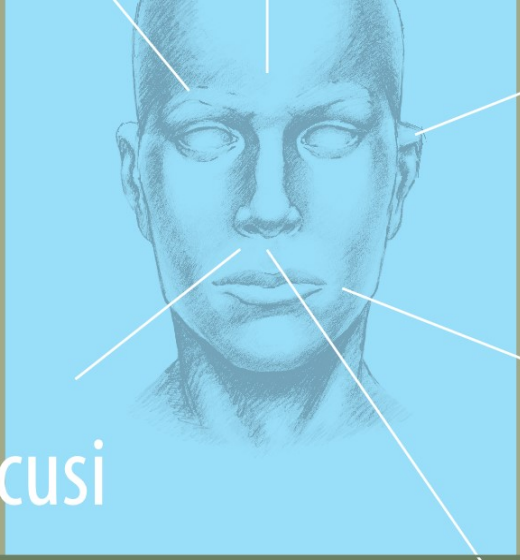

Stephen Mancusi

The Police Composite Sketch

Humana Press

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Preface

The police composite sketch is one of the most astounding investigative tools in law enforcement. It is based solely on a person's perception and memory of an unknown suspect. The police composite sketch is developed during the execution of a composite session. A composite session is an extreme exercise of human communication and drawing. It challenges the skills of an artist to understand and illustrate words of description to the highest level of performance. In today's world of forensic science and great leaps in technology, the forensic art discipline of police composite sketching still relies on the most basic aspect of the investigative community: the spoken word. It has proven itself during many difficult investigations to successfully help solve these criminal cases. This is one reason for the public's interest and amazement in these drawings.

Many intuitive insights are revealed during the composite session about witnesses, victims, and perpetrators. This intriguing knowledge has been noted over my many years in the implementation of composite sessions. This scholarship is not only based on these experiences, but also on the obscure aspects of human interaction, a condition all people are familiar with and operate within everyday. The structure of the composite session investigation exposes common trends. These trends were used to interpret and implement the following composite session philosophy and strategies.

Primarily a book about how to conduct a police composite session, applying these concepts will be explored in the context of actual experiences, cases, and questions asked. The learning opportunity in the answers to these questions and the understanding of these forensic art cases are a valuable illustration of the techniques applied during the development of the composite sketch. The hope is to answer some of the perplexity and dilemmas about this technique for the accomplished and aspiring forensic artist as well as for the average interested reader. Due to the complexity and diverse skills associated with the composite session, the information will be explored within a standard operating procedure as well as straightforward rules, basic guidelines, notable concepts, tips, and tangential narratives. These accounts will reveal a conduit into a successful philosophy about how to conduct a police composite session. The procedures offered are successful strategies and solutions. Read this book as a narrative from start to finish. It is a journey describing the road to

an effective investigative procedure, composite drawing technique, and philosophy. Plus, it illustrates one path to a rewarding career.

Peekskill, NY Stephen Mancusi

Acknowledgments

The contents of this book are based on my years of experience as the New York City Police Department's forensic artist. I offer a special thanks to the department for the opportunity to develop these forensic art skills. The NYPD and all its members are one of the most professional and talented police departments in the world. It was advantageous to have worked directly with other accomplished composite artists during my time with the NYPD. This bolstered the scholarship of the composite art philosophy put forth in this book.

It is also important to recognize Detective Frank Domingo as an integral part of the development of these composite art concepts. Sadly, he passed away in 2009; he is greatly missed.

Additionally, it was invaluable to meet and discuss forensic art issues with other artists over the years. On many occasions, I have been able to talk, teach, and learn from these colleagues. This book is offered in the modest of mindsets. It is acknowledged that a multitude of forensic artists are adding to the forensic art disciplines every day.

Lastly, thank you to my daughter Kayla for helping with this book.

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Forensic art includes the disciplines of composite art, image modification, age progression, facial comparison analysis, demonstrative evidence, and postmortem/skull reconstruction. The forensic artist should also have knowledge of victim psychology, facial anatomy, human memory, and aging trends. The ability to communicate with, interact with, and interview victims as well as witnesses from all walks of life for all sorts of crimes is a necessity. Composite art is an unusual marriage of two unlikely disciplines, police investigative work and art. The cop-artist, almost an oxymoron, possesses both skills.

2. The Composite Session

All composite sketches are done during a standard composite session. The composite session includes drawing and interviewing. The development of composite session skills is directly related to the level of professionalism one obtains. Though drawing is important, it is equally paramount to conduct an organized session and develop good interviewing skills. Even a skilled artist can ultimately fail at conducting a composite session without proper technique. A standard police composite session technique is further revealed with actual case studies. Session and interviewing strategies are explored.

3. Drawing the Composite Sketch

The three-stage composite drawing method is explained. The first stage of the drawing is the proportional sketch, which is a simple line drawing with all the facial features slightly suggested in their desired proportional locations. The second stage of the sketch is the characteristic stage. The artist is delineating the shapes of the facial features. The third stage of the sketch is the rendering stage. During the

rendering stage of the drawing, the artist depicts the forms and textures of the head in light and shadow.

4. Witnesses and Victims

It is essential for the artist to acquire perceptiveness about different types of witnesses and victims. The way certain types of witnesses and victims responded in the past during composite sessions has revealed recurring trends. Acknowledging some of these impressions will help the artist to conduct his or her composite sessions. The composite session participants are divided into several basic categories. Exploring how each type has generally responded in the past will reveal beneficial strategies.

5. Descriptive Terminologies, Responses, and Solutions

Communication is the cornerstone of any composite session. This communication between the artist and participant reveals a lexicon of terminology. This terminology is a valuable facet for the development of a composite sketch. Understanding the words used by a person to express his or her perception of a suspect's appearance is principal to the success of the composite. The following is an exploration of these words and some solutions.

6. Managing Difficult Composite Sessions

There is a degree of difficulty with all composite sessions, though most are conducted within standard procedures. This chapter explores challenging exceptions and circumstances that will require procedure adjustments and increased artist concentration. These will include field sketches, difficult witnesses and victims, witness deception, the press, high-profile cases, multiple witnesses, language barriers, department rules, and intrusions. If these conditions are not properly handled, it will swing the pendulum of success in the wrong direction.

7. General Drawing Tips

There are tips, techniques, and guidelines that will help create better composite sketches and improve an artist's drawing skills. The implementation of these concepts will assist all composite artists at any level. Most are based on common artistic knowledge and theory. Presenting some of them within the context of a composite session and the three sketching stages will offer a more practical application.

8. Composite Session Tips

This chapter presents some additional tips for conducting a composite session. They should be implemented in conjunction with the other session concepts, guidelines, and rules already presented. It is also important to have a working understanding of the levels of success a composite sketch and session can achieve.

