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Activity: Research

Do media reports influence juries?

Learning objective

At the end of this activity you should be able to:

- identify the potential impact on juries of media reporting of crimes.

A. Using the article, answer questions 1 to 14 that follow.

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/8519995.stm>

1. What did the study conclude about jury trials?
2. How are juries protected from the influence of the media?
3. What can happen to editors who compromise the legal process?
4. What is the view of many lawyers and journalists about the impact of media reporting?
5. What is the 'fade factor'?
6. According to Thomas, what did the report show about what jurors recalled from the media?
7. How did the impact of the media differ in high-profile cases?
8. Did the study confirm the fade factor?
9. Briefly explain what is shown by the graph.
10. Why might there be a problem for jurors who cannot forget the original media reports about a case?
11. Why does the internet present a problem for ensuring juries are not influenced by the media?
12. What does the graph about the use of the internet suggest?
13. Why were three juries dismissed in 2008?
14. Why is the internet different to traditional media?

B. Overall, do you think media reports are likely to influence a jury? Give reasons for your answer.