



The CS/ Effect

Published in *American Bar Association Litigation Journal*

January 22, 2021

This article discusses the "CSI effect," or the concept that television shows like *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* have created an expectation among jurors that highly technical, science-based, forensic evidence is the only credible evidence and non-scientific evidence, such as witness testimony and documents, can be disregarded. The article explores how the "CSI effect" can influence all phases of a trial and offers steps that criminal law practitioners can take to mitigate or take advantage of this concept. Specifically, the authors advise practitioners to learn the details of the trial judge's jury selection procedures and deadlines and submit voir dire questions that allow them to better understand jury expectations in each case, master any scientific or technical evidence in a case before a trial and understand how it was collected, set expectations in opening statements to account for jurors' views or play to their expectations, take advantage of independent evidence and documents to corroborate non-scientific evidence and mitigate the "CSI effect" in direct examinations, compromise the credibility of witnesses in cross-examinations by emphasizing a lack of scientific or technological evidence, and proposing juror instructions on the appropriate use of circumstantial evidence. The authors conclude that criminal law practitioners should always be aware of how popular culture and technological advances can influence juror expectations in a case.

[The CS/ Effect.](#)

CONTACTS

For more information, contact your Katten attorney or any of the following attorneys.



Scott A. Resnik

+1.212.940.8543

scott.resnik@katten.com

Attorney advertising. Published as a source of information only. The material contained herein is not to be construed as legal advice or opinion.

©2026 Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP.

All rights reserved. Katten refers to Katten Muchin Rosenman LLP and the affiliated partnership as explained at katten.com/disclaimer.