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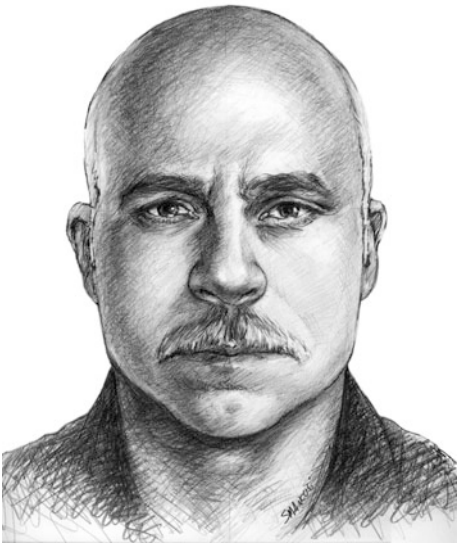
About the Author



Stephen Mancusi was the senior forensic artist and a first grade detective for the New York City Police Department for almost 27 years. Stephen was the recipient of many Chief of Detective awards presented by the NYPD's Detective Bureau for his part in successful criminal investigations within the city of New York. His expertise encompasses all the forensic art disciplines. His composite sketches have been instrumental in identifying many criminal suspects, including high-profile cases such as The Stuyvesant Town Rapist and the Central Park Assault Case. His drawings have appeared in all of the major New York newspapers, and in local and network TV news programs. He has been featured in articles in the *New York Times*, *London Sunday Telegraph*, *Evidence Technology Magazine,* and *The Daily News,* among others. Mr. Mancusi has appeared on ABC's "20/20," "New York Views," Discovery Channel, Court TV's "Justice Factory," Pro 7 German Television

Network, "Seven Network Australia Sunday Night," "Good Morning America," and History Channel's "MysterQuest." He is certified in forensic art by the International Association for Identification and sits on the board of the I.A.I.'s forensic art sub-committee.

As a forensic artist and NYPD detective, he has provided expert testimony during court proceedings throughout the city. In addition to his work for the NYPD, Stephen has developed forensic images for other law enforcement and governmental agencies, including the FBI and U.S. Postal Inspections Service.

A professional artist and illustrator for over 27 years, Stephen's skills encompass a variety of media, including 3D and 2D digital art, acrylics, oil, pencil, and pastel in a wide range of subject matter. His illustrative portfolio includes book jackets, magazine cover art, and poster art. A list of clients and examples of his work can be viewed at his website, www.forartist.com.

Stephen's paintings, pastels, and drawings have been exhibited in many New York galleries, including the prestigious The National Arts Club and Salmagundi Art Club in Manhattan. His artwork was part of several exhibits displayed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art as well as in the NYPD Police Museum.

On the lecture circuit, he has addressed a number of groups from varying disciplines, including the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Mystery Writers of America, School of Visual Arts, and Society of Professional Investigators, to name a few. Because of his expertise in the field, Stephen has trained artists of other police departments throughout North America in the field of forensic art. He has conducted forensic art workshops during many forensic education conferences throughout the United States. He has also presented lectures and residences for schools and community groups throughout Westchester County and New York City.

Chapter 1
Forensic Art and Composite Art

Forensic Art

Forensic art includes the disciplines of composite art, image modification, age progression, facial comparison analysis, demonstrative evidence, and postmortem/skull reconstruction. Police composite sketching is one of the most complex skills in the field of forensic art. The forensic artist is a multi-skilled professional. Though drawing or sculpting ability is paramount, additional skills are required. The forensic artist should also have knowledge of victim psychology, facial anatomy, human memory, and aging trends. The ability to communicate, interact, and interview victims as well as witnesses from all walks of life for all sorts of crimes is a necessity.

In the past 25 years, the previously known "police sketch artist" has evolved into the "forensic artist." In fact, police composite artists are designated as forensic artists. Forensic art evolved when police composite artists of that time began to organize what we did. In the fall of 1984, the New York City Police Department (NYPD), under the initiative of Detective Frank Domingo of the NYPD's Artist Unit, held the First Composite Art National Symposium (Fig. 1.1). Interestingly, it was held in the World Trade Center, which was only a few blocks from the NYPD headquarters. I was fortunate to assist in the final stages of the organization of this symposium and attend it. The head of the FBI's Special Projects Section and over 50 artists from all over the nation were present. Many familiar names and faces in the forensic art world at that time attended this seminar (Fig. 1.2). All the forensic art issues that are discussed today were explored during this conference. It was one of the first steps in the organization of the forensic art field. As these police art concepts were laid out in the years that followed, it became evident that the word "forensic" was appropriate. It didn't hurt that at that time real-life television crime shows had just become popular. A national spotlight was cast upon many forensic disciplines' sciences and art.

The disciplines of forensic art have been used by law enforcement agencies throughout history. When one recalls the Old West, the classic wanted poster with a drawing of an outlaw comes to mind. Many of these drawings were police composite sketches. As an example, the New York City Police Department has had a continuously staffed Artist Unit since 1956, but it used composite sketches long before then.

S. Mancusi, *The Police Composite Sketch*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-60761-832-4_1,

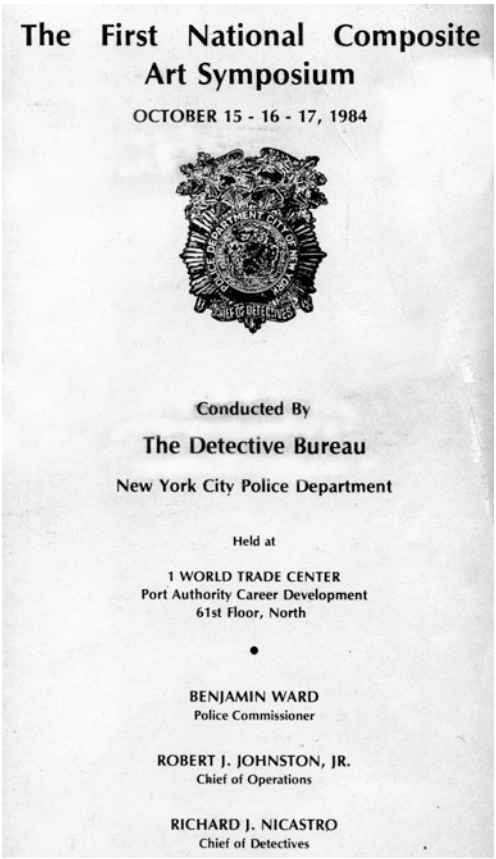


Fig. 1.1 "The First National Composite Art Symposium" program cover

The forensic artist primarily draws and sculpts but also uses a variety of computer technologies and digital imagery to help create practical investigative images. Over the years, forensic art has proven to be a formidable investigative tool. Time and time again in many celebrated cases throughout the world, it has been the key component in the solution of criminal investigations. On occasion, the forensic image has even pulled the proverbial rabbit out of a hat.

The word "forensic" does imply a scientific discipline. However, it refers to evidence that is brought into legal proceedings under expert testimony and open to debate. Though many of today's forensic artists have extensive scientific knowledge in specific forensic techniques such as skull reconstruction, it is still an art form. Consequently, forensic art is the artistic technique used in the identification, apprehension, or conviction of a wanted person. This person may not necessarily be a criminal, but could be a missing person or an unidentified deceased person. These forensic images are admissible in a court of law. A question often asked is, *are courtroom artists forensic artists?* The answer is no. These artists perform

Fig. 1.2 Composite Art Symposium attendees

their profession during legal proceedings. Generally, in contrast to the forensic artist, the completed artworks are not introduced as evidence, nor are they used for identification. Forensic art consists of the following disciplines.

Composite art: This is the technique of creating a sketch of an unknown subject from individually described parts into a single graphic image. It is intended to be a likeness or similarity of a victim's or witness's perception of the subject at the time the subject was seen.

Image modification: This is the alteration or enhancement of a photograph or video image for the purpose of updating, clarifying, or identifying a wanted subject. Age progressions and regressions are image modifications.

Postmortem reconstruction: Commonly known as skull reconstruction, this involves the rebuilding of facial features of unidentified badly decomposed or skeletal human remains. These images are created (1) digitally, (2) by sketching, or (3) three-dimensionally with clay. They are used for identification. Additionally, postmortem drawings are also reconstruction images. These are the facial drawings created by viewing photographs or the remains themselves of an unknown deceased person. In these cases, the bodies are relatively intact and not as decomposed. These drawings are used for identification.

