



Article Title: *Cognitive and Contextual Influences in Determination of Latent Fingerprints  
Suitability for Identification Judgments*

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**Article's Subject Matter:** A study that investigated whether suitability judgments would be different given: 1) the presence of a comparison exemplar print  
2) examiner certification and 3) knowledge of another examiner's determination.

#### Key Points in Article

- Dror has recommended that the ACE process be conducted in a linear (sequential) manner with each phase independent from each other. First the latent is examined by itself and then the known fingerprints are analyzed.
- It was found that the presence of the latent print and known prints together indicated that suitability judgments may be susceptible to contextual bias.
- Examiners with IAI certification appeared to be less affected by the contextual effect of comparison prints on suitability judgments.
- Examiners can be biased towards the conclusion that a latent is unsuitable by the purported conclusion of another examiner, but not biased towards the conclusion that the latent is suitable for comparison.

#### Discussion:

The authors are advocating that the Analysis stage of ACE-V be done in a sequential manner. The unknown print should be examined in detail prior to the known fingerprints being looked at.

The authors do concede though that doing the initial latent analysis in isolation may lack the benefit of direction guided by the comparison exemplar. They are allowing for some "re-analysis" of the latent print to take place but only if it is clearly documented.

The document is very detailed (35 pages) regarding the experiments carried out by the authors. They have articulated that the latent print should be analyzed in detail prior to any analysis being done of the known prints. I would like to have known if this would hold true with a double blind process.



Depending on when an examiner attended either CPC or OPC they would have been taught to examine the latent print first, in detail, prior to analyzing the known print(s). This study appears to confirm the value in following this process.