

<b>Institution:</b> University of Portsmouth
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 22 Social Work and Social Policy
<b>Title of case study:</b> Improvements to the training and professional development of Police in investigative interviewing
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>The University of Portsmouth research into effective use of the Cognitive Interview (CI) by police forces in the UK and overseas has led to recommendations for changes to training of police officers in this field throughout their careers being adopted in several countries across the world. The work, led by Dr Becky Milne, has also been used to inform the decision making processes of a variety of national policy reviews and professional bodies. Research has improved the standard of interviewing, particularly for sensitive investigations such as rape and child abuse.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>In 1998 the Home Office awarded funding to the University of Portsmouth to conduct a nationwide examination of police interviewing in the UK. The project was supervised by Dr. Milne. The research (the first world-wide) examined real world police interviews of suspects, witnesses and victims of crime. The resultant research report, now internationally recognised as the Clarke and Milne (2001) report, found that the training officers had received was not being fully transferred into the workplace. It was deemed at the time that a primary reason for a lack of training transference was the mode of the training itself (not practical enough).</p> <p>More recently, Milne's work has examined interviewing skills within certain crime types; specifically sexual offence investigations. A national evaluation was undertaken with NPIA (National Police Improvement Agency) examining this highly sensitive area of police work, where real life victim interviews were analysed, revealing again that there was an overall, but widely varying, deficiency in skill levels among interviewing officers. These individual differences were replicated in work conducted in Australia (with Prof Powell and Prof Kebbell) where the research focused on interviews of suspects in child abuse investigations. This latter research revealed that the ability to learn to conduct an effective interview for policing purposes is not something that all police officers are capable of doing to the standard necessary for effective interviewing in sensitive circumstances. The studies also concluded that for those with the basic skills to be able to be trained, the correct delivery of career long training and continuing professional development is vital for optimising interviewing skills and improving the quality of interviewing.</p> <p>Research focussing on the use of the Cognitive Interview (CI) - when investigating police officers who were trained according to the tiered approach recommended by Dr Milne's earlier work - as an innovative technique in policing; has analysed its social and cognitive components and their relative efficacy for use with vulnerable groups. This has encompassed testing the underlying theory and empirical base. The CI has been found to enhance recall significantly with all types of population; including people with learning disabilities, the older adult and children.</p> <p>One of the reasons for a lack of transference found in the Clarke and Milne report was the fact that officers found the CI too cumbersome for use in all types of interview (from road side information gathering exercises to full visually recorded interviews). Thus the team developed a new front-line police interview which has been piloted by forces in the UK and the New Zealand Police.</p> <p>Overall Milne's body of research has contributed to the theoretical literature with regard to investigative interviewing skills transference in the police and to individual difference.</p>

### 3. References to the research

Clarke, C., and **Milne, R.** (2001). *National evaluation of the PEACE investigative interviewing course*. Police Research Award Scheme. London: Home Office. Available on request.

Dando, C., Omerod, T., Wilcock, R., and **Milne, R.** (2011). When help becomes hindrance: Unexpected errors of omission and commission in eyewitness memory resulting from change temporal order at retrieval? *Cognition*, 121(3), pp.416-421. DOI: [10.1016/j.cognition.2011.06.015](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2011.06.015)

Holliday, R.E, Humphries, J. E., **Milne, R.**, Memon, A., Houlder, L., Lyons, A., and Bull, R., (2012). Reducing misinformation effects in older adults with the cognitive interview mnemonics. *Psychology and Aging*, 27, 1191-1203. DOI: [10.1037/a0022031](https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022031) Ref2 output: 22-BM-004

Read, J., Powell, M., Kebbell, M., **Milne, R.** and Steinberg, R. (2013). Evaluating police interviewing practices with suspects in child sexual abuse cases. *Policing and Society*. Pp.1-22. ISSN 1043-9463 DOI: [10.1080/10439463.2013.784297](https://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2013.784297)

Snook, B., Luther, K., Quinlan, H., and **Milne, R.** (2012). Let 'em talk: A Field study of police suspect questioning practices. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 29(10). pp.1328-1339. ISSN 0093-8548 DOI: [10.1177/0093854812449216](https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854812449216)

Westera, N., Kebbell, M., and **Milne, R.** (2013). Losing two thirds of the story: a comparison between recorded police interviews and the live evidence of rape complainants. *Criminal Law Review*, 4, 290-308. ISSN 0011-135X. Available on request.