Demonstrative evidence: This is the creation of visual materials that act as investigative aids or are used during legal proceedings as courtroom presentations.

Facial image comparison analysis: This is an opinion report based on an analysis of a comparison between multiple facial images. It attempts to determine if the subjects are the same individual. However, it is not necessarily meant to be a definitive facial recognition and/or a positive identification since the images in question could

be of varying quality. A degree of possibility is the norm for the outcome of the analysis as it relates to an identification or exclusionary result.

Becoming a Forensic Artist

The following question is often asked: *How do I begin to be a forensic artist?* The answer is simple. The pursuit of traditional artistic skills is an excellent avenue on which to begin. The best direction I can offer is a brief account of how I started. Though a little cliché, it is appropriate. My interest was always in art and illustration. I attended the State University of New York at New Paltz and the Fashion Institute of Technology, where I received a professional-level commercial art education. This is pertinent because, contrary to popular belief, art is a skill that requires quality instruction. Though creativity is somewhat inherent, the technical skills of drawing and sculpting must be learned. The forensic artist needs to be fluent in one or both of these techniques. The artist who skips the traditional study of art and decides to throw paint on a canvas, calling it "art," is puzzling. Where is the substance behind these images? Even Picasso knew how to paint and draw before he chose to do what he did. Forensic art is not an exception. The forensic artist must acquire traditional artistic skills first and then forensics.

Upon graduating from art school, I had a fledgling illustrative career mainly painting teenage novel book jackets. Unfortunately, it quickly became apparent that the field of graphic art is competitive and a difficult one from which to earn a living. It seemed at the time that law enforcement would be a profession that offered an avenue to pursue an art career. I tell all my younger students to keep one's eyes open for opportunities that may arise. A new prospect may not be exactly where you expect to find it. One never knows where a door might open; if it does, you should run through it. It can't be said that every door will be successful, but at least you should try. That is exactly what I did, though my interest in traditional law enforcement was minimal. A job that presented a chance to apply artistic skill in a police investigation capacity was very intriguing. I envisioned a path to a police artist position. It was a big step, but I saw an opportunity.

After joining the New York City Police Department in 1982, I worked as a patrol officer for a couple of years on the streets of Brooklyn in some of the toughest New York City neighborhoods. This was a far cry from a life as an artist. Yet the time on patrol offered many incidents from which to develop a unique perspective and understanding about the crimes' situations and their victims. It is not the only way to obtain this knowledge and interactive skills, but it is one of the most effective. The police officer experiences the confusion and intensity that follow most criminal acts. All the emotion, pain, uncertainty, horror, and environmental logistics are thrust toward the officer. These are situations that require actions and solutions. They are certainly learning experiences that help during a composite session.

Nevertheless, my interest and skills were still in art. Only a few months after graduating from the police academy, I inquired about applying to the Artist Unit.

However, early on, it seemed as if the door was closed. I remember being on patrol one day, standing on a street corner. It was a rare quiet and rainy day. I decided to make some phone calls. I went to the local store on my beat and got change for the pay phone—there weren't any cell phones back then. I wasn't sure how many calls I would need to make before I got through to the right person. It's a big department and getting through to the right person is easier said than done. Anyone who has ever called a large city department can certainly attest to that. Believe it or not, it is even the same for its members. I was hoping to get an idea about the reality of becoming the department artist. To this day, I am not sure if I ever really contacted the proper person. I did get in touch with someone whom I understood to be a police artist. I was told, "Kid, if you're not connected, you never get in. Besides there are no openings anyway." Well, being "connected" meant knowing someone of importance to go to bat for you, basically to make inquiries on your behalf to get appointed to the unit. I was not connected. It seemed as if it were a dead end and the door would never open. I almost gave up on the idea, but you should never give up on your dreams.

Only a short time later, the chance to apply to the NYP D's Artist Unit did arise. Upon coming back from a two-week vacation, my patrol partner told me he saw a department bulletin the week before looking for an artist. Much to my surprise, the opportunity door opened. I ran through it as fast as I could. I talked to Detective Frank Domingo, who was the senior artist at that time. He was looking to replace an unexpectedly retiring artist, Detective Bill McCormack. Bill was something of a salty seaman-type guy. He had white hair, white beard, and a weathered complexion with sunken cheeks. He was an accomplished artist in his own right, but he loved to fish. He had announced his retirement without much warning. Detective Domingo wanted to recruit a police officer with significant artistic skills to maintain a higher level of competency within the Artist Unit. He held interviews for the first time in the unit's history and extensively tested many applicants, including me. Well, we hit it off, and I was a police artist a few months later. My journey as a forensic artist began. I was grateful for the chance to be the department artist. It is very difficult to attain this position, and I knew it. Perseverance and the ability to see the path to one's goals is an answer to how to get there. Possessing professional-level art skills and having a personality that connects with my interviewer certainly didn't hurt. My path was a successful one. Hopefully, this may help you to start an equally successful path. Needless to say, it is extremely rewarding to apply one's artistic skill during a composite session to catch the "bad guys."

Story 1: "Mob Hit"

An interesting situation happened a few years later. It demonstrates the degree of difficulty and competition for such a position within a large department. There was a mob hit of a man from Staten Island, a borough in New York City. A wise guy was gunned down one evening in his car while it was parked in his driveway. It was a

Man found slain in B'klyn identified as mob figure

By LARRY CELONA and JERRY CAPECI
Daily News Staff Writers

A Staten Island man found slain in Brooklyn was identified yesterday as a mob associate who had been wounded earlier this year in the bloody Colombo family war, law enforcement officials revealed.

Steven Mancusi, 36, whose body was discovered Wednesday, was apparently killed a week ago and left in a car that had been stolen Oct. 1,

Fig. 1.3 *New York Daily News* article

noted news story in the papers the next day (Fig. 1.3). One of the first lines of the article stated, "Steve Mancusi, known mobster, was killed in his car late last night." It went on to give further details of the incident. In addition to his name, his basic human pedigree closely matched mine. The office got a kick out of it. However, I wasn't expecting the phone call that I received later in the morning. A police officer who wanted to get into the Artist Unit called. She was inquiring if I was dead and was there now an opening in the unit. Much to her dismay, I informed her I was very much alive and, unfortunately for her, there was not an opening. The next artist position did not become available for many years. Sometimes timing is everything.

Composite Art

Composite art is an unusual marriage of two unlikely disciplines: police investigative work and art. The cop-artist, almost an oxymoron, possesses both skills. The artist must create a quality facial drawing with assured confidence. The purpose of this sketch is to successfully gather, interpret, and illustrate the information obtained from the victim's memory. This sketch will be a drawing that merges many elements into one graphic image—hence, a *composite*. It is essential to realize that a composite sketch is a drawing of a victim's or witness's perception of a perpetrator at the time he or she was observed. It is not meant to be an exact portrait of the suspect. Keep the two words "likeness" and "similarity" in mind at all times. This is the best a composite sketch can achieve. Unlike most forensic sciences, in forensic art, almost *is* good enough.

All composite sketches are done during a *composite session*. A session involves drawing and interviewing. Though drawing is a vital part of the session, the real challenge lies in the ability to interview the victim or witness. The structure and continuity of the session are extremely crucial. The artist must develop a technique that effectively involves a victim or witness into the creation of a suspect sketch.

