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Foremost Changes in Polygraph in Last 100 Years



James Allan Matte

When I attended the Backster School of Lie Detection in New York City in January-February 1972, there were five primary polygraph techniques in use at that time. Namely, the Relevant-Irrelevant Technique, the Reid Technique, the Arther Technique, the Marcy Technique, and the Backster Zone Comparison Technique. The changes that followed in the next forty years were significant, and too extensive for discussion in this paper, hence the interested reader is directed to the voluminous textbook (Matte 1996), updated with a Supplement (Matte 2002–2012), available at amazon.com.

Since 2012, two major movements for significant change have ensued.

The first is substitution of the traditional Probable-Lie Comparison Question (PLCQ) with the Directed-Lie Comparison Question (DLCQ). The PLCQ requires great skill in its introduction, due to its threatening nature, whereas the DLCQ requires relatively no skill, and is readily accepted by the examinee, due to its non-threatening nature. It is the non-threatening nature of the DLCQ which opponents of the Directed-Lie are most concerned with. For a full, detailed discussion and critique of the DLCQ, the reader is directed to (Matte 1998, Matte 1999, Matte 2015).

The second major movement for change is the awarding of the Electrodermal Activity (EDA) signal greater weight than the Pneumograph and Cardiograph tracings, to wit: 50% for the EDA, 25% for the Pneumo, and 25% for the Cardio tracings. The reader is directed to (Marin, Barbey, Rosenbaum, Hammoud, Orr, Milad (Jan 2020), Matte 2015, Nelson 2019, Selle, Agan, Ben-Shakhar, (Sep 7, 2019).

I'm sure that other changes not discussed in this paper will be forthcoming in the summations solicited from other examiners and researchers.

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