### 4. Details of the impact

Research findings in respect of police interview training and the use of the CI have provided police forces world-wide with the evidence base to both improve the training of police officers throughout their careers and has allowed implementation of new, innovative techniques valuable in working with vulnerable individuals. Improved, reliable, interviewing plays an important part in the justice process, and appropriate handling of vulnerable individuals improves their access to justice.

The Clarke and Milne report, widely published following the research project, made a number of recommendations for police interviewing. Many of the recommendations have been implemented. Amongst the most apparent changes is the adoption of the recommended Tiered approach to developing an interviewers skills across their career, which was fully adopted by the UK police as a result of the report and has formed part of the UK government's "Professionalising the Investigative Process" (PIP) agenda and associated National Occupation Standards. The Tiered approach has also been adopted by the New Zealand Police Force, Australian Federal Police and two Australian Territories. The uptake in these locations stemmed from dissemination work by Dr Milne who met with Police representatives and gave presentations on the team's research.

The group's research into the CI (Fisher, Milne & Bull, 2011) has encouraged the adoption of the CI by police organisations across the world (in North America, Europe, Australasia, Asia and Africa). The research has been used by Milne to develop teaching materials and training packages for Police Investigators, training investigators from across the world, including from the UK, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Brunei, Canada, Cyprus, Germany, Malta, New Zealand, Norway and Sweden. The training has continued to be enriched by ongoing research and Milne has been able to incorporate her most recent work on interviewing vulnerable groups, interviewing suspects and critical failure points (which can lead to miscarriages of justice) into the training.

As a result of her research, Milne has been asked to advise several national policing bodies on the use of interview techniques appropriate to vulnerable groups and has drawn upon the team's research findings to provide appropriate advice. The research study on sexual offences was cited within the Stern Review in which Baroness Stern examined the investigation of rape within the UK and led directly to changes in police interviewing behaviour at the 'coal-face' by developing actual

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interview techniques that officers can utilise in the field, by advancing training programmes, and at a strategic level by influencing police policy.

The research findings with respect to the innate skills require for successful training as an investigative interviewer have forced organisations to examine their training policies and to adapt selection processes, both in terms of selecting officers for advanced interview training and for roles in the force.

The research findings have informed Milne's work as an invited member of a specialist database of experts for the UK police service (National Crime Agency; since 2002). She has acted as an expert witness in court proceedings and as a subject matter expert in real investigations using her expertise and research results to advise on the best ways to interview various individuals in an enquiry (e.g. current case: Savile inquiry). As an elected member of the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Investigative Interviewing Strategic Steering Group (a group whose role is to direct national strategy, policy and practice in the UK) Milne has been able to inform discussions at the highest level in UK policing with the latest research outcomes from the team's research work. As a result of her work for the UK police she was the first (and only) academic awarded by ACPO, the Tom Williamson Award for outstanding achievement in the field of investigative interviewing (2009). Among the documents produced by ACPO which have been influenced by Milne's research are;

- (i) Interviewing vulnerable groups for legal purposes – Welsh Assembly package (2005);
- (ii) Interviewing vulnerable groups; A guide for legal practitioners; Scottish Office (2005);
- (iii) Achieving Best Evidence; A guide for interviewing children and vulnerable groups for legal purposes (Home Office, 2007;2010);
- (iv) National Investigative Interviewing Manual (New Zealand Police, 2008,2012) – now also used in Australia (2012).

The study of police interview techniques is of great public importance and interest, and the general public has both the desire and right to know that the best available techniques are employed in the pursuit of justice. Recently Milne helped design and presented a BBC/OU television series (three programmes) called *Eyewitness* that examined the use of the CI in the real world of investigating serious crime. There was an average of 630,000 viewers per episode on the first showing, the programmes reached a wide audience and raised the public profile of interviewing as a highly important police skill.