One method that helps to achieve this during the composite session is the technique of drawing the sketch in three stages. The first is the *proportion stage*. It is a basic line drawing that lays out the relationship and position of the individual facial features. Just as a building cannot be constructed without a foundation, the same goes for the composite sketch. The proportions are the foundation. In fact, many individuals look the way they do because of their unique proportions. The composite then enters a second stage, which is the *characteristic stage*. This is the drawing of the shapes of the facial features described by the victim. This is also the stage when the artist is working the most closely with the victim. The final stage is the *rendering stage*. The artist will render the sketch clearly and distinctly according to the information that was described and illustrated. "Clear" and "distinct" are also two important words to keep in mind when rendering a composite sketch. The composite sketch is not meant to be photographic, but rather an illustration of the information gathered during the session. Understanding these stages and terminologies will help you conduct your composite session (Fig. 1.4).

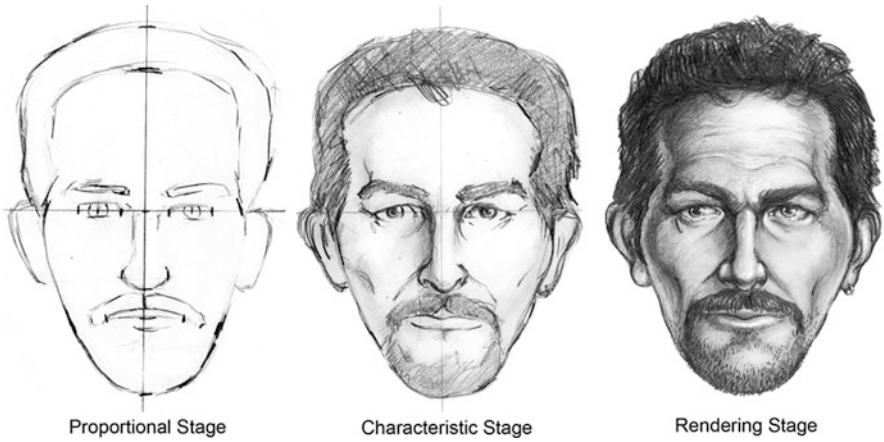


Fig. 1.4 The three stages of a composite sketch

Before exploring this method fully, let's examine the artistic appearance of a composite sketch. When drawing a portrait or a caricature of a subject, the artist will have either the person or images of the person in front of him or her (Figs. 1.5 and 1.6). The artist knows what the outcome is going to be and can sketch accordingly. In many ways, these artistic interpretations can look more like a subject than a photograph might. Especially with caricatures, illustrating one extreme feature, such as Jimmy Durante's nose, can achieve a great likeness. Unfortunately, the composite artist does not have an image of the subject in front of him or her while working. The composite artist needs to rely on the verbal description supplied by the witness. Thus, the look of a composite sketch will range from a portrait-type drawing to a caricature-type sketch, unfortunately never achieving either (Fig. 1.7). Understanding this limitation will help your composite sketching implementation.

Fig. 1.5 Pencil study of Humphrey Bogart

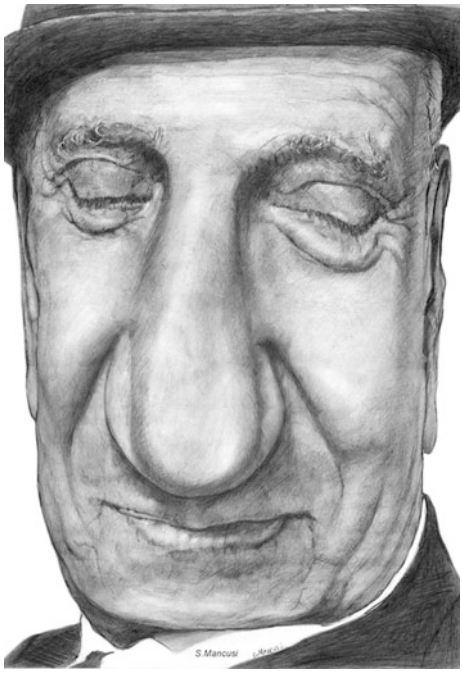


Fig. 1.6 Caricature of Jimmy Duranté

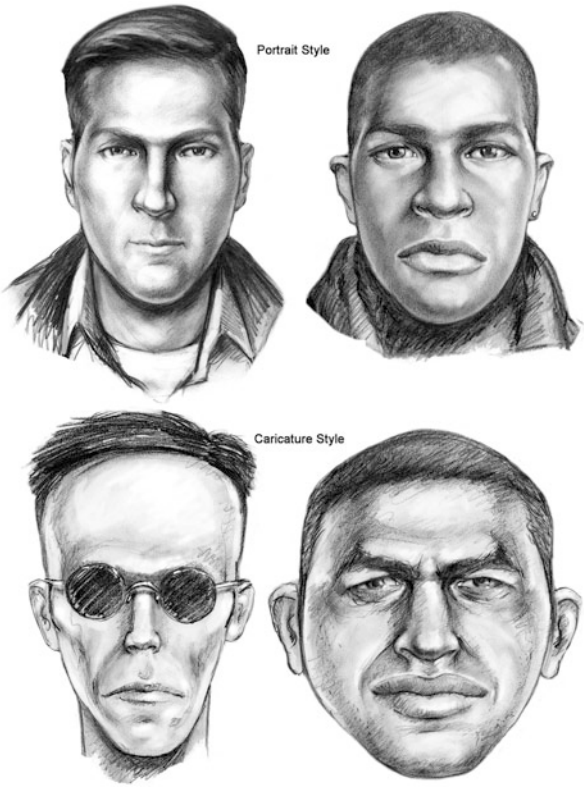


Fig. 1.7 Portrait- and caricature-style composite sketches

Basic Composite Sketch Case Study: "A Serial Rapist"

Sometime in 1994, a woman comes home from work in the Stuyvesant Town neighborhood in lower Manhattan. This is an apartment complex consisting of many buildings. It is not generally known as a dangerous area. She is an intelligent businesswoman in her 30s. It is late afternoon but still light outside. She enters her building, goes up the elevator, and walks down her hallway to her apartment. She feels she is in the safest place she could be. As she approaches the door to her apartment, she is unaware that there is an unknown man inside. He had broken into her apartment earlier through a window. As she enters, the man attacks her. He sexually assaults her. This is not an isolated incident. This suspect has attacked before. He is a serial rapist who has committed similar crimes in Manhattan on other occasions. However, this victim was the first to get a direct look at the front of his face. A sexual crime in New York City is handled by the Special Victims Squad of the NYPD's Detective Bureau. In the normal course of their investigation, detectives

from the Special Victims Squad contact the artist unit to have a composite sketch prepared.

The appointment was a couple days after the attack. I get the preliminary information about the case prior to the arrival of the detective and victim. I am told the particulars of the incident and that the suspect was a serial rapist. The assigned detective felt this victim got a good look at the suspect. They arrive at my office located in One Police Plaza, just across the street from City Hall. A standard composite session is conducted with the victim. The victim works closely with me throughout the session. The session continues normally and a sketch is completed. The victim is satisfied with the outcome of the sketch and feels there is a good likeness to the perpetrator (Fig. 1.8). The detective received a couple of photographs of the sketch and some photocopies. It wasn't until much later that the Printing Section was able to reproduce the sketch on a wanted poster. The poster was distributed throughout the department, ultimately hanging on a wall in some police precincts of interest. As luck has it, one day an assistant district attorney (ADA) in New York City was in one of these precincts on other business. She sees the wanted poster and recognizes the sketch as her half-brother Anthony. "Recognizes" is another important term to keep in mind. The ADA recognized the subject of the sketch. In a courageous act, she immediately informs the Special Victims Squad of this realization and gives the detective this significant lead in this case (Fig. 1.9).

