspects.

The other example of when the profile was right is the case of the Mad Bomber that after it was solved with the aid of the profile it helped to bring profiling to the attention of the FBI. The case of the “Mad Bomber” thirty-two bombs were set off around New York City and a

psychiatrist Dr. Brussels created an accurate profile using crime photos and letters sent to police from the bomber, (MacMillan, 2017). The perpetrator was single, living with a sibling, religious, and other characteristics were given that helped identify the man because most of them were accurate. After that case the FBI started investigating the techniques and what is used today is the result of the research that was done in the FBI back then.

Law enforcement agencies have admitted that criminal profiling is useful to investigations, but they see that its usefulness is limited. One major problem that seems to be pointed out is the sample that the FBI used to create the typologies, they are a biased sample. All the participants were willing, convicted criminals that were never going to get out of jail, white, male, serial killers, and a very small sample, (Godwin, 2002). That means the typologies are based on potentially unreliable sample and it leaves out the fact that there are many outliers when it comes to murderers. Murderers are the deviant part of the population so they may have some similarities to other murderers, but are still unique individuals that

Most studies have indicated that most profilers are people who work in the FBI's Behavioral Analysis Unit because they can be asked by other state and local level law enforcement for a consultation, (Snook, Haines, & Taylor 2007). There are also retired FBI agents that profile and the FBI seem to be the most consistent and reliable profilers, but there are private profilers that can be contracted. However, private profilers cost thousands of dollars that many police departments do not have to solve one case. Therefore, many offices do not use profiles on any cases, unless they have an unusually difficult case and are able to get help from the FBI, (Young, 2006). This shows that profiling is limited and is not used as often as the public thinks, but most law enforcement would acknowledge the reality that profiles are helpful tool to investigate. Law enforcement does not have an exaggerated view of profiling and they may even

use a diluted form of it in investigations already, but it has never been the one piece of evidence that ties the whole case together and points out one suspect that is guilty.

In addition, about 40% of forensic psychology and psychiatry professionals thought that criminal profiling was developed enough to be valid and reliable, (Torres, 2006). The study has shown that professionals close to the field know about the practices and endorsed it even with the lack of scientific evidence, but only as an investigative tool. However, they do not support its use as a tool for investigating and research, (Torres, Boccaccini, & Miller, 2006). According to Torres et al., (2006) if more research is conducted and a more stable guide to make a criminal profile was made then there would be more professionals that would support its use.

Many people including judges may endorse profiling if it is called another name like, criminal investigative analysis, but there are many other names for it. Since there are many names it is hard to get a complete picture of what type of legal professionals' support criminal profiling. Although the majority of research points to the conclusion that there is a split in the law enforcement community. Many believe that it is another helpful tool and if not used it could make the investigations take longer. While others believe that using a profile could be misleading, used inappropriately by taking things out of context.

Judges also vary on opinion to allow criminal profiles to be admitted as evidence in a trial. Some believe that profiles are relevant and have enough legitimacy to help convict an offender, but others do not believe that the practice is not reliable enough or based in science enough to allow it in court. Criminal profiles are seen by most judges to be irrelevant to court cases because they assume that since a person has some characteristics that match those of other serial killers or criminals that it makes them guilty. However, many cases have proven that it is not the case because they could be some unlucky person that seemed to match many of the

characteristics, but not be a criminal. According to *Criminal Profiling*, Collin Stagg seemed to fit the profile, but there was no evidence that he had committed the murder that he was accused. If the Mr. Stagg's had gone to court solely based on characteristics that he had that matched the offender and if he did not have an alibi he might have gone to jail. The profiler tried to get him to confess to the murder using an undercover detective that fed him details or pretended to like extremely hardcore sexual fantasies, but luckily was told this went way out of hand by a judge and that Stagg's was not guilty of the crime. However, they already dragged the guy's name through the mud by insinuating he was the murder solely based on similar characteristics he had to the offender. Therefore, criminal profilers have made relevant analysis that can be used in court such as: motivational analysis because if the person has a reason for committing a crime it may be more likely to be the suspect than someone who has no apparent motivation and, linkage analysis because if the person committed multiple crimes sometimes they leave behind evidence or characteristics that are the same to the multiple crime, like their signature or MO. The linkage analysis takes an already known offender that is guilty of a crime and outing them at the scene of another crime, the analysis is useful in court, but not necessarily in an investigation (Turvey, 2012). Some judges or prosecutors may have a negative view of profiling due to the jury wanting the evidence even in meniscal cases, such as a case that has eyewitnesses. It requires the prosecutors or judges to add an extra role to their job, which is to explain to the jury why forensic evidence such as profiles is not needed in certain cases. Although the one study did not find a relationship between the people watching CSI and other forensic science shows and them not convicting due to lack of or little forensic evidence, (Roberts, 2017).

There have been many rulings on what can and cannot be allowed into court, but it seems it is up to judges to only allow evidence that is based upon reliable methods. There has been

debate about what type of evidence should be allowed in, but in 17 cases in the United States that has used criminal profiles or parts of it in the trial the cases be retried and the evidence was not allowed to be used the second time in the appeals process (Kocsis, 2007). The courts still are dealing with how to handle the new type of evidence in court because some of the pieces are legitimate techniques, while other are still too unreliable to be admissible in court because they could be too influential over the people of the court. The courts are having a harder time deciding what to do about the new type of evidence because it is not backed by science or at least not like DNA evidence since criminal profiling is more theoretical. Judges cannot find a clear answer to whether or not a trial would be fair if the new type of evidence was allowed in court, they would not want to send an innocent person to prison or let a guilty on free because they allowed a new unproven form of evidence in the court. Many judges shy away from allowing criminal profiles because then they have to decide what is admissible, be strict, do extensive research to know what part of criminal profiles are more valid, only allow certain parts in, and make sure that no biased information gets admitted. It seems complicated and many times the judges are not going to want to deal with the hassle of trying to figure out whether or not the field is reliable, based on peer reviewed journals and other academic sources. Also, most judges probably do not want to set a precedent about criminal profiling because the researcher is not behind the method as it is with other types of witness testimony. Plus, if they were wrong and then all the cases they ever tried using criminal profiling would have to be retried. However, criminal profiling is a relatively new field, only being around for about 50 years so far, so there is not much information about the reliability and criminal profilers as expert testimony has not been empirically shown to be better than an average person. Therefore, the information provided by them should not be allowed in court is what some states courts have declared.

Many judges have to dismiss criminal profiles because they are just educated guesses and the expert testimony by the profiler can point directly at a suspect, but that suspect can be innocent even though the person fits the stereotype or typical background and characteristics of the average criminal type. Just because someone can fit into the type of offender found through the profile does not mean that the profile is one hundred percent accurate all the time. Most judges know about the CSI effect and probably see that if criminal profiles were presented in court by a professional profiler than the jury would be highly swayed to side with the profile due to what the public's unrealistic views of how accurate criminal profiles were. Therefore, even if other very contradictory evidence was shown the jury may still be convinced by the profile and wrongly convict an innocent person because of their media bias.

Since criminal profiling cannot be tested for validity because there is not a scale or test to determine validity. It is hard to know whether criminal profiling is worth using at all or if more research can make it a more legitimate tool to capture criminal offenders. This may make it more legitimate and then it may be more widely used in courts and law offices to catch criminals. Criminal profiles cannot be legitimized if the way to become a profiler is variable which means that there is not a common shared curriculum so that everyone has similar standard profiling skills. Some individuals have training from the FBI in Quantico, Virginia, while others have master's degrees or doctorate degrees, (Roufa, 2017).

A way to improve the way criminal profiling is done may be to use another type of method. An alternative method that is not nomothetic, which means that they are not general assumptions made by profilers about suspects using approaches such as CIA, are idiographic. Idiographic methods of profiling do not use statistics about serial killers, but known facts about the offender based on information from the case or cases that allow the profiler to make a profile

that is concrete and describes the offender that committed the crime, not what the offender might be like. An example of idiographic offender profiles is the BEA or the Behavioral Evidence Analysis which would be a better option for profiling than the current method used now. Research needs to be done on the method to understand the best way to implement it, but it seems a better alternative to the CIA approach that is based more on statistics and predictions than actual reliable facts.

The BEA approach uses at least three types of evidence to gain a conclusive profile: the crime scene analysis (which is when the characteristics about the crime are evaluated), forensic analysis (the actual physical evidence is tested and analyzed before it goes to the profiler for examination), and forensic victimology (is when the investigators look at the victim to address their and other's questions), (Turvey, 2012). However, there is not a concrete answer of the exact person that committed the crime ever when someone is profiling, it is merely to narrow down the potential suspects and be used as an investigative aid. This alternative approach is more reliable and is based on scientific methods which is lacking in the current system; if criminal profilers were to use the BEA style then they may be given more credibility by the criminal justice and judicial fields to gain access to more wide spread use around the country. It could potentially reduce the amount of unsolved crime and get crimes solved more quickly if professionals believed in the use of criminal profiles.

In conclusion, the general public may be misled by the media portrayal. Also, a negative effect might be seen by a small percentage of people that go into the forensic psychology field to become a profiler, but end up finding out that criminal profiling is not as exciting and action packed as it is in the television shows. Law enforcement and judges have divided opinions on the admissibility of criminal profiles. The jury bias on profiling due to media has been a key

component that has turned criminal profiling into a negative instead of bettering the field it has made it worse. Individuals keep using it even with its flaws because the media has made the topic extremely interesting, which has created a problem that is keep using the old broken system because the public likes it. One thing is certain that more research needs to be done to understand the validity, reliability, and perceptions of profiling in the legal community. The field is lacking the right amount of leadership and guidance that will allow the field to progress toward new techniques. It is time to move away from the 1970's version and combine all the research into one location instead of scattered information across the field. There needs to be a change to organize the field of criminal profiling, so that everyone is using the same terminology not fifty different names for criminal profiling.

In my future research at OSU-Stillwater I want to survey at least 100 undergraduate students to understand their perceptions on criminal profiling. The research has not shown what the public thinks of criminal profiling besides some views from news articles, but those are hardly reliable for the general population and are generally tainted by biases. The first question would be if the individual knows anything about criminal profiling and the source of their knowledge. Which could be used to see if something like the CSI effect was happening to college students, that maybe they think criminal profiling is widely used and often by the FBI everyday on cases. The question could also help to identify if an individual's source of information is credible, if it is based off of television, news, or even some other type of media then it is most likely an unreliable sources and they may have many misconceptions about criminal profiling or it could be based off of material presented in Dr. Thrasher's Criminal Behavioral Analysis class and the Criminal Profiling textbook, or other research material that is a credible source of information. More than likely the participants' exposure to criminal profiling

is going to be from some sort of media because the amount of coverage for factual criminal profiling is limited due to the relatively new field that still needs development. The individuals that are the most knowledgeable now are probably going to be the individuals that are closest to the field such as the criminal profilers themselves and their relatives, but not the general public because the information is still tangled with inaccurate information.

Also, it would be helpful to understand what type of misconception participants would have such as: criminal profiles being highly reliable at pinpointing suspects and knowing exactly who committed a crime, or that the FBI has highly advanced technology that allows them to have an analyst input characteristics about an offender, especially traumatic childhood events, and find a small list of suspects that fit the profile. It would help the profiling field to know what their perception is by the general public so that they can try to educate and make a more accurate picture of the profession. In addition, some individuals might be less likely to enter into a field that is not all that they expected it to be due to media portrayals of what a criminal profiler does and does not do. Most profilers do not go out into the field, but almost all of the media shows the exact opposite, so it can be confusing understanding exactly what is real and what is fiction. In addition, many profilers are not full time, they have other jobs and work as a profiler part time, but not many sources tell the public that. This will help make the field more credible with the public, which will come from the profession doing more research and finding the methods that do work, possibly the BEA method. In turn law enforcement will use criminal profilers more often and judges will be able to allow case linkage and motivational analysis, maybe not criminal profiles because they do not necessarily mean guilt from characteristics, but it will still be useful and admissible in court. Which might make the field more legitimate since courts will be

deeming some parts criminal profiling practices as reliable and valid enough to stand up in court, which will earn the field respect and legitimacy.

Other questions for the participants would be if they were a judge would they allow criminal profiles in the courtroom and why. If these answers could be given by law enforcement or judges it would be a good reflection for the field to look at to understand if they are on the right path, but most likely the field might wonder at least if they should be trying to change for the better of crime investigation. Would more criminal offenders be caught if there was a different type of criminal profiling practice in use today or would the offenders be caught more quickly to decrease the amount of harm done to a community? Some of those questions could be answered by doing a survey of judges, profilers, and law enforcement, however some of those individuals will have to be surveyed in a future study. However, the questions would be the opinion of the public based on their knowledge of criminal profiling.

If the study permits me I want to compare the views of law enforcement and the views of the public to see if one has more accurate knowledge of the field. It would help to understand if everyone is confused about the reality of the criminal profiling or if media impacts the general public more than the law enforcement or vice versa. No matter how either group perceives the field, the study should show what the biggest misconception is and to try to teach people using uncomplicated methods that are standard. Trying to eliminate some of the misinformation about the field should be a future task for criminal profilers by using concrete methods, language, and being a centralized filed instead of scattered about in the BSU and BAU. Then everyone will know where to find accurate facts about the reliability, validity, what the criminal profiling is, and other information about the field.

Results

The study surveyed 26 individuals with the mean age being 28.79 years and 80.8% having at least some college. The subjects were personal contacts: friends, relatives, that were asked to take a survey either via email or phone using a set script, which can be found in the index section.

