

(1956) reports that the reliability of the GSR, measured as average skin log conductance, was 0.95 for a series of four sessions; although the absolute conductance values may change, individuals consistently maintained a large or a small response from one session to another.

Except for Kubis (1962), no one has explored the possibility that two examiners working independently might make different interpretations of the same record. Reliability of the polygraph in the sense of the consistency of measurement, i.e., agreement among examiners, is an unknown quantity.

C. EVIDENCE AVAILABLE IN THE GOVERNMENT

It is estimated that military and security agencies have conducted almost 200,000 polygraph examinations over the last 10 years, largely in connection with security screening. However, this experience has never been summarized and it is doubtful whether data remaining in the files can be utilized to provide an assessment of its effectiveness. Despite general assurance to the contrary, recordkeeping and performance appraisal on the use of the polygraph in the Government appears not to have been accomplished. If any review has been performed, the method of analysis and the results are not available for inspection despite a specific effort made to uncover them for this study.³ A private organization which provides polygraph services on a fee basis was approached because its research director says that his reports are available for inspection by other

³ As might be expected, this statement drew some replies from examiners who reviewed a working draft of this report:

(1) "Studies have been performed at . . . correlating the results of polygraphs and background investigations. No studies have or can be made of the absolute validity or reliability of the polygraph by personnel assigned to this unit. The worth of the program in terms of confessions and information of security value has been established beyond cavil."

(2) "We feel that your report could only be improved with the inclusion and analysis of more complete statistical evidence which we both know is either nonexistent or not readily available to you."

(3) This statement "does not apply to the U.S. Army Military Police Corps. While it is true that certain data is not available in the Office of The Provost Marshal General, much information is available at major operating command headquarters and at the Provost Marshal General's School. The Provost Marshal General's School is continually testing and evaluating lie detector performance, to include improved application and examination techniques."

The Provost Marshal also provided the data shown in table 2. Indeed, these data are useful. It shows that among 1,302 examinations in which deception was indicated, 52 percent led to admissions and 19.8 percent were verified by further investigation, while 27.5 percent could not be substantiated. For examinations in which no deception was indicated, contrary results were obtained by other means in 2.3 percent (73/3,153) of the cases; 3.6 percent (167/4,622) of the examinations were inconclusive.

From the data, it is not possible to make any judgments about effectiveness of the polygraph in security investigations because success or failure to detect deception in such cases (117 among the 4,622) is not broken out in the table.

TABLE 2.—*Summary of lie detection examinations performed by the U.S. Army Military Police. (See exhibit 26, p. 463.)*

Total examinations conducted-----	4, 622
Murder-----	28
Rape-----	96
Burglary-----	223
Security-----	117
Others-----	4, 158
Refusals to submit to examinations-----	386
Admissions obtained in pretest interviews-----	438
Admissions obtained during or immediately after execution-----	478
Examinations in which deception was indicated-----	1, 302
Examinations in which these indications led to admissions/confessions during examination-----	686
Examinations in which these indications were verified by further investigation or interrogation-----	258
Examinations in which these indications were not substantiated through investigation, interrogation, admission, or confession-----	358
Examinations in which no deception was indicated-----	3, 153
Instances in this category in which contrary results were obtained through investigation or interrogation-----	73
Instances in which results of examination in this category were in accord with results of other investigative techniques-----	3, 080
Examinations which were inconclusive-----	167
Complaints, if any, made against the lie detection examination procedure by those who were tested-----	4