Anthony resides in Florida. He had been arrested years earlier in Florida for rape and was released only a few months before. At about the same time, the Stuyvesant Town Rapist started his crime spree here in New York. Through diligent

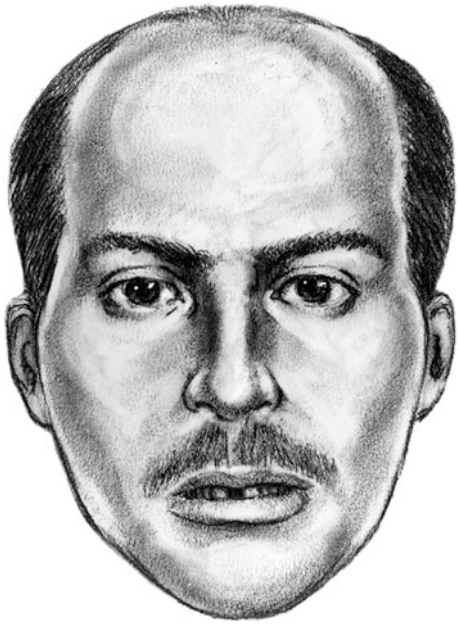


Fig. 1.8 Stuyvesant Town rapist composite sketch

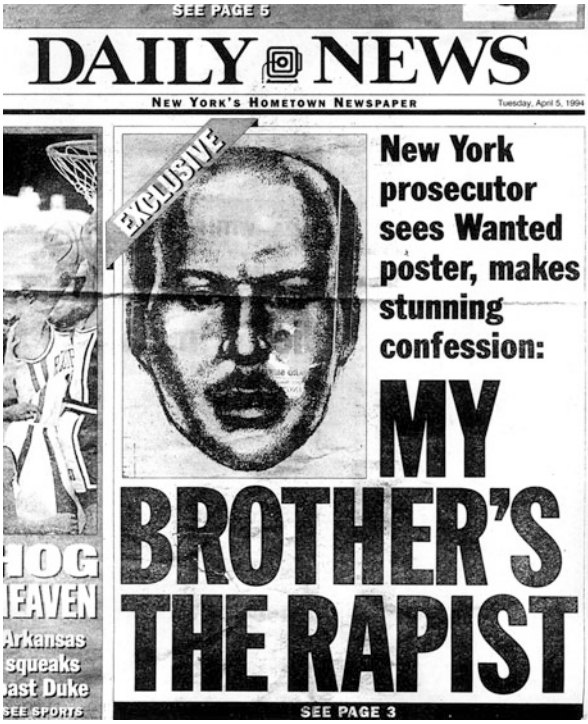


Fig. 1.9 Front page of *N.Y. Daily News* (1994)

work, the detectives of the Special Victims Squad were able to develop a case with the available evidence against Anthony. They arrested Anthony at his Florida home. He was later identified by the victim during a lineup. He was convicted of first-degree rape and received 20 to 40 years in prison. During sentencing, the judge noted that this convicted suspect's sole purpose in life seemed to be to rape, sodomize, and terrorize woman. He felt it was his right to commit these crimes (Fig. 1.10).

There are many examples of successful composite art cases throughout the country. Nevertheless, this perfectly illustrates the fundamental premises of a composite sketch: There is a crime, and the victim is able to identify the suspect or at least had a chance to see the perpetrator's face. The particulars of this incident were perfect for the implementation of a composite session. A composite sketch is successfully prepared and completed during the session. The sketch is released to the investigative detective and/or to the public. Through others recognizing the suspect portrayed in the sketch, a detective gets an important lead that results in the suspect's apprehension. Even though this sketch is not exactly the suspect, it was close enough to do its job. These basic circumstances can lead to the successful conclusion of many criminal investigations.

The process will be the same for most cases. The circumstances will change. Conducting a composite session and sticking to a specific technique will be

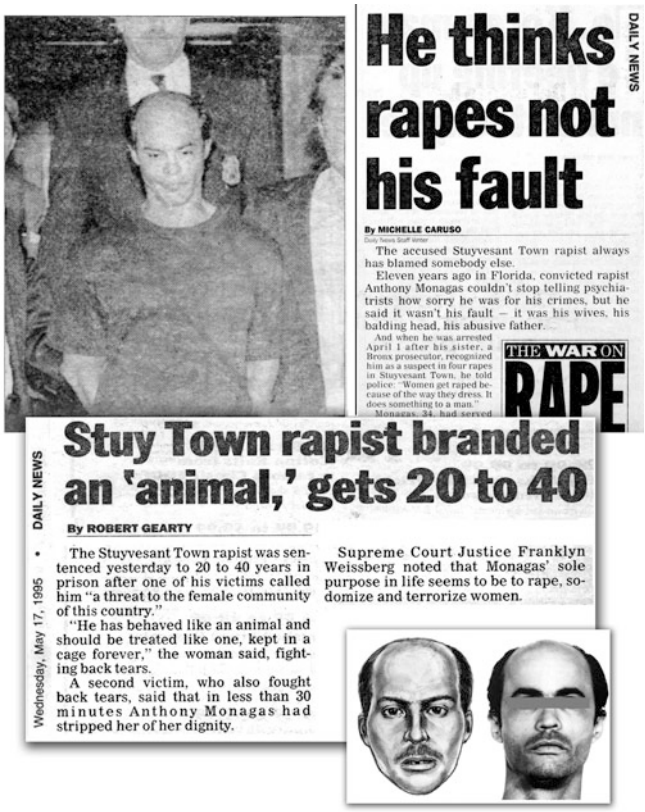


Fig. 1.10 Stuyvesant Town rapist *N.Y. Daily News* articles and suspect hit

demanding. Crimes, victims, detectives, descriptions, and a host of other variables can complicate many composite sessions. The trick is to find ways to handle these pressures and perform at a consistent level of professionalism. I am reminded of something an old friend of mine always said when things weren't going quite the way we planned. He was a carpenter for whom I apprenticed in my youth. "Stevie," he'd say in his Italian accent, "We do the best we can under the existing conditions." Well, you always need to do the best you can, no matter how difficult the conditions may be.

Art Materials

As we explore composite art further, an often-asked question is, *what kinds of art materials are used?* Art materials are essential tools of the composite artist. Inferior equipment will impede the performance of your sketching technique. Though

everyone has individual preferences, there are some suggestions that are strongly advised. Many types of equipment and materials have been experimented with. The following have been found to be the best. First, if you have a yellow no. 2 pencil with a pink eraser in your arsenal, remove it and put it back in your child's school bag. As a professional artist, we do not use this pencil. The quality and type of pencil are significant to the outcome of a drawing. Graphite pencils come in a variety of types. They range from 9H (the hardest) to 8B (the softest). The hard graphite will result in generally lighter lines. The softer the graphite, the darker the tones that can be achieved. The H scale starts with a 9H, which is very hard, and continues downward to an H pencil. There are two middle-level pencils: HB and F. (The yellow pencil with the pink eraser is a 2H, by the way.) The B scale starts at B and goes up to an 8B or higher. The 8B pencil is very soft. There are many pencil-drawing techniques that require all these levels of pencils. As seen in the drawing of Humphrey Bogart (Fig. 1.5), I utilized the complete range of pencils for this detailed technique. This type of deliberate pencil technique, though resulting in a desirable-quality drawing, is very time-consuming. This would be counterproductive for a composite sketch, where time is important. For a composite sketch, a soft pencil such as a 6B (tip: I suggest a Sanford Design Drawing 3800 pencil) is all you need. This tool will avail you of all the halftone values and contrast to render a sketch in a reasonable amount of time. Inexperienced artists may be apprehensive to use such a dark, aggressive pencil, perhaps being insecure in their ability to control their line and shading technique. However, the more you draw with a 6B or softer pencil, the more the range of its effectiveness becomes evident. Additionally, one's confidence will grow with experience. The beautiful thing about a pencil is that it is a very forgiving medium. You can always erase, which you will need to do a lot of during any composite session.