None of the participants had any law enforcement or criminal justice background. 92.3% had heard of criminal profiling and out of them 73% heard of criminal profiling through media or entertainment. Only 1 person that has just a high school diploma and 1 person who has a Bachelor's degree have heard of criminal profiling from school. A majority, 57.7% think that a profiler might be able to create a profile from seeing only the crime scene. 15.4% have had some college, watched criminal profiling television shows or movies, and have thought that criminal profilers should be able to make a profile from seeing only the crime scene. In addition, 76.9% believe that criminal profiles are used often by the police. While only 38.5% believe that courts use profiles to determine guilt, however, 80% of those participants had at least some college education. When comparing the responses from two questions, 38.9% of participants who watched criminal profiling entertainment thought profiles were used in court to determine guilt, while only 33.3% that did not watch that type of entertainment thought a profile was used for guilt; $P = 0.8102$. 80.8% participants responded that they thought the media uses profiles to identify an unknown or unidentified criminal. With courts only two participants thought more research should be done before profiles were used in court and only seven others were unsure about whether or not more research should be done. Also, half of the total participants that said more research needs to be done were participants that watched criminal profiling related entertainment. Seven participants were on the fence on thinking whether criminal profiling was

the same as racial profiling and one participant thought that the two were the same. 65.4% answered that criminal profiles are used in court and 33.3% that responded courts use profiles denied that profiles are used to determine guilt. 7.7% of participants believe that a profile can be made in one day and those participants had watched criminal profiling entertainment. When asked what the purpose of a criminal profile was, the majority, 18 participants, responded that it was to narrow down the suspects for a crime. However, seven participants responded that profiles were to identify potential criminals and one responded that determine the person responsible for a crime. Four of the seven and the one person that answered profiles were used for identifying potential criminals and determining the person responsible all had watched profiling entertainment. Of all participants 69.2% had watched “Criminal Minds”, “The Bone Collector,” “MindHunter,” or some other type of criminal profiling entertainment.

Discussion

The results of the study were inconclusive because there were mixed results. The majority of participants had heard of criminal profiling from the media or other entertainment. In addition, the majority had watched some type of profiling entertainment, about 70% which shows that many participants gained some of their knowledge about profiling through television. Also, only 2 participants with different education backgrounds had heard of criminal profiling from school and the majority of the other participants hearing of it from the media, then that also supports that most of the participants’ knowledge comes from media. The concerning statistic is not that 57.7% of participants thought that a profile can be made from seeing only the crime scene, but that 15.4% had went to college, that had watched profiling media, and thought profiles could be completed by seeing only crime scenes. People who have had further education about how to gather information that is accurate to base decisions on and they base their knowledge of

criminal profiling on facts not television shows. If college educated participants based their knowledge profiling on media than the chance of people with less education would be more likely to base their knowledge on media than from research. Other evidence that supports media influence, is that 38.9% watched profiling media and thought profiles can be used in court to prove guilt, while only 33.3% that did not watch and agreed. With the difference having a significant level of 0.8102 there is some weight to support that media negatively effects laypeople. Since, criminal profiles are not used to prove guilt any juror that thought that due to media could be influenced their decision. Instead of adding proving guilt the profile is supposed to be used as supporting evidence as that a person is the perpetrator. However, people were aware that the media portrays unknown perpetrators so they are aware, but if they know it is incorrect to use it to convict someone on. Also, there are several misleading media information that profiles can be put together in a day or even a few days or that a profile can determine the person responsible for a crime or to find potential criminals. The study shows that for people serving on juries there should be a short discussion about the use of criminal profiling and forensic evidence before a juror is selected to try to reduce verdict decisions that are based on bias for the use of criminal profiles or forensic evidence.

There are some limitations due to the small sample size. To make a more inclusive study a future study should use a larger sample size with law enforcement and judges. The participants may be more educated than the general population so a random sample would be more representative. Also, having data from law enforcement and judges could give a more clear picture to understand if criminal profiling is harmful to use with a jury trial.

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Index

Survey Script:

Hello, I am an undergraduate student working on my thesis and I would like to invite you to participate in my study. The study consists of a brief 5-10 minute survey about your knowledge and opinion of forensic psychology. The survey is voluntary and you can stop the survey at any point. Thank you for your time!

Data Analysis:

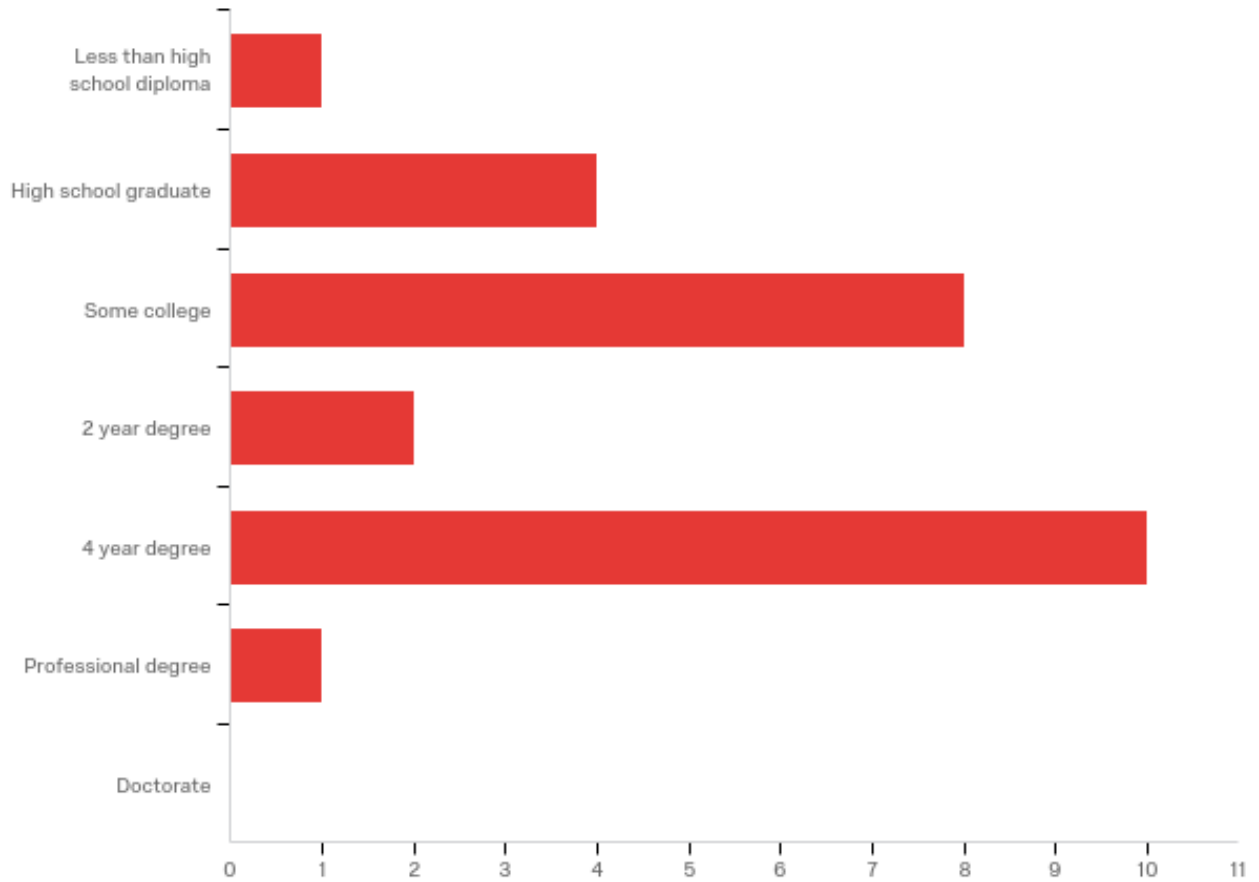
Default Report

Forensic Psychology Thesis

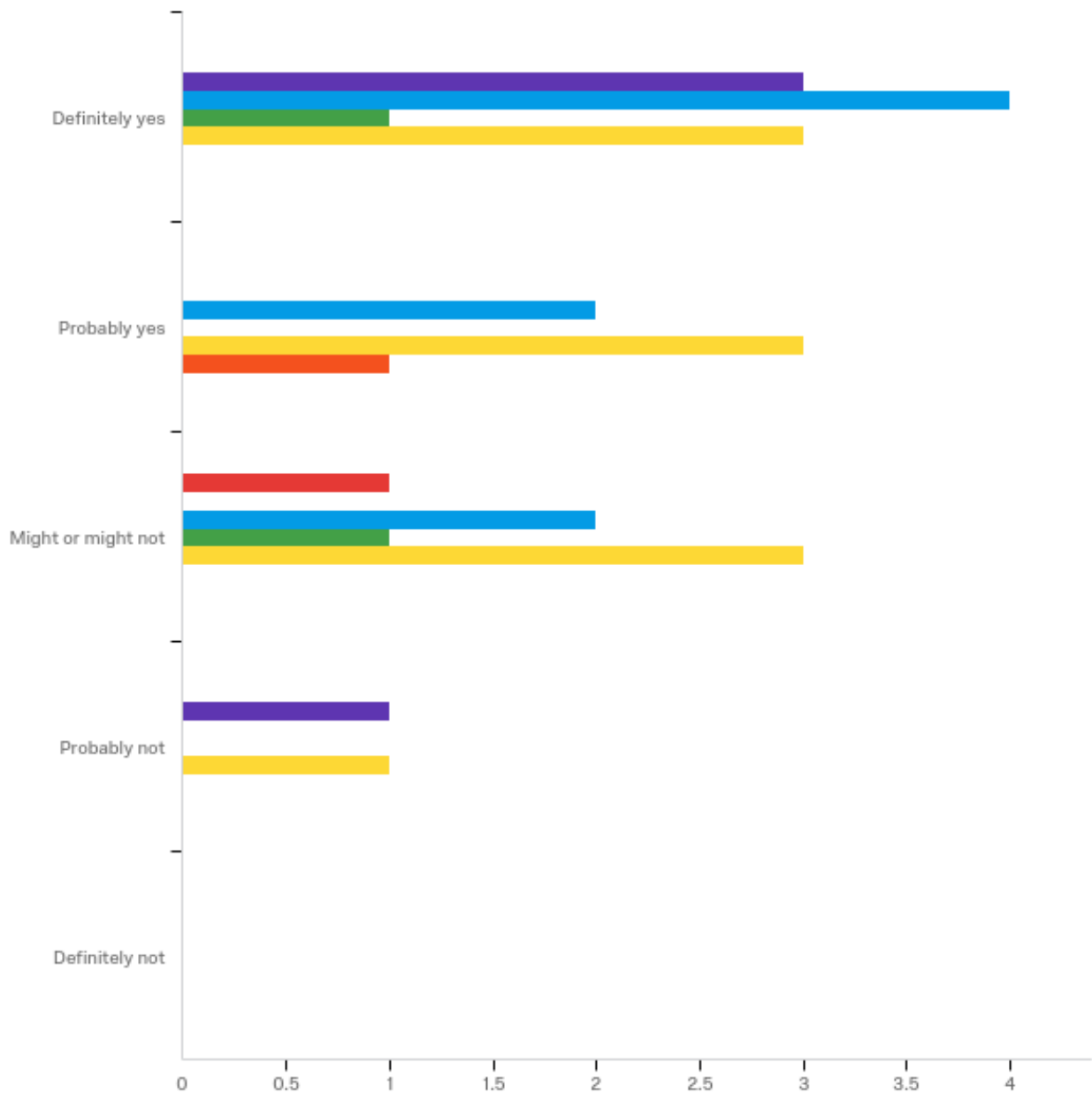
Q3 - Enter your age

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Enter your age	20.00	62.00	28.79	12.06	145.33	24

Q4 - What is your current level of education?



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Less than high school diploma	3.85%	1
2	High school graduate	15.38%	4
3	Some college	30.77%	8
4	2 year degree	7.69%	2
5	4 year degree	38.46%	10
6	Professional degree	3.85%	1
7	Doctorate	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	26



Do you think profiles are used by courts to determine guilt compared to education level.