## **5. Sources to corroborate the impact**

**1. Inspector and Professional Practice Manager, Education and Training Command, Queensland Police.** Letter corroborating that the research findings initiated at the outset and are having a direct impact on the creation of interview policy and training within Queensland Police. It was also outlined that the research findings are being utilised by front line officers who are conducting interviews of witnesses and victims in the most serious of cases.

**2. Assistant Commissioner, Australian Federal Police.** Letter corroborating that the research directly informs the professionalization of police interviews in UK and Australia. Specifically with regard the development of search strategies to locate concealed victims of crime.

**3. Inspector, Head of Investigation Training, New Zealand Police.** Letter and email corroborating that the research helped to inform directly the creation of the tiered approach to interviewing in New Zealand. The underpinning research also formed the backbone of the National New Zealand Interviewing guide and associated doctrine. He noted in an email that; "There is no doubt that without your guidance and support NZ Police would not have developed and implemented a world leading II training programme". Furthermore, it was outlined that the CI research formed the core of the New Zealand Tier 3 witness training programme.

**4. Professor at Centre of Excellence of Policing and Security, Griffith University.** Letter

corroborating that the research helps to inform evidence-based policing in the world of interviewing. In addition, it outlines that the research base has leadership and standing in Australia.

**5. Chief Constable, Chair of the ACPO Investigative Interviewing Strategic Steering Committee, ACPO National Lead for Investigative Interviewing.** Letter corroborating that the research has had a contribution to UK police interviewing and that this in turn has resulted in successful prosecutions. It is outlined that the research directly helped to create the tiered approach to interview training that exists in the UK and that the research has a National impact on UK police interviewing policy, practice and procedure.

#### National Documents:

1. Criminal Justice System (2009). *Achieving Best Evidence in Criminal Proceedings; Guidance on Interviewing Victims and Witnesses, and Using Special Measures*. London; Office for Criminal Justice Reform. Dr Milne was part of the writing team of this national document that all police officers and social workers must abide by when interviewing vulnerable groups for legal purposes in the UK
2. *Practical Guide to Investigative Interviewing*. Bramshill: NSLEC. Demonstrates that the tiered approach to interviewing as recommended by Dr Milne's research was adopted in the UK.
3. *Learning Descriptors; Specialist Investigative Interviewing; Development Programmes. Module B. Witness Interviewing*. (2008). Bramshill: NPIA. The National interview guidance outlining recommended practice for interviewing witness in the UK recommends only one academic text; Milne, R., and Bull, B. (1999). *Investigative Interviewing; Psychology and Practice*. Chichester: Wiley.
4. *Witness Interviewing Guide*. New Zealand: New Zealand Police. And *Investigative Interviewing Doctrine*. New Zealand; New Zealand Police. Acknowledges Dr Milne "for her time, expertise and advice that have contributed to the development of this guidance" and refers to the aforementioned Milne and Bull (1999) text.

#### Media Coverage:

1. Feature in *the News* (Portsmouth) outlining Milne helping the writers of the programme *The Bill* with regard to witness interviewing. (May, 2008).
2. Feature in the *Police Professional* bulletin and the *Daily Mirror*, (Sept/Oct, 2008) regarding her research on the standards of police officers interviewing of sexual offence victims.
3. Part 1, Part 2, Part 3 *Eyewitness*; (April/May; 2010). Milne was an advisor and presenter in this TV series examining how human memory affects the police interviewing and investigation process. An average of 630,000 viewers per episode.  
[www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00s6b06](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00s6b06)  
[www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00s8yl1#programme-broadcasts](http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00s8yl1#programme-broadcasts)
4. Two features on *BBC1SouthToday* (Dec, 2010) regarding the launch of the new Centre of Forensic Interviewing. Dr Milne was interviewed in the Centre, about the Centre that she launched.
5. A report about Dr Mine's keynote lecture in *the Magistrate*, which she gave at the 650 years of Justices' of the Peace celebrations, University of Birmingham; (May 2011); Witness evidence; fact or fiction?.
6. Dr Milne was interviewed on *BBC Radio Solent* (May, 2012) about her research concerning how more sex offenders are likely to be convicted if victims accounts are visually recorded and presented as evidence.