This brings up another element of the pencil—the material it is made of. Graphite pencils are the best for a composite sketch. Ebony, charcoal, and other exotic carbon pencils are slightly oilier. They do not mix with graphite pencils and are more difficult to erase. I would not use them for a composite sketch. Stick with graphite pencils; they will do the job well.

I place three erasers on my drawing table when doing a composite sketch. They are all required. The kneaded rubber eraser is extremely versatile and used the most. The only rubber eraser I can recommend is the Design Kneaded Rubber no. 1224. Drawing is not only done with a pencil but also with an eraser. You can't draw without it. The next is a white Staedtler Mars Plastic eraser. This eraser is used to remove the graphite almost down to the white of the paper. It is an effective eraser in the dark shaded areas of a drawing where the paper may be fully saturated with graphite. This is in contrast to the kneadable erasers, which may leave some marks behind. The white eraser is good for removing desirable highlights on a completed sketch. This eraser is used sparingly. The third is an electric eraser and a must. It is loaded with a similar white plastic eraser described above. These are great for removing lines and adding small white highlights in the eyes, lips, and hair. Unfortunately, they are not cheap. I have one that is about 15 years old and it works great. It was produced by a company called Elite, which seems no longer to be in

business. For reasons unknown, this happens often in the art material world. Just as you fall in love with a particular art tool or material, the company goes out of business or decides to change the product. The only suggestion is to purchase a cordless one that is as light in weight as possible.

The most important piece of equipment you will need is a drawing pad. I am very particular with this item. Cheap paper will not suffice. You need the best-quality paper for a composite sketch. The paper needs to be able to take a lot of abuse in terms of drawing, erasing, redrawing, and redrawing again. Low- or even middle-grade paper gets saturated with the graphite quickly. It will not allow the artist to make all the changes that might be required during the course of a composite session. The size of the pad is 11 in. by 14 in. This may seem insignificant, but it is not. When working on a consistent-size sheet of paper, you will have a familiarity between the proportional relationships of the size of the subject's head to the sheet of paper. This will consistently keep the head dimensions to the optimum 7 to 9 in., which has been found to be an effective size. Drawing too small doesn't allow the detail and may impede your shading technique. Drawing large takes more time and may result in your running out of paper surface. A sketch of an approximate 8-in. head on an 11-in. by 14-in. pad will allow enough area for hats, beards, and/or full hairstyles. The paper should be two-ply, with a rough surface. (Tip: A suggested pad is the Strathmore Bristol 500 series no. 580-62 vellum finish 11×14 pad. It is a little high-end in cost, but worth it.)

Story 2: "Equipment"

The following is a case that illustrates this point about materials. Late in the evening some time ago, a robbery occurred in the 75th precinct. Generally, the next day would be sufficient to do a composite sketch for this kind of case. However, this time the powers that be wanted it done that evening. At the time the call came into the NYPD's Artist Unit, the artist on duty was Juan Perez. He was the newest artist to the unit. Detective Perez was eager to do his first field sketch. He took all the pertinent case information from the detective on the phone. He quickly packed his field sketch bag with his equipment and set out for the location. Upon getting to the precinct, he was feeling slightly anxious. A field sketch is always a little more difficult of a composite session (see the section entitled "Field Sketches" in Chapter 6). However, he believed he was prepared. He met with the detective assigned when he arrived. He was brought to a back room of the precinct. The victim was already there and visibly upset. She was sitting next to a table. Detectives were milling around and waiting for the artist to begin the composite sketch session. The artist began to unpack and set up. He pulled out his pencils, mug shots, ruler, and eraser. To his dismay, something was missing. The Strathmore pad wasn't there. In his haste, he inadvertently left the pad on his desk back in the office. He later described his feelings to me: "It was like when you went into your third-grade class and the teacher announced the start of the big test. A test you had forgotten all about. Your heart drops into your

stomach." He said he was in a small state of panic. Not wanting anyone to know and thinking quickly, he casually went over to the copy machine and got some Xerox paper. Nobody except him was the wiser, and he continued with the session. To this day, he says it was one of the most difficult drawings he had done. Not because the session, crime, or victim was bad. He was lucky. It was a straightforward session. It was because the paper was not responding to his drawing technique, and the quality of the sketch suffered. No matter how hard he tried, he could not achieve the rendering levels he was capable of. There were great limitations to this kind of paper. When conducting a composite session, you don't want your equipment to be the distraction. Needless to say, he was never so nonchalant about his equipment again.

Other pieces of equipment you should have available are facial and photographic references. They are a very helpful tool for the composite session. The NYPD's Artist Unit has access to countless mug shots of suspects of all ages and races. This proves to be invaluable. If you are working for a law enforcement agency, you should get access to these types of images. If not, it will be a little difficult to get the amount of photographs you will need to conduct your session. The FBI has a catalog it offers to law enforcement agencies for this purpose. It is not as extensive as necessary, but it is pretty good and useful. Unfortunately, such catalogs are a little hard to come by. Other references should include all kinds of accessories like hats, glasses, hairstyles, and a variety of any other images that you may think of. These will aid in the interview process with the witness or victim. These photographs are meant to be used as references only.

Additionally, an electric pencil sharpener nearby is helpful. I constantly sharpen my 6B pencil as the drawing continues. An electric sharpener doesn't result in the best pencil point. When time is important, this kind of sharpener does the job quickly. If a very detailed portrait drawing is required, you would use a single-edge razor and sanding block to chisel the finest point. A composite sketch does not require that kind of edge. Other equipment includes tracing paper, ruler, and maybe some circle and oval templates. Good lighting and a strong, sturdy drafting table are all a must. Your studio or interview room should be quite, private, and inviting. The environment in which you conduct a composite session is very important.

A computer and digital equipment are necessities for most forensic artists. In fact, some forensic art disciplines' investigative images are done solely on the computer. Though it is not as paramount for the composite sketch, it is still helpful. There are forensic artists who do their drawing directly on a computer with a drawing tablet. I am computer-savvy but find nothing is better for sketching than the traditional art materials. However, you will still need a computer, a scanner, and a good laser printer for the creation of a wanted poster. It also helps to electronically transmit a completed sketch to other units or agencies. On occasion, you can make some adjustments to a finished sketch on the computer after it has been scanned at the end of the session for printing quality control. Any desktop system today will work just fine. Your hardware should also include a drawing tablet. The Wacom tablets are great. A Wacom 6×8-in. size is more than sufficient. All kinds of software are available. General off-the-shelf software as opposed to specifically designed

software for forensic artists is quite sufficient. These digital software programs are powerful tools. Once you have learned them, they are the best for achieving your image goals. You will need desktop publishing software for wanted posters (I suggest QuarkXPress). The most valuable program is Adobe Photoshop. It is somewhat expensive but worth the price and a must for any digital graphic project.

The tools you use will make a difference. Acquiring them really should be the simplest thing you can do to ensure a consistent product. The NYPD is a large bureaucracy. As readers who have worked in a bureaucratic setting may know, getting the equipment you feel you need is not so easy. It may take a little persuasion. The NYPD never made it easy. The old "bottom line" always came first. Fortunately, most of this equipment is relatively inexpensive compared to other forensic unit budgets. Interestingly, the NYPD's Artist Unit had only one red rotary phone for the longest time. While the rest of the department and the world had push-button telephones, we still turned a dial. This is not to say that I didn't like the old rotary phone. It added to the ambiance of the unit. Once a detective asked if he could use our phone; when he looked at it, he was a bit perplexed over how to dial. It was kind of cool. It took the major incident of 9–11 for the NYPD to finally upgrade all of its phone systems. However, the NYPD has fully come up to the 21st century since then. It always takes a little coaching to get a large department on board with spending money. But if your requests are good suggestions, the department will always come through. You don't want to be caught trying to loosen a 5/16-in. nut and find out you only have a 1/4-in. wrench. Fight the battle; it will pay off in the long run.