Key:

Red = less than high school diploma

Purple = high school graduate

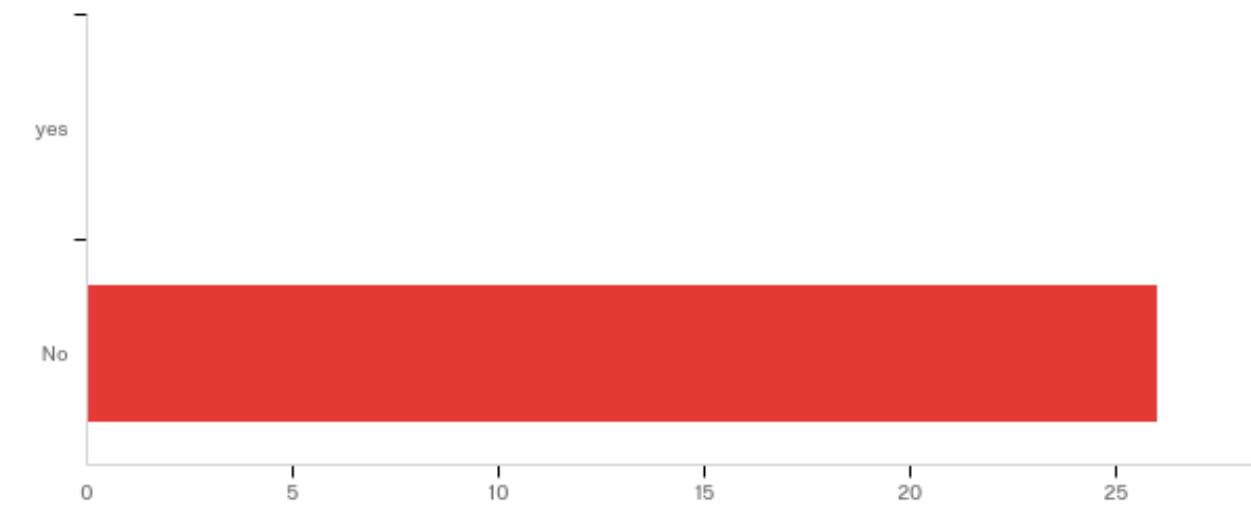
Blue = some college

Green = 2-year degree

Yellow = 4-year degree

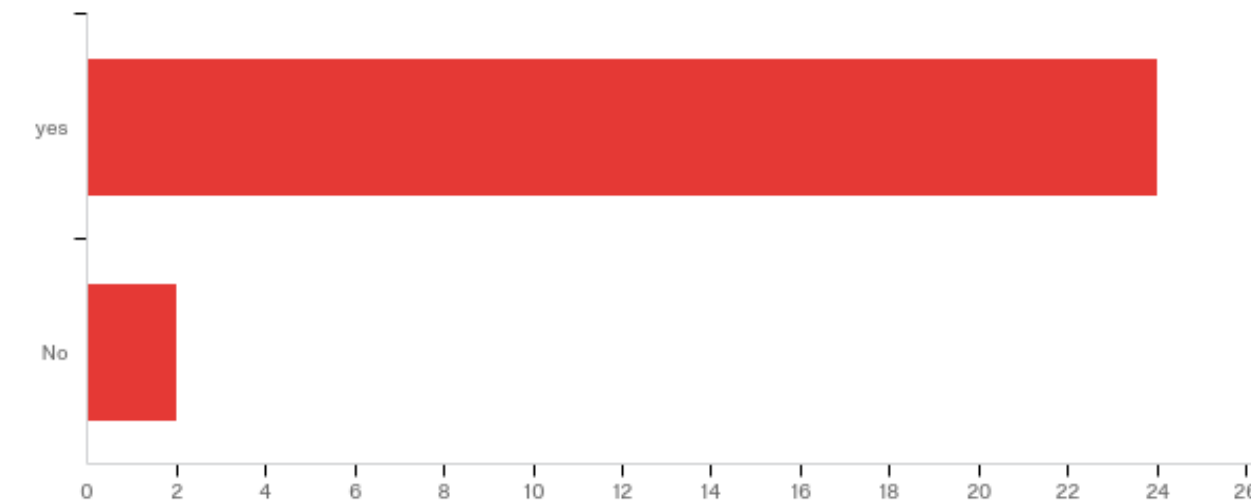
Orange = professional degree

Q5 - Do you have a background in law enforcement or criminal justice?

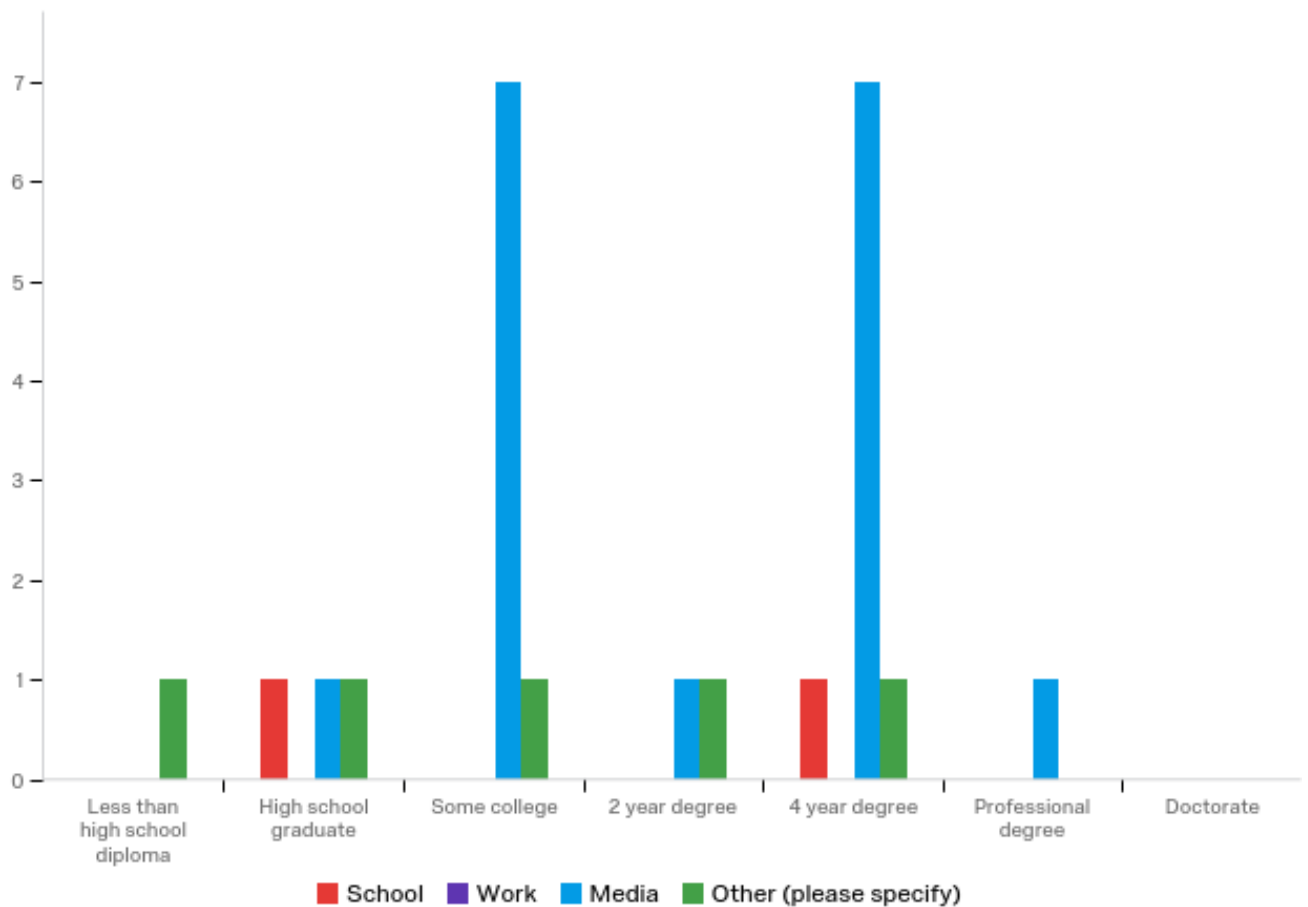
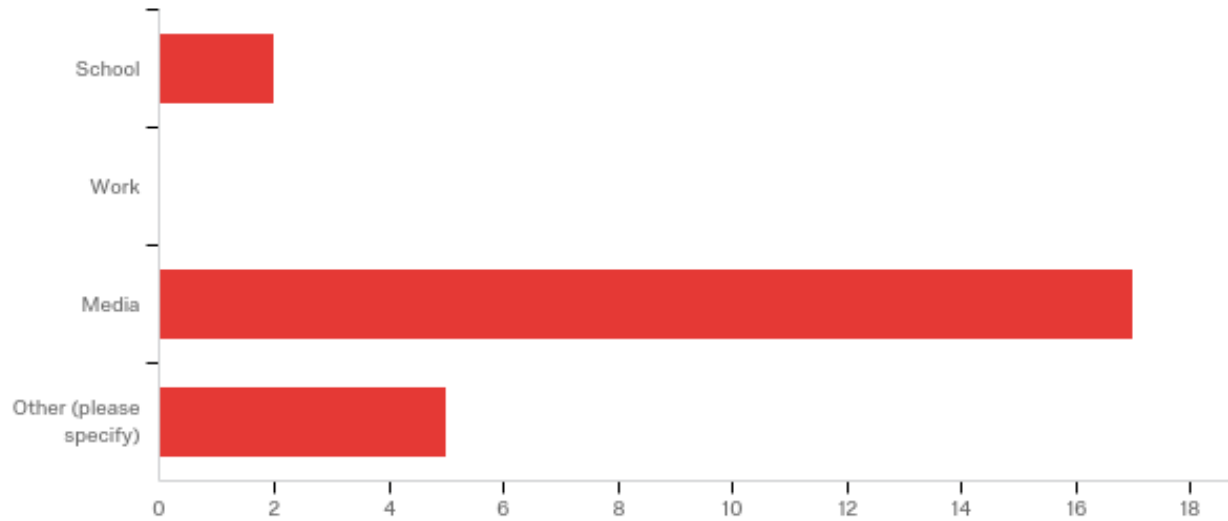


#	Answer	%	Count
1	yes	0.00%	0
2	No	100.00%	26
	Total	100%	26

Q6 - Have you heard of criminal profiling?



#	Answer	%	Count
1	yes	92.31%	24
2	No	7.69%	2
	Total	100%	26

Q7 - What context did you hear of criminal profiling?

Q7 compared to education level

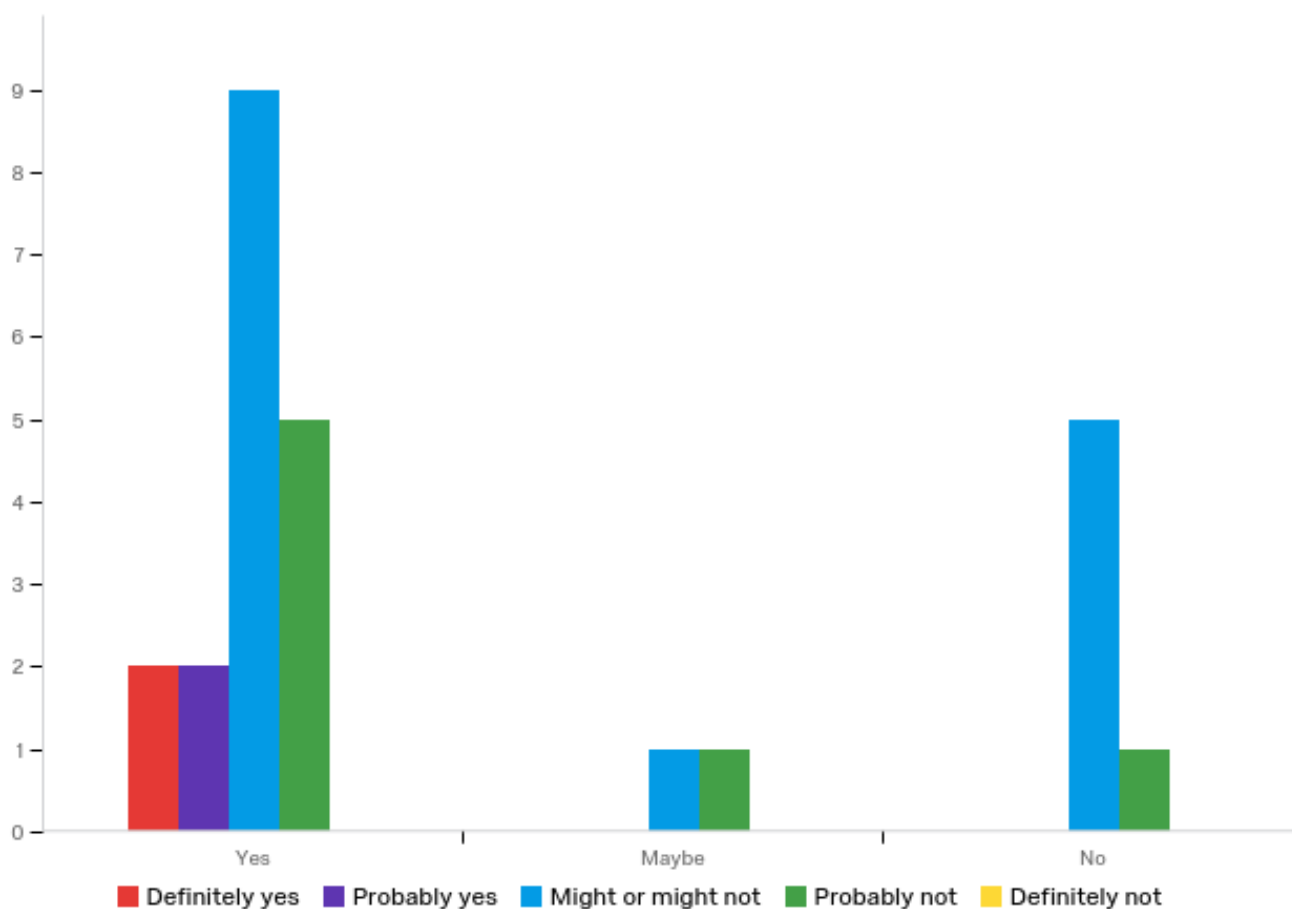
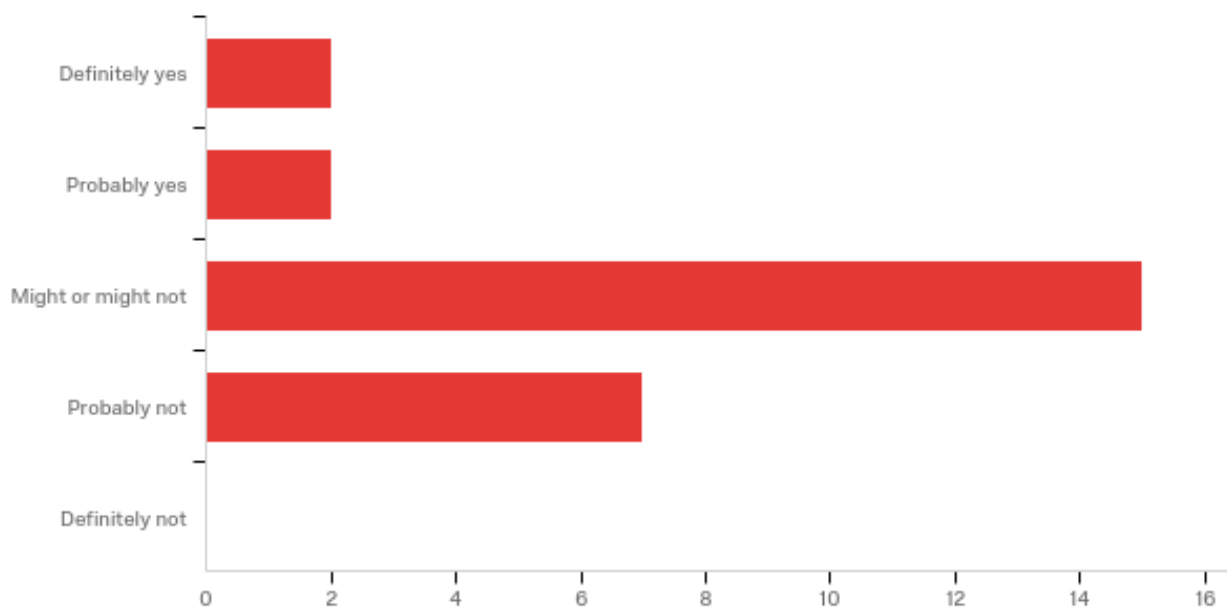
Other (please specify) - Text

