

Joseph Eastwood, PhD

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Forensic psychologist strengthens ties with law enforcement agencies to create evidence-based, best practices

Social media's constant presence has blurred the line and generated influential and critical judgment of how law enforcement officers handle extreme situations as part of their daily work. Consequently, mounting pressure on these agencies to deal with increasingly complex criminal investigations has prompted Joseph Eastwood, PhD, Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Social Science and Humanities to establish more scientific and evidence-based law enforcement practices. In collaboration with Durham Regional Police Service and law enforcement officers across several provinces, Dr. Eastwood's research aims to identify issues and develop guidelines to significantly improve the tools and training available to frontline police officers. His goal is to establish a law enforcement research centre at UOIT, and create an online interview-based program for frontline law enforcement officers.

A large part of his research focuses on the plausibility of alibis within criminal investigations including what investigators are looking for when assessing whether it's true, and the credibility of multiple strangers backing it up. His research will further investigate the content and circumstances of the event leading to an alibi, whether it was salacious, and whether those in question changed their minds midway through their testimony.

Since his appointment to UOIT in 2013, Dr. Eastwood has worked tirelessly to establish partnerships among his faculty with local and provincial law enforcement agencies. His research to enhance the comprehension of legal rights including improving their delivery by frontline officers and the protection of interviewees has been incorporated into law enforcement agencies' training programs in several provinces in Canada. Dr. Eastwood brings unique interviewing techniques and perspective to teaching and learning. Previously, he spent two years as an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Bishop's University in Sherbrooke, Quebec.

Working alongside a research supervisor and mentor for six years who inspired his interest in perceptions of wrongful conviction, Dr. Eastwood received both his Doctorate and Master of Science in Experimental Social Psychology from Memorial University of Newfoundland. He completed his Bachelor of Arts in Honours Psychology from the University of New Brunswick Saint John, following two years of study in Mount Allison University's Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

Education/Learning, Research, Corrections, Defense, Judiciary, Law Enforcement, Program Development, Training and Development

Confessions and Interrogations, Forensic Psychology, Social Psychology, Investigative Interviewing, Wrongful Confessions

American Psychology-Law Society, International Investigative Interviewing Research Group

What Are My Rights Again?": Comprehension of Canadian Youth Waiver Forms
American Psychology Law Society Conference

You Have the Right to Remain Confused: Comprehension of Legal Rights in Police Interrogations
Society for Police and Criminal Psychology Conference

“That’s the Way My Wednesdays Always Go”: The Role of Schemas in Innocent Suspects’ Alibi Creation
Society for Police and Criminal Psychology Conference

Predicting Police Caution Comprehension in Adult Offenders: What Do They Already Know?
Canadian Psychology Association Conference

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