Chapter 2
The Composite Session

Basic Concepts

As stated earlier, all composite sketches are done during a standard composite session. The composite session includes drawing and interviewing. First, let's examine some basic concepts needed to conduct a composite session successfully. An acknowledgment worth noting is that artists throughout the country will have many of their own variations for this technique. The following is more like a revelation of observed propensities and an exploration of a particular set of procedures that have been developed over time. The reasons for these prescribed composite concepts will be discussed. The proof of their effectiveness is illustrated for the many investigations for which they were successfully implemented.

The development of composite session skills is directly related to the level of professionalism one obtains. Professionalism is having the knowledge and competence expected from the skills of a specific discipline. This seems like an obvious statement for many professions. The police composite artist must see him- or herself as a professional. Though a given in many other technical forensic disciplines, it has not always been the case in the field of forensic art. This is attributed to the fact that many law enforcement agencies do not have access to a trained artist and may settle for someone without the full complement of artistic skills necessary to do the job. The department or artist is not at fault. An individual with the basic talent or desire to be an artist may not have had the opportunity or funds to pursue it completely. This has resulted in many police composite sketches looking amateurish or just anatomically wrong. This is a problem for the profession. Fortunately, in the past 20 years, there have been greater opportunities for the police artist to get training and information about composite sketching techniques. The isolation of a police artist is not as prevalent today as it was in the 1980s and earlier. There are more avenues for communication, such as the Internet. Additionally, there are forensic science and art organizations that make it easier to get help. Though nobody starts a forensic art career with great composite session abilities, it is up to the artist to have professional-level artistic skills.

I was fortunate to have acquired solid artistic skills prior to entering the field of forensic art. As mentioned earlier, this was directly related to college-level

S. Mancusi, *The Police Composite Sketch*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-60761-832-4_2,

instruction of the techniques that are vital for the professional graphic artist. It takes a diligent effort to hone one's artistic skills. Nevertheless, the experienced, well-trained general artist will still not possess the unique knowledge required to conduct a composite session. Every artist will need to attain this knowledge to develop a suspect composite sketch. The following is a brief account of my first attempt at a composite session. Many of the composite session concepts that will be discussed were not fully developed back then.

Story 3: "First Sketch"

There really isn't any warning when the department is going to transfer you into a new command. I had been interviewed and tested for the Artist Unit. I was told the commanding officer of the Latent Print Section (the parent section of the Artist Unit) had requested the transfer, but neither of us had any idea when that would happen. Upon arriving to work one afternoon at the 81st precinct to perform normal patrol duty, I was told that my transfer had come through and, as of the next morning. I should report to my new command. The news caught me and the Latent Print Section's commanding officer off-guard, as well as Detective Frank Domingo, who had recommended me. I was there bright and early the next day.

During the first couple of days of orientation, I was told Frank would begin my training when he got back. He was on leave for a few days. I was working a tour that generally had me alone in the unit answering the phones and making future appointments. On the second or third day, a call came in for a composite sketch from the Manhattan Sex Crimes Squad. They were looking for a suspect sketch to be done that day. I figured, "I know how to draw. Damn! I'm already a professional illustrator." Eager to get my feet wet, I told them to come in. Honestly, I didn't make the decision on my own. Before committing to do the sketch, I asked the fingerprint supervisor on duty if I should do it. In his defense, what did he know? He was told I could draw. So why not let me try?

It was a sexual assault that had occurred in the city. The squad arrived at the office with the victim right on time. I would love to tell you that I was a natural and the session went smoothly without a hitch. How could it? I had no concept of what or how a composite sketch was done. As far as I was concerned, the victim tells me what the guy looks like and I draw the face. I'm not even sure if I was savvy enough to offer the victim a seat or a cup of coffee at the appropriate time.

Take a look at the pencil drawing of the old man (Fig. 2.1). This is the level of drawing skill I was capable of. As you can see, I knew how to draw. I presumed my composite sketch would be equally good. I asked the victim what the guy looked like and started to sketch from there. My whole focus was to draw a face and make it look good. I quickly realized that this was not going to be easy. I wasn't just copying a picture of a face. As a matter a fact, I had no idea what the face that I was drawing looked like. So I struggled with every line. I was asking questions, drawing, erasing, and drawing some more. I started with an eye, a nose, and so on. Unsurprisingly,

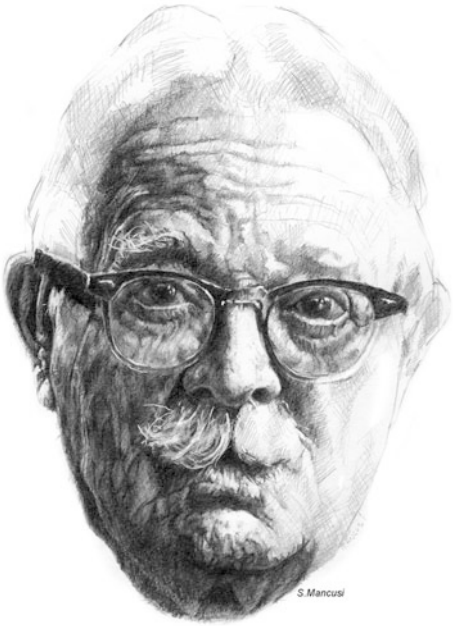


Fig. 2.1 Old man pencil study

I made quite a few mistakes during that first sketch. It took me about five hours, which would be long for most composite sessions. They weren't very productive hours either. If the victim had told me the nose was 10 in. long, I probably would have tried to draw it that way. There wasn't any structure to the session. Even if I had been lucky enough to get all the information from the victim, my technique wasn't developed enough to illustrate it properly. Ultimately, the completed sketch was terrible. To this day, I cringe when I look at this drawing (Fig. 2.2). Now you may be asking yourself, "What were the detectives thinking?" They thought they got a great sketch. What did they know? A detective is never going to be able to tell you that your sketch is bad. I can't remember if the victim was happy with it or not. I wouldn't have known how to fix it anyway.

The preceding story clearly demonstrates a valuable lesson. Though drawing is important, it is equally paramount to conduct an organized session and develop good interviewing skills. Even a skilled artist can ultimately fail at conducting a composite session without proper technique. Moreover, this lesson can go both ways; take a look at the example of a past composite sketch from an unknown artist (Fig. 2.3). This is an actual suspect sketch that was found in the archives of the Artist Unit. Even if this artist possessed good composite session technique without well-developed drawing skills, he did not have the ability to properly illustrate the information obtained from the session. Every composite artist must be certain that his or her abilities are competent and at a professional level. It is our job as the artist to ensure a properly developed and anatomically correct composite sketch.

Fig. 2.2 Stephen's first sketch

Fig. 2.3 Unknown composite artist's sketch

In addition to the requirement of professionalism and organization, some other issues should be addressed up front. The careful consideration of the session's environment is one. All composite sessions should be conducted in a managed environment. This is an area over which you have complete control. Field sketches are a reality and the normal course of action for many composite artists, but this control can be little more difficult to attain (see the section entitled "Field Sketches" in Chapter 6). When possible, the bulk of your sessions should take place in your studio or office. The NYPD's Artist Unit has a large room with several drafting desks. The lighting is good and each desk has a lamp. All the equipment described in Chapter 1 is abundantly available. There are comfortable chairs for the victims or witnesses. The Artist Unit is equipped with files of mug photographs of all races, ages, and genders, in addition to other visual references. There is every attempt to keep the area appearing un-police-like. You do not want people intimated by the session environment.