news

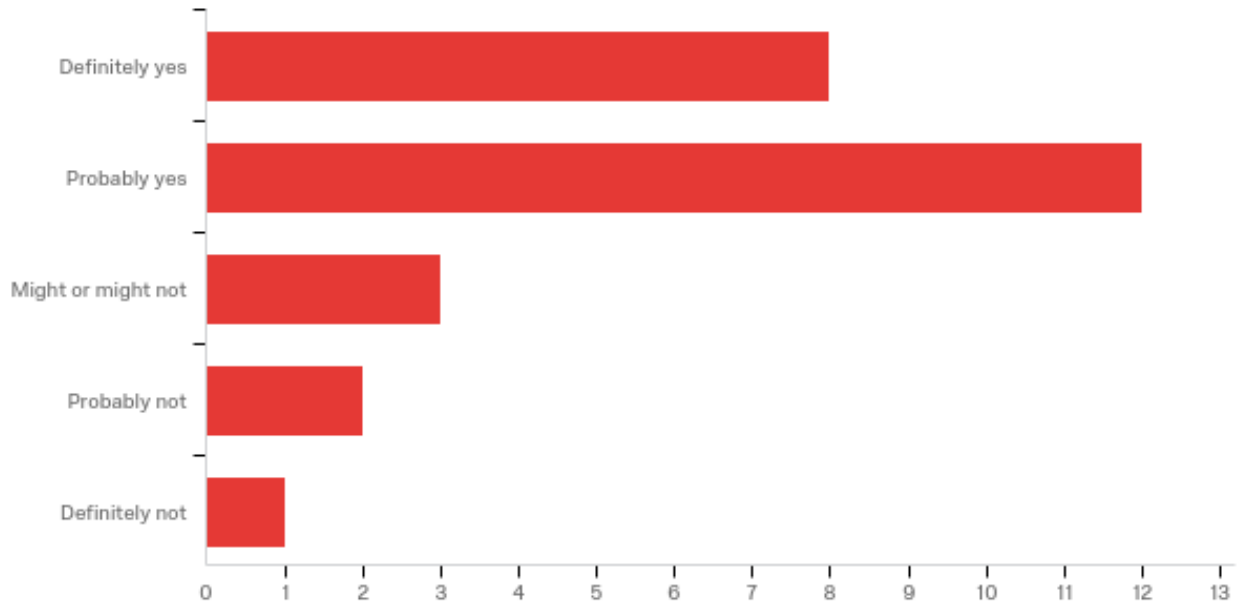
Family member

Television Show

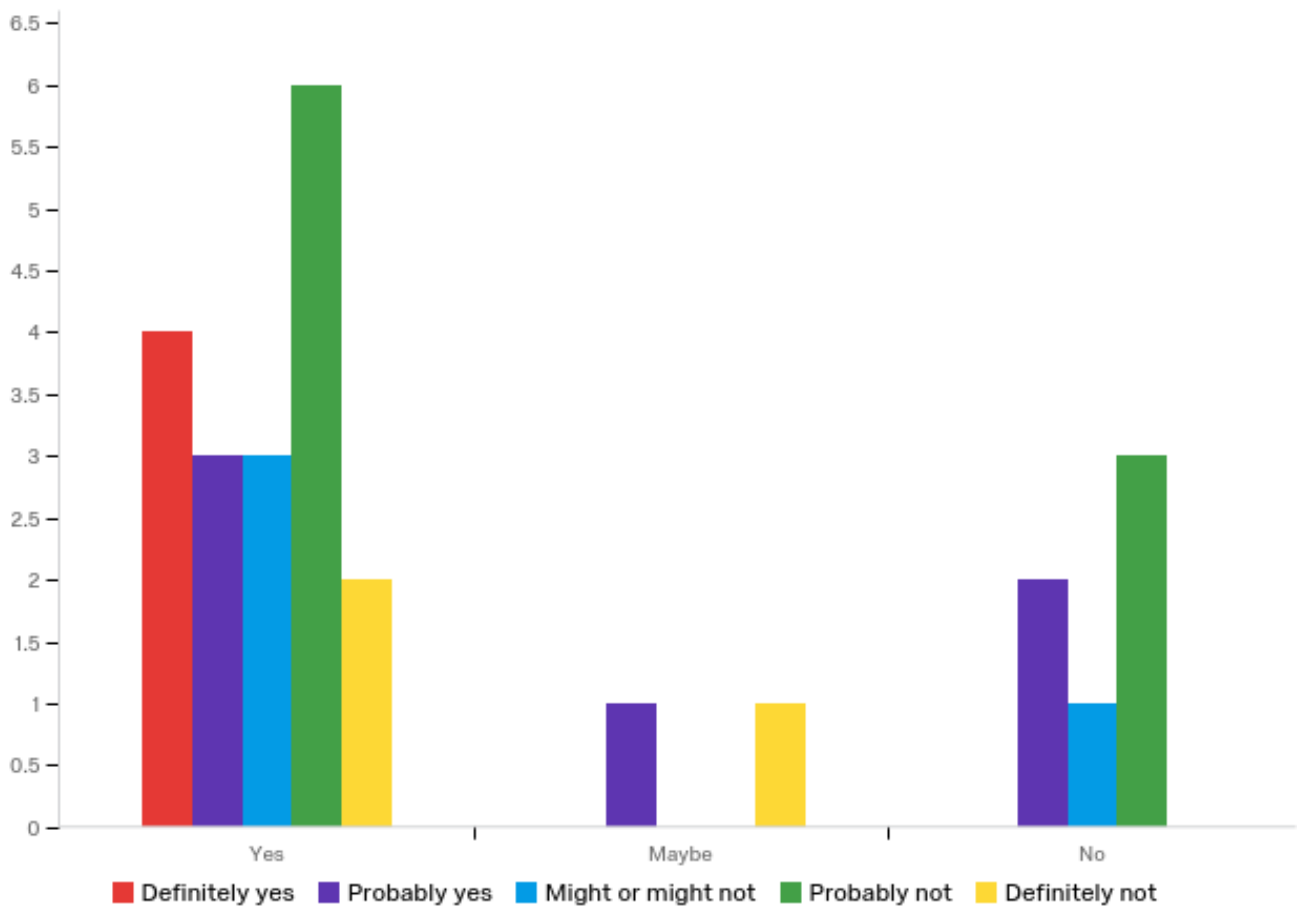
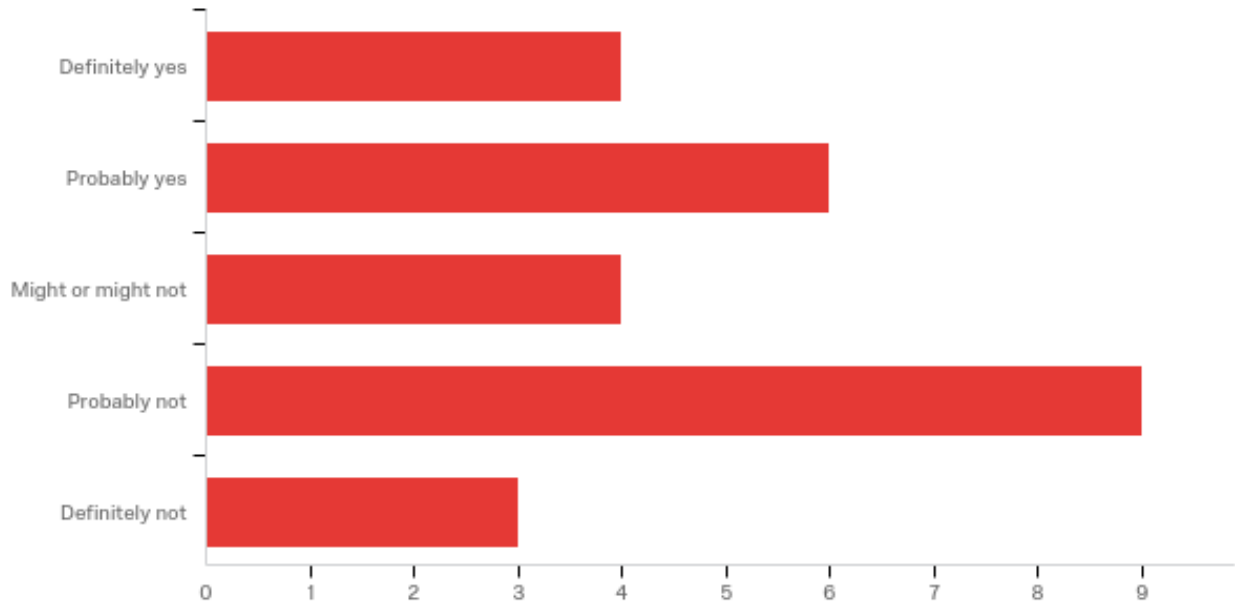
Q8 - Do you think a professional profiler can determine a profile from only seeing a crime scene?



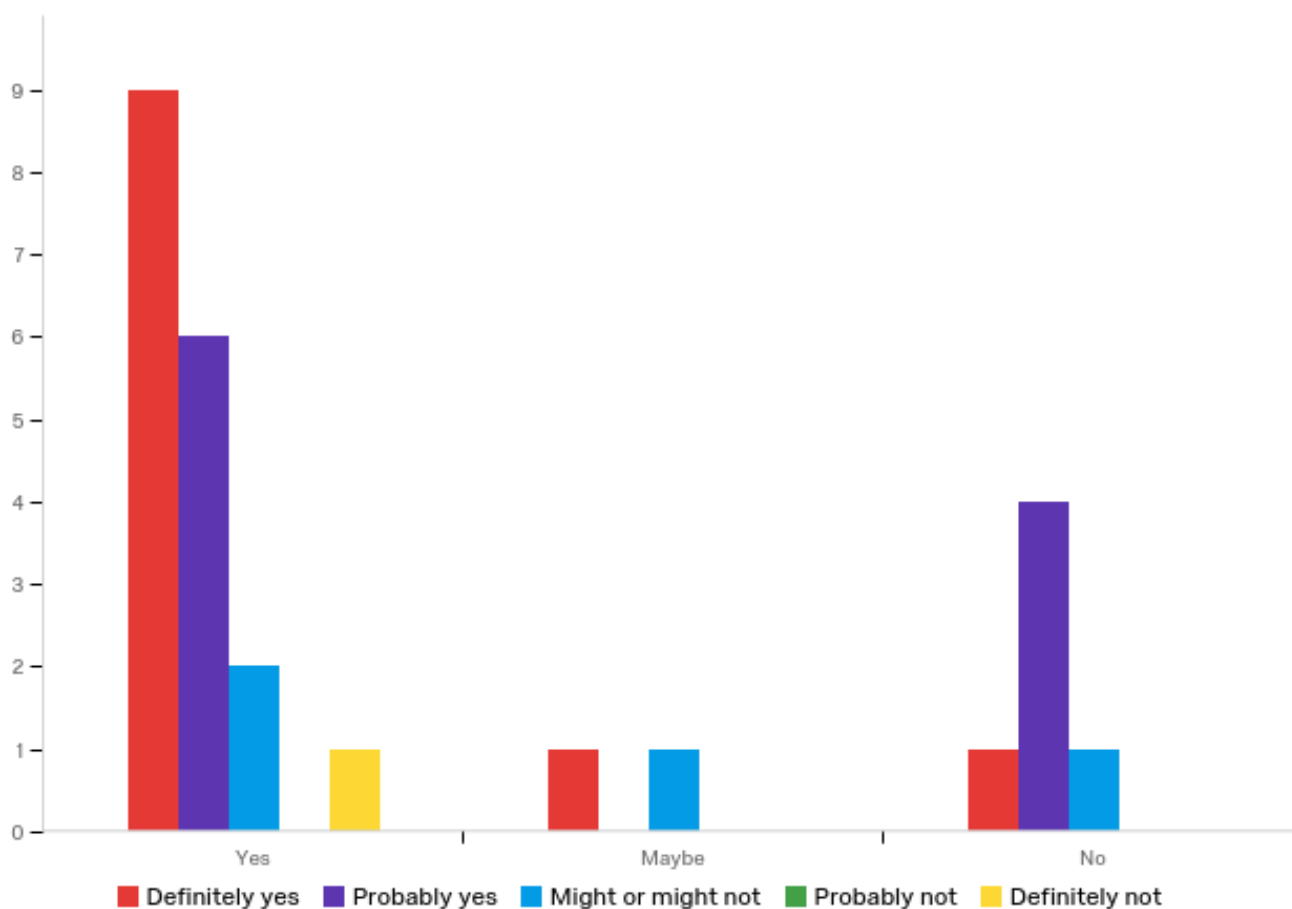
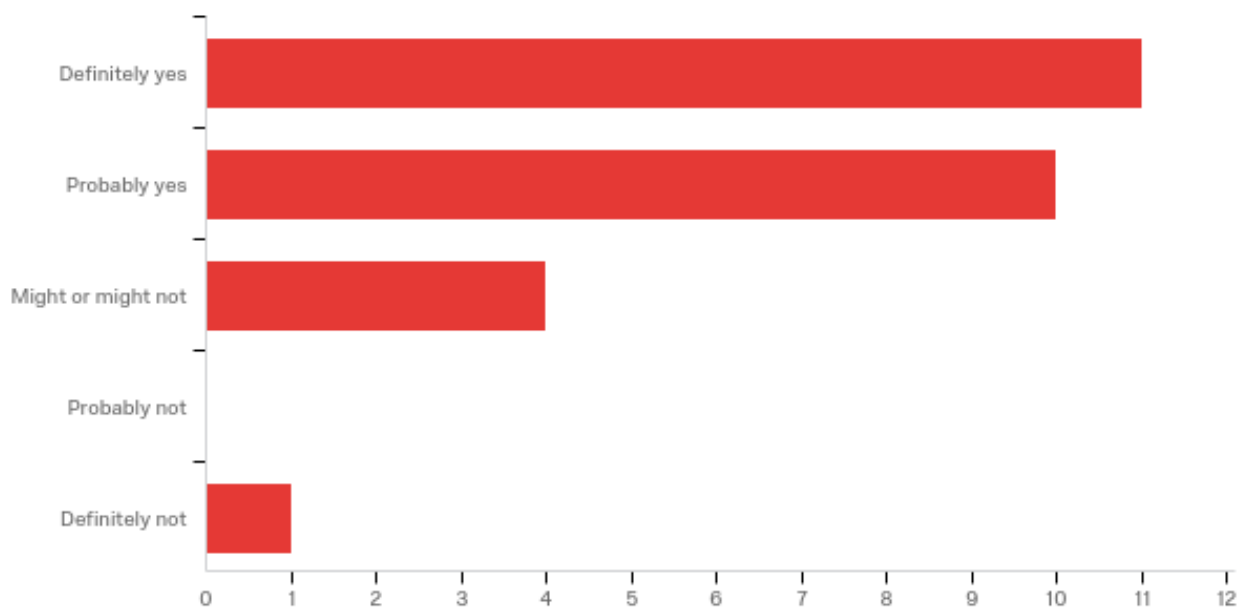
Q8 compared to participants that watched criminal profiling entertainment

Q9 - Do you think profiles are used often by the police?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Definitely yes	30.77%	8
2	Probably yes	46.15%	12
3	Might or might not	11.54%	3
4	Probably not	7.69%	2
5	Definitely not	3.85%	1
	Total	100%	26

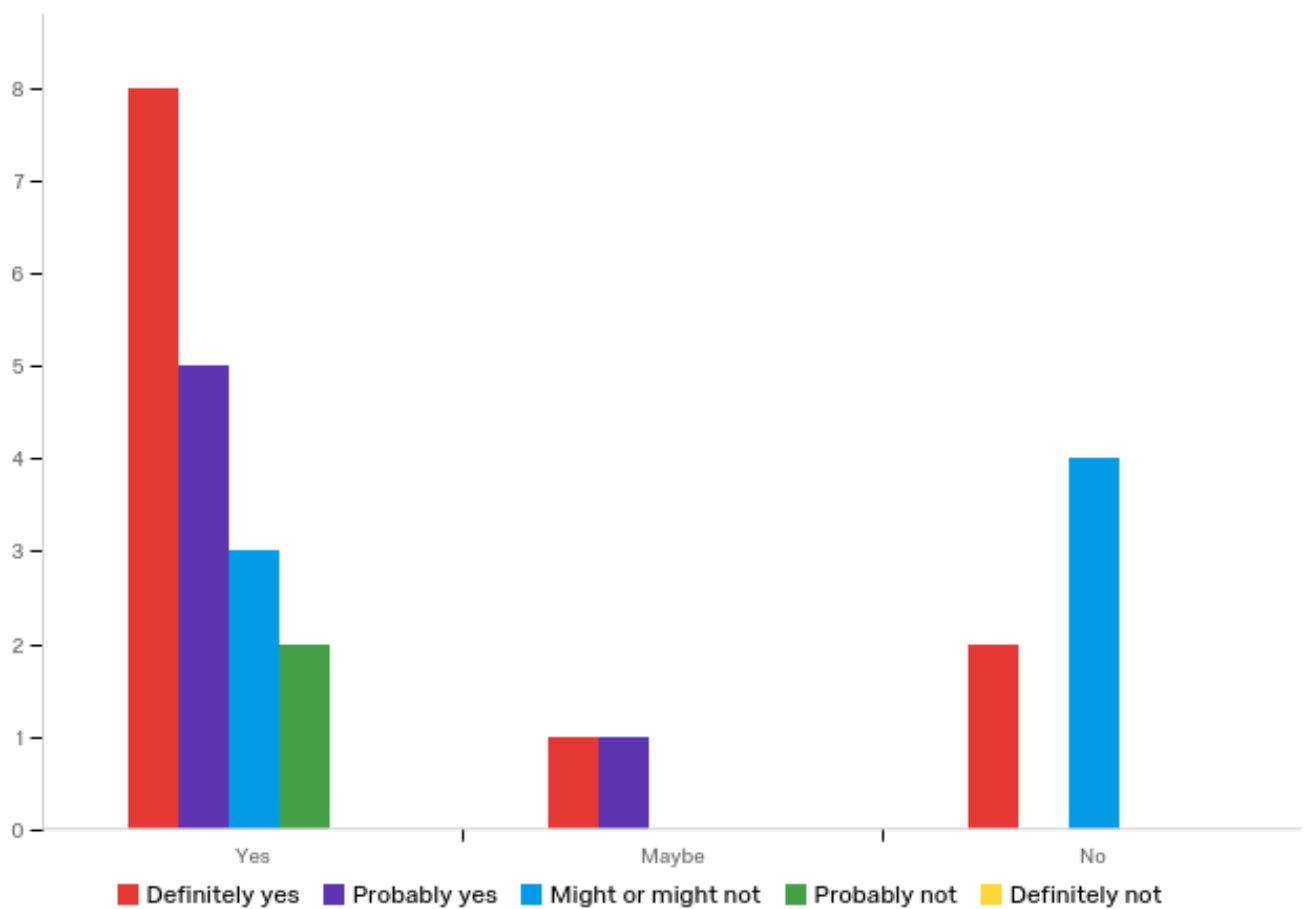
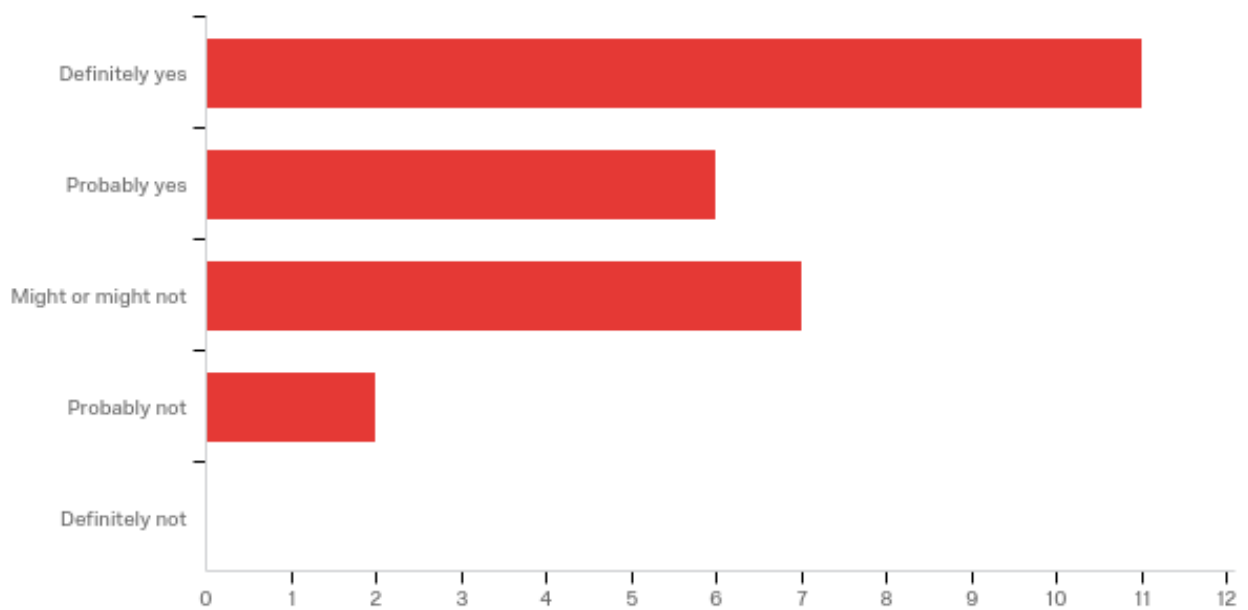
Q10 - Do you think profiles are used by courts to determine guilt?

Q10 compared to participants that watched criminal profiling entertainment

Q11 - Do you think profiles are used by the media to try to depict the unknown criminal?

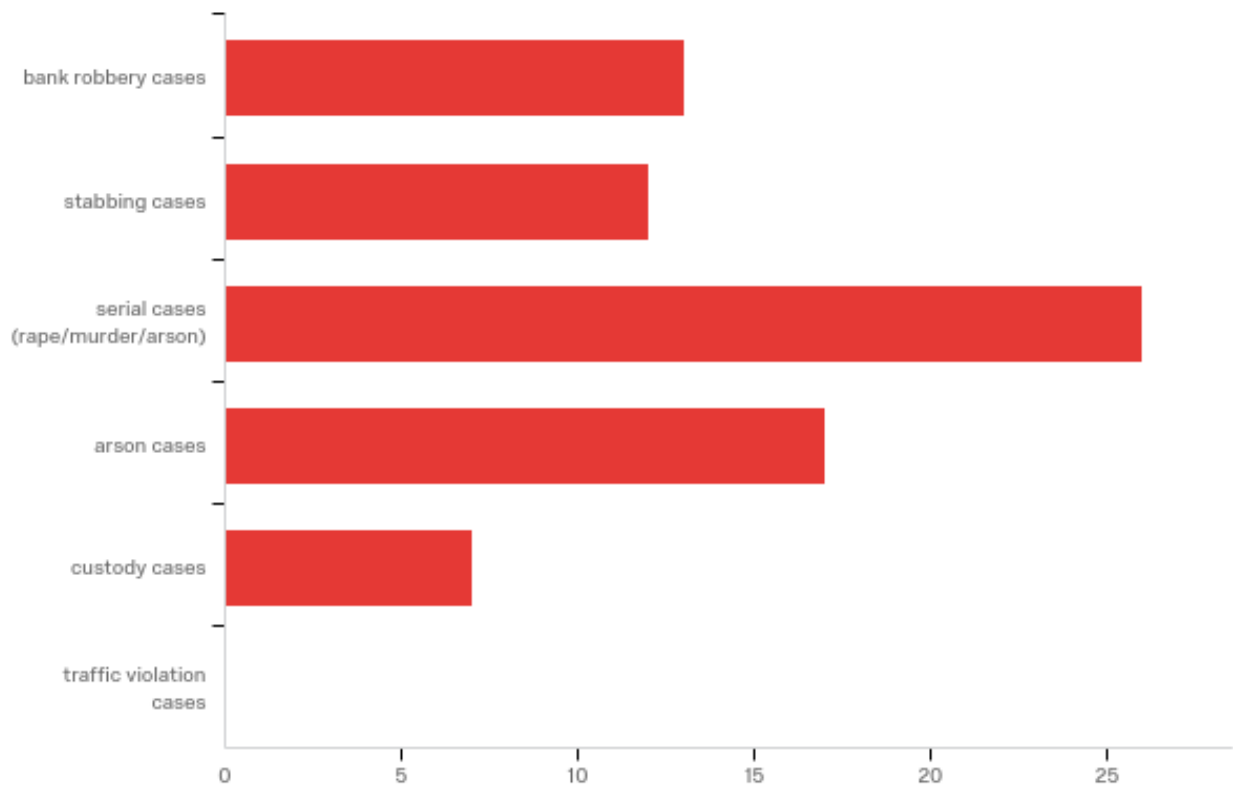
Q11 compared to participants that watched criminal profiling entertainment

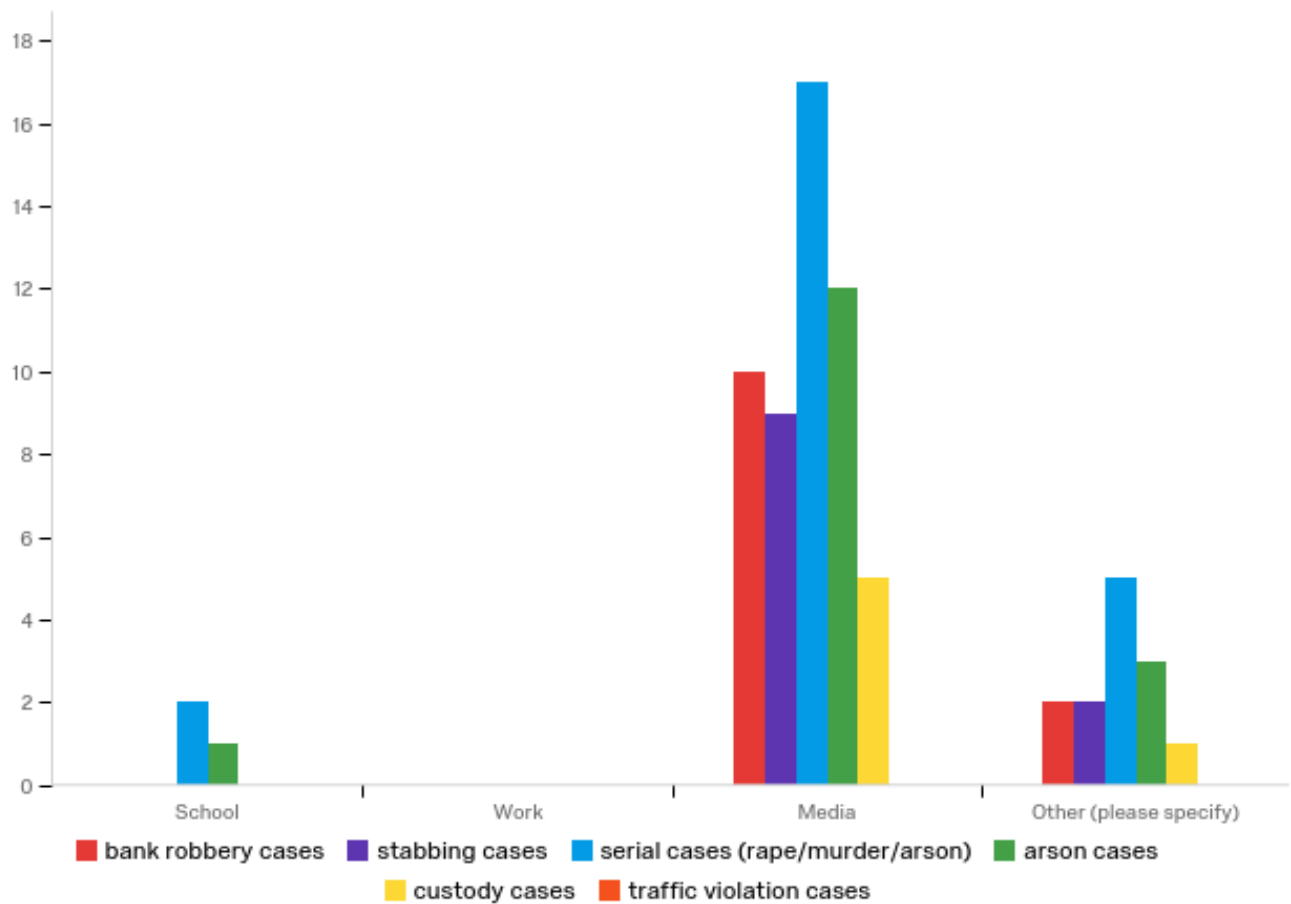
Q12 - Do you think that more research should be done on criminal profiling for it to be used in courts?



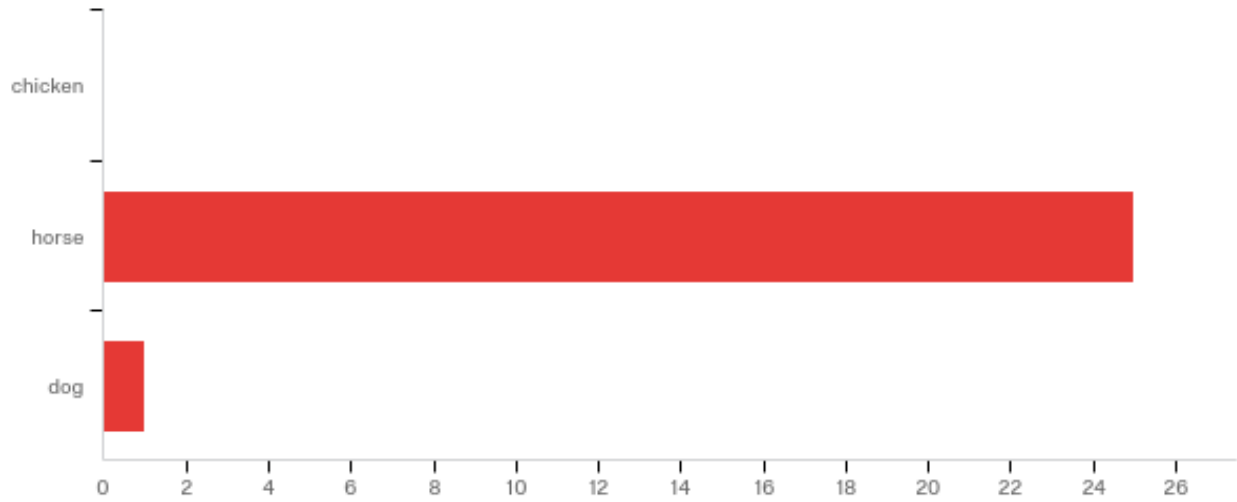
Q12 compared to participants that watched criminal profiling entertainment

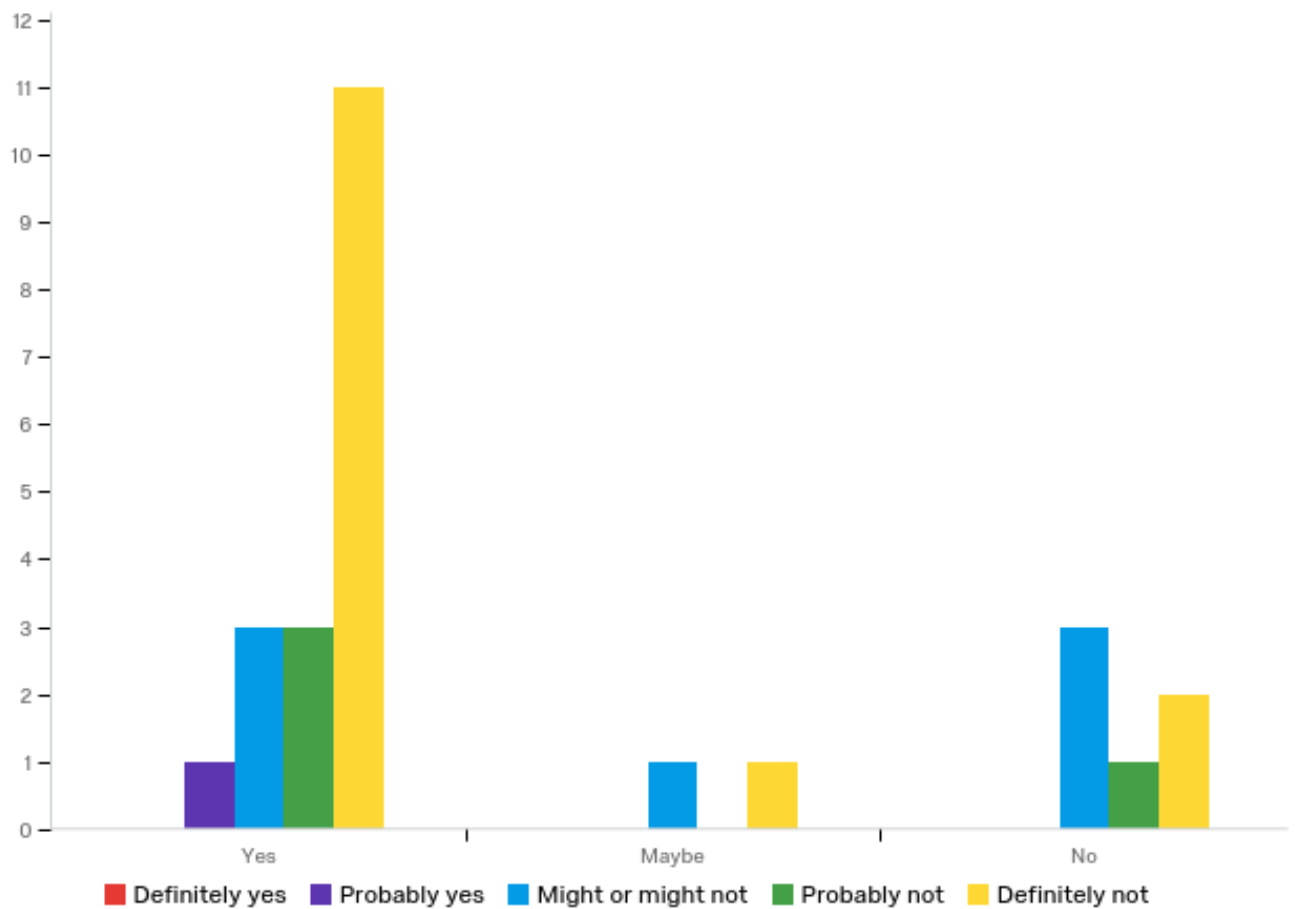
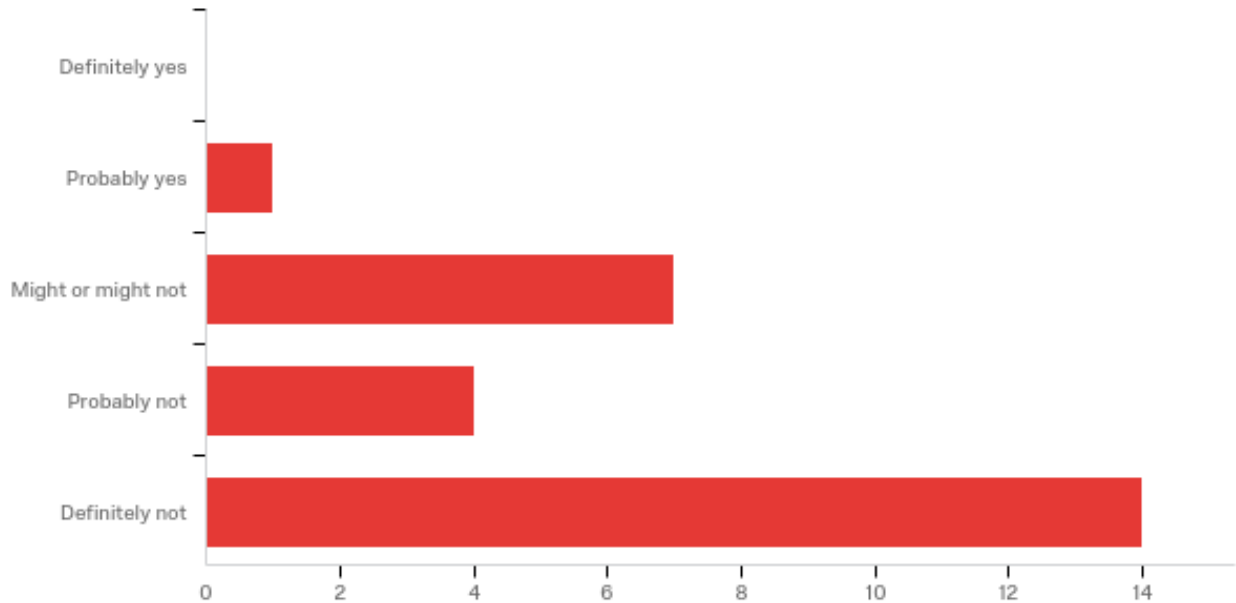
Q13 - What cases do you think utilize criminal profiles? (select one or more that apply)



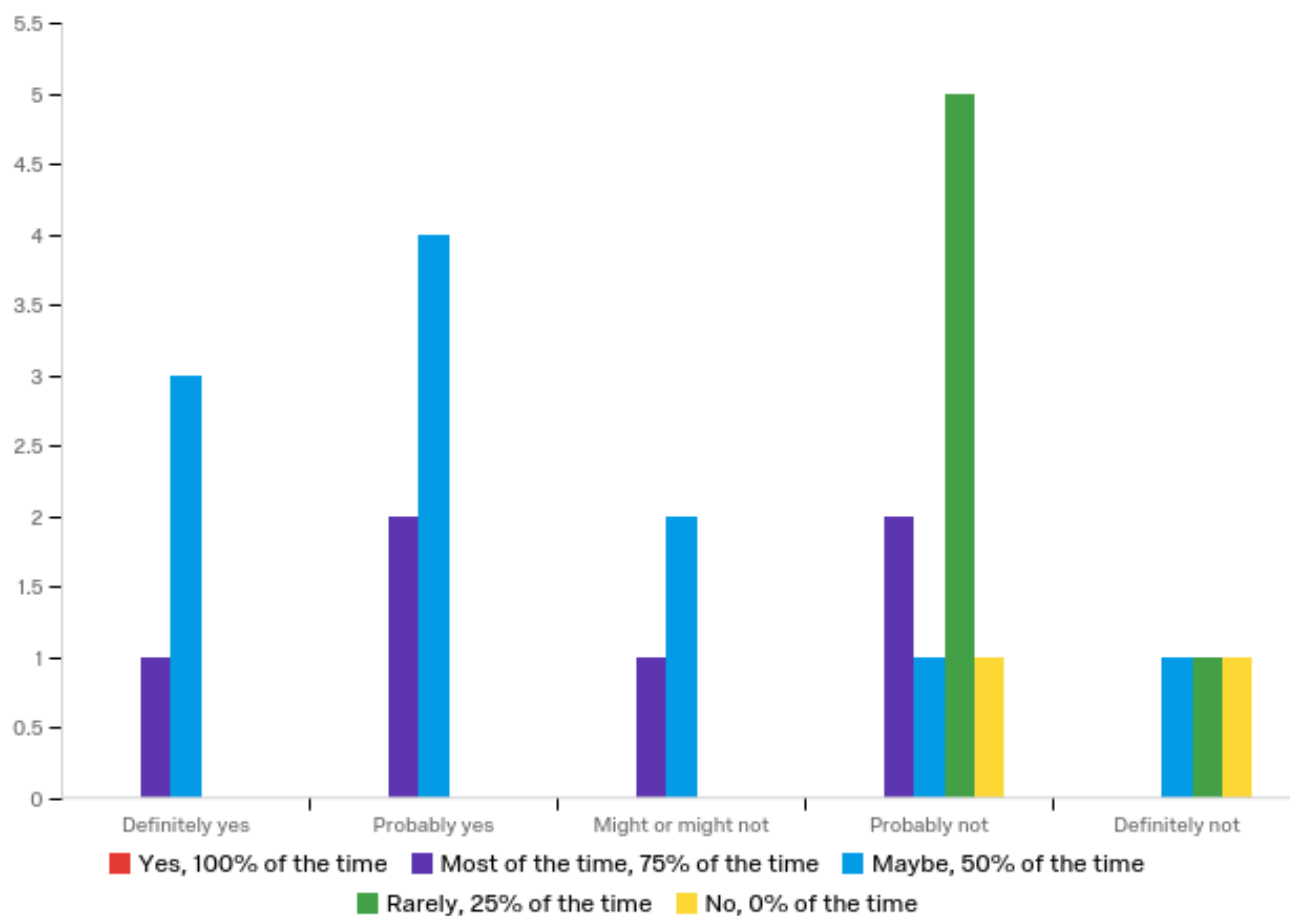
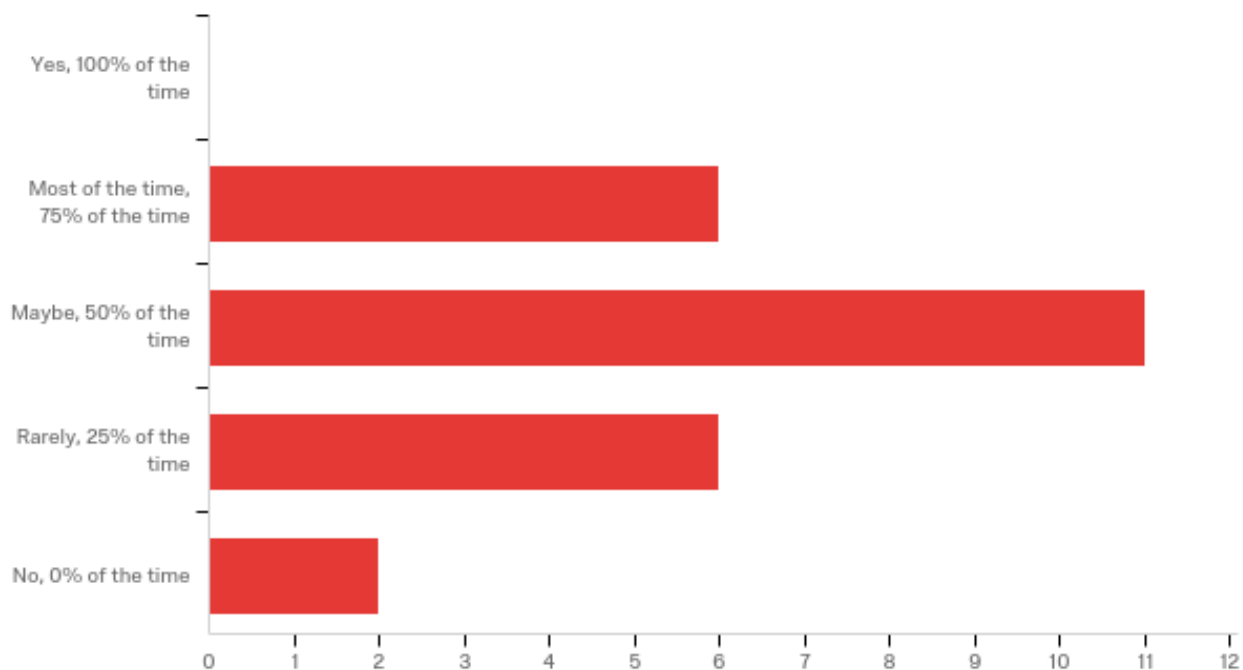


Q13 compared to where participants' learned about criminal profiling

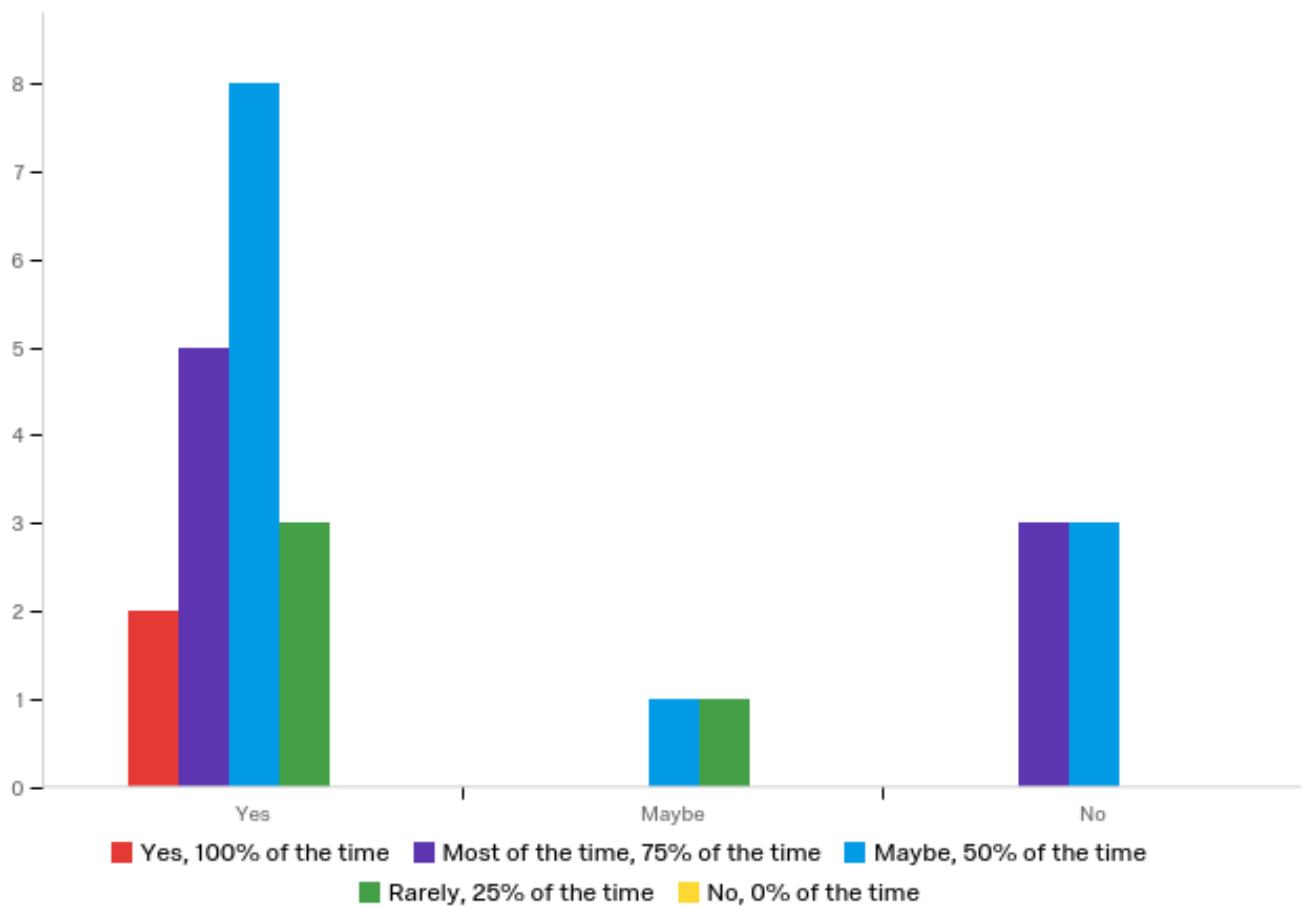
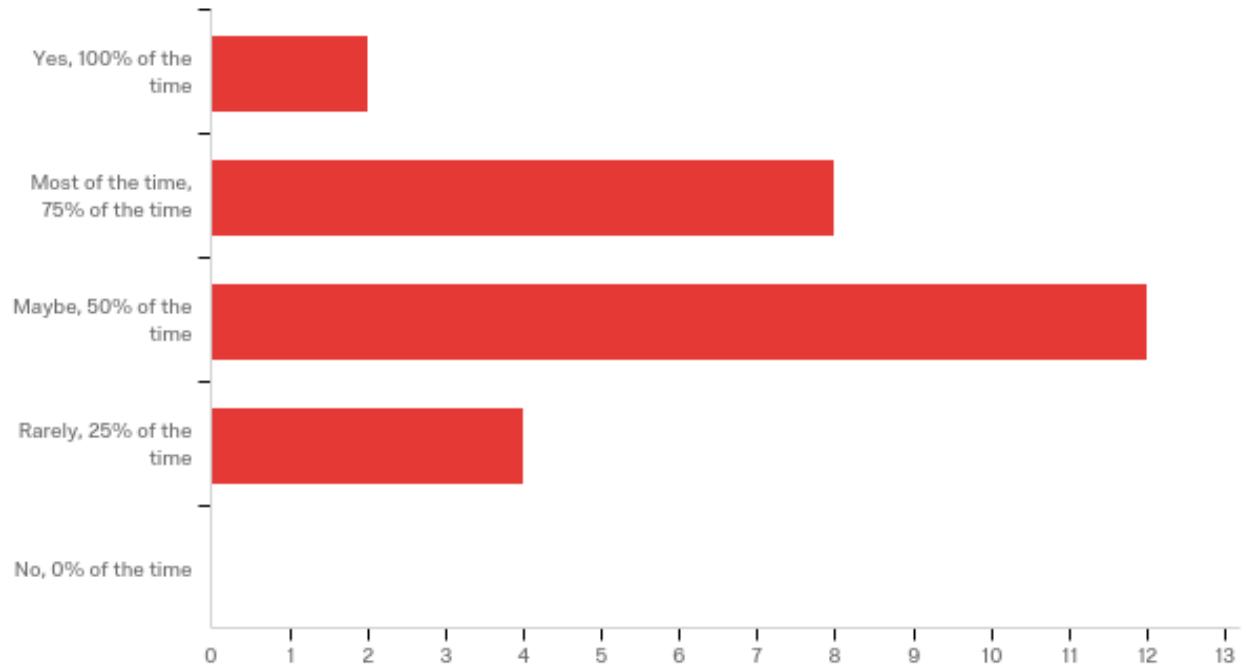
Q14 - Select horse from the answers below

Q15 - Is criminal profiling the same as racial profiling?

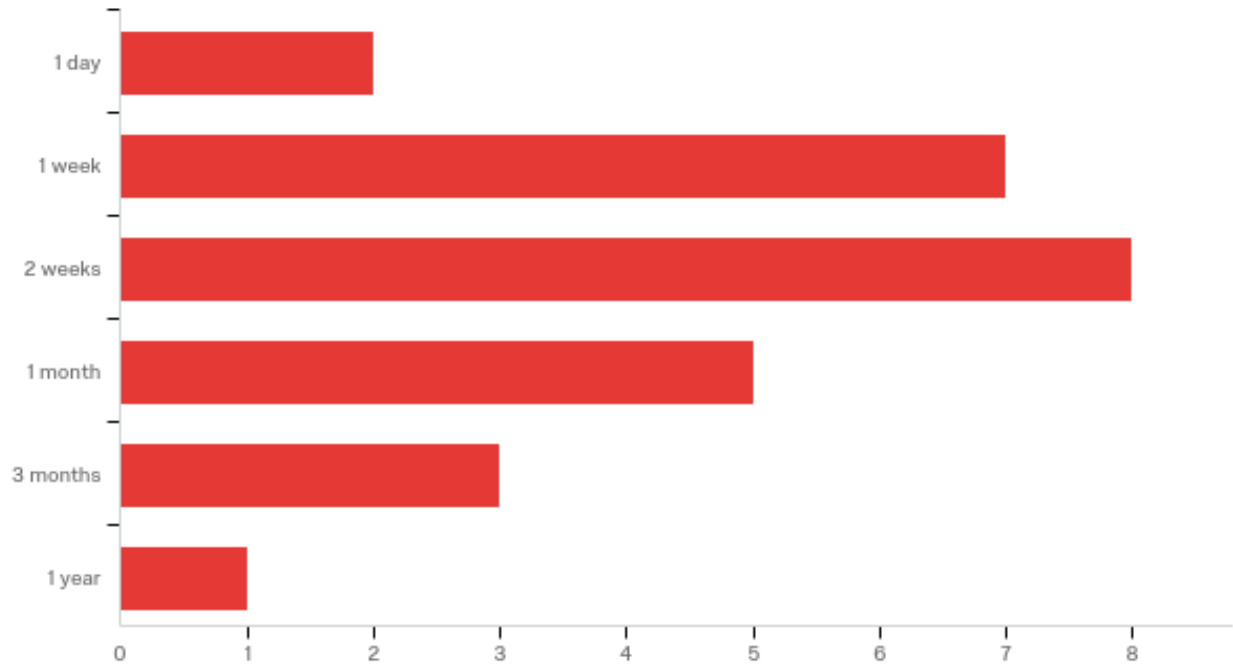
Q15 compared to participants that watched criminal profiling entertainment

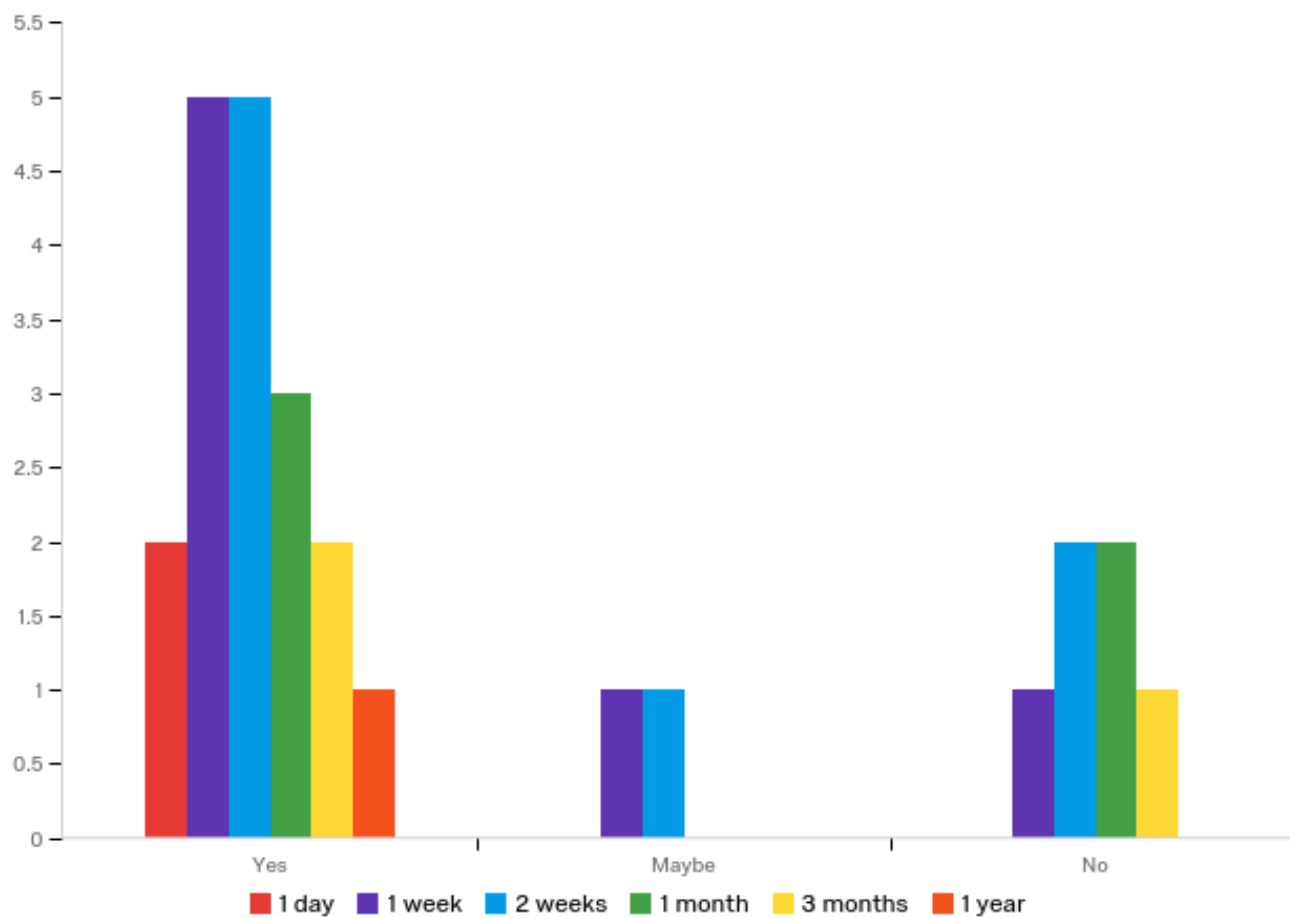
Q16 - Is criminal profiling used in court?

Q16 compared to the participants beliefs about profiles being used by courts to determine guilt

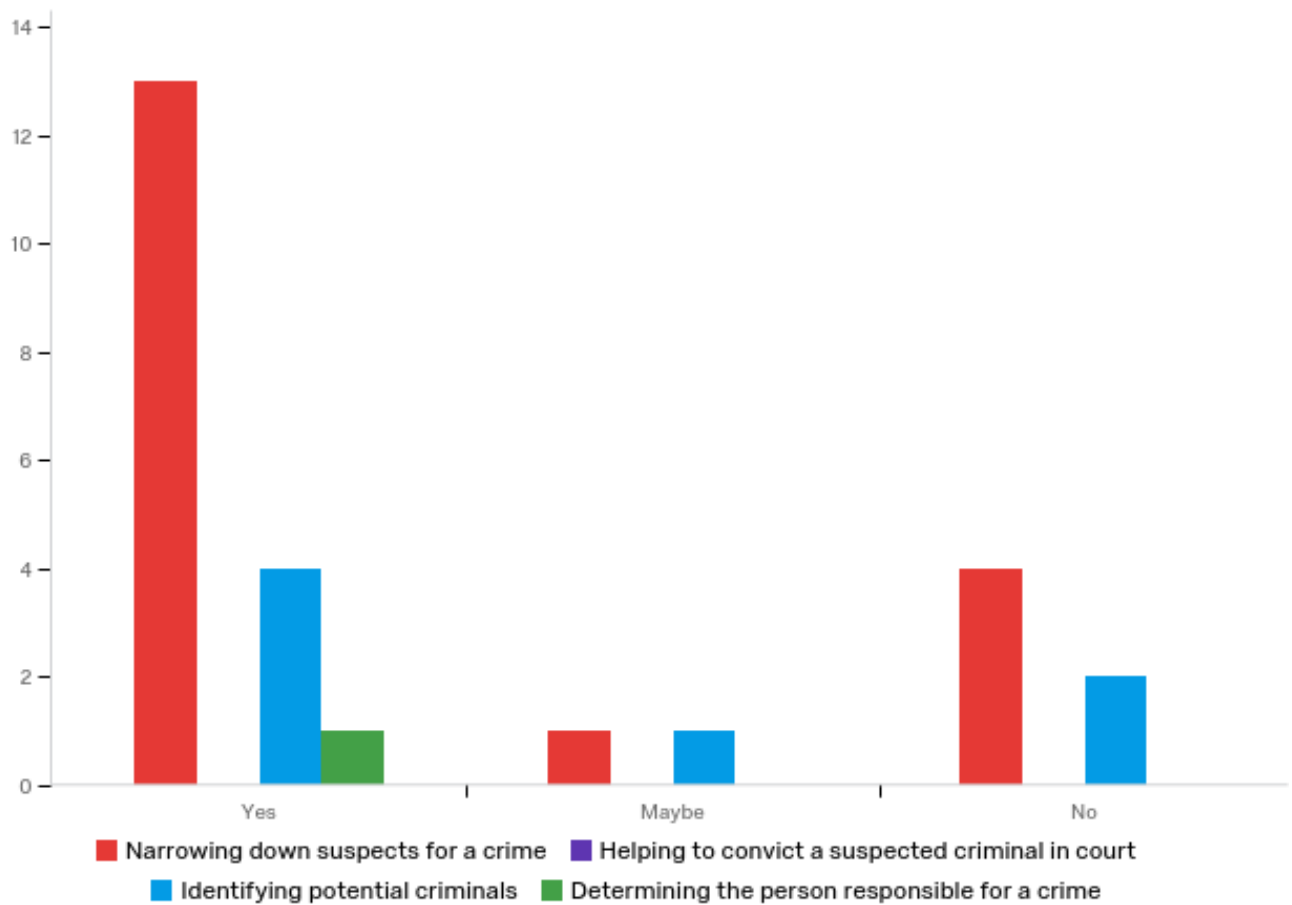
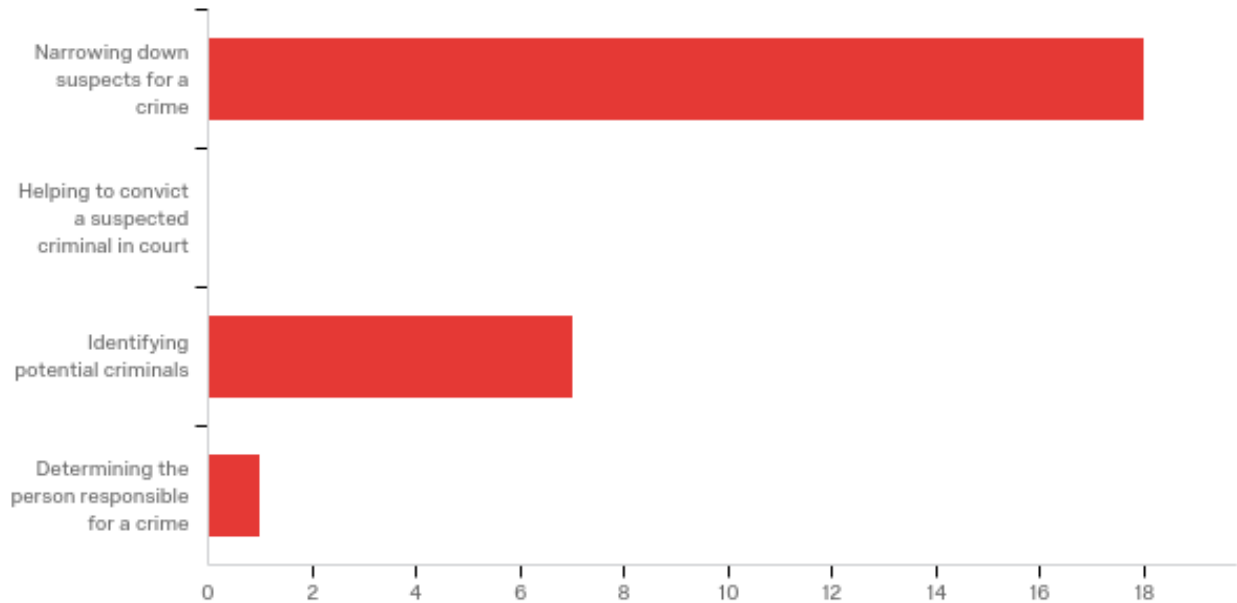
Q17 - Is criminal profiling used in police investigations?

Q17 compared to participants that watched criminal profiling entertainment

Q18 - How long do you believe criminal profiles take to create?

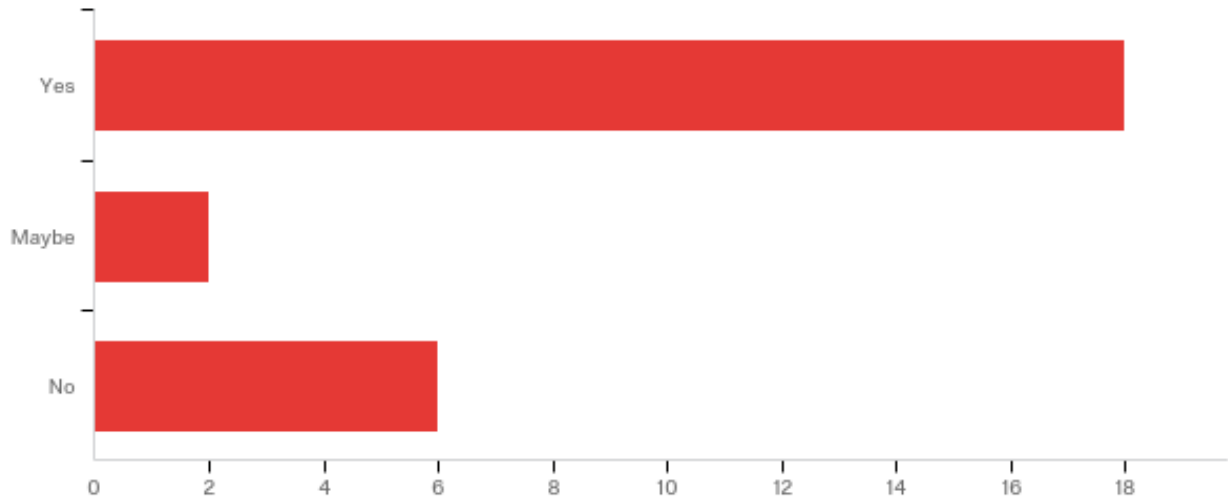


Q18 compared to participants that watched criminal profiling entertainment

Q19 - What is the purpose for criminal profiling?

Q19 compared to participants that watched criminal profiling entertainment

Q20 - Have you ever watched "Criminal Minds", "MindHunter"," The Bone Collector", "Citizen X", "Seven", "Copycat", or any other entertainment about criminal profilers?



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	69.23%	18
2	Maybe	7.69%	2
3	No	23.08%	6
	Total	100%	26