The artist's attire is also a consideration. He or she should not look like a cop. Uniforms are not recommended. People are generally intimidated by them, and this is not helpful during a composite session. Consider this for a moment especially if you are a police officer yourself. When you are stopped for a traffic violation in your car and the cop walks up to you, how do you feel? This highway cop is projecting an authority figure necessary for this circumstance. It is completely the opposite condition for a composite session. You don't want a witness or victim to feel you are an imposing authority figure when you first meet. Many witnesses, victims, and even detectives were surprised when I revealed during the session that I was a detective. You will find that keeping controllable distractions at a minimum and the office environment pleasant during a session will benefit your overall results.

The Beginning of the Composite Session

Prior to the start of any composite session, you must get the presession preliminary information from the investigating detective. You should attempt to gather this information without the victim or witness present. Some of the obvious details required will include the crime and the date, time, and location of the occurrence. Additionally, ascertain if this case is part of any ongoing crime pattern and if any other sketches have been prepared. Furthermore, the detective's impressions of the victim or witness can be helpful. This includes such information as the mental and physical condition of the victim and whether he or she is being cooperative. Detectives do not volunteer all the information upfront—mostly because they don't know you need it. Always ask if the victim or witness previously looked at mug shot photographs. This is for a couple reasons. First, many times the victim may have picked out someone who looked like the suspect but is not him or her. It will greatly help if that photograph is available. However, before viewing any photograph a detective may have brought, be certain the photograph is not

an active suspect. If it is, you do not want to see it during the session. A mug shot of a possible suspect will compromise the results of the composite sketch and become an issue later in court. However, if it is just a lookalike, it can be used but only after the artist has ascertained the conditions in which the victim previously selected the image. The procedure to determine the usefulness of a lookalike photograph is implemented when the references are introduced into the session. A second reason for determining if the witness has viewed mug shots is the possibility that it could have affected his or her memory. Knowing a victim has viewed countless mug shots prior to arriving for the composite session is information you should be aware of (see "Memory" later in this chapter). It is imperative for the artist to get as much presession information as possible during the preliminary inquiry.

Another thing you want to know from the detective is if there were any surveillance video or pictures from the incident. Many stores, banks, and residences have cameras installed. Any images of the suspect, even if they are dark and out of focus, could supply the artist with some additional information. You will be amazed at how many detectives forget to tell you that there is an image of the suspect from one of these cameras. The detectives generally regard images that they cannot use for identification as no value. Yet, to the trained eye of the composite artist, there may be some partial value to it. Any information you can get about the suspect is going to help. There is no such thing as cheating except for the circumstance that a lookalike photograph is a possible suspect.

Working Case Study: "The Psycho Straphanger"

In the spring of 1989, there was a case in Queens, a borough in New York City. The police dubbed the case the "Psycho Straphanger." We will explore the general composite session procedure as it relates to this working case study. The session particulars will be conveyed from start to finish in their entirety. We will intermittently reference other composite sketch cases that might illustrate a particular premise better. Generally, the "Psycho Straphanger" case was a standard composite session.

The circumstances of this case are as follows. This perpetrator would randomly stare down his victims, mostly men, while on a subway train. He would attack his victims with his fist, pipe, or knife. The incidents would be brutal. The suspect would leave his victims bloody on the floor of the subway car. In most of the instances, the victims sustained serious injuries. The last incident for this case had occurred in June 1989. The squad decided to have a composite sketch prepared with this last victim. Per police procedure, once it has been determined that a composite sketch would be helpful, the detective calls the Artist Unit to make an appointment. Time is always of the essence, and appointments are made within a timely fashion. However, the needs of the victim's or witness's schedule and other investigative procedures are accommodated.

As standard procedure, almost all victims and witnesses are accompanied to the composite session by the detective assigned to the case. On occasion, if the investigating detective is not available at the time the composite session is to take place, an unescorted-victim appointment can be arranged. This would not be recommended. The goal is to make this process as painless as possible for the witness or victim. Since this person is helping the department with the investigation, the least we can do is transport him or her to police headquarters for the composite session. One Police Plaza is the NYPD's headquarters and the location of the Artist Unit.

There are other reasons for the individual to be escorted. Some witnesses are not as reliable as others. Detectives spend a lot of time tracking down people for their investigations. Having a sketch prepared gives them a reason to get a vital witness or victim into their custody. Many times they can get other investigative work done with this person prior to or after the composite session. Having the investigating detective present during the session also allows you to get the previously mentioned presession information directly from the detective. Additionally, many times you may elicit other information from the victim during your session interview. The new information revealed may not be related to the composite sketch but could aid in the investigation and be of interest to the detective assigned. The standard procedure is to have the investigating detective present at the time of the session.

A composite session appointment was arranged for the June 1989 victim in the "Psycho Straphanger" case. The squad detective escorted the recent victim, who happened to be a male parole officer, to police headquarters. The composite session started the moment they arrived. The initial few minutes of a session are crucial to setting the tone of the whole session. The session interview starts at your first greeting:

> Hi. I'm Stephen, the department artist. It's nice to meet you.

There is a balance between the interview and drawing during any session. It starts with the interview and continues throughout the session. The drawing becomes more prevalent later in the session and continues until it ends. Start every session with the obvious pleasantries. This means basic stuff, like asking, "What's your name?" and "How are you?" Invite the witness or victim into your office. Offer him or her a seat, coffee, and let him or her get comfortable. Victims and witnesses are your visitors; treat them that way. You want them at ease.

Once this has been accomplished, if you haven't already gotten the presession information from the detective, do it now. If you need to talk to the detective, try to do it outside the office, especially if the presession information might be sensitive for the witness or victim participant to hear. Do not alienate the participant, but explain that there is some police business that needs to be taken care of prior to the start of the session. It has been noted that as long as you keep the participant informed as to what is going on, he or she will feel more a part of the process.

At this point, the stage has been set. You have all the presession preliminary information, and the witness or victim is seated comfortably. You are ready to continue the session. Offer a short explanation of the process to the witness or victim

participant right in the beginning. Let him or her know what to expect and what his or her role will be. This was explained to the victim of the "Psycho Straphanger."

> We are going to draw a composite sketch of the guy who did this. I will be asking you questions about what happened and what the suspect looks like. Just answer them as best you can. If you don't have the answer to a particular question, that's okay, too.

As the composite artist, it is our job to handle insufficient witness or victim participant information. This topic will be covered later. For now, this is all the explanation the participant needs. As the session continues, additional information will be supplied to the participant. You are now starting the core of your session's interview. This is your turf, and you need to be in control of the process.

The Interview

The initial interview is the first phase of the session's overall interview. The session's initial interview began with the opening "Hellos." The following question is often asked: *Does the artist need to have a detective's experience interrogating suspects, and will this help the artist conduct a composite session?"* The short answer is no. Composite artists do not interrogate. We interview. The assumption right from the beginning is the witness or victim wants to help. This belief generally continues throughout the session. Even if it is apparent or you are told prior to the session by the investigating detective that there are some reservations about a particular witness or victim participant, you should continue with the previous assumption (see the section "Intentional Difficult Behaviors" in Chapter 6). In the "Psycho Straphanger" case, the victim was a parole officer, so this assumption seemed clear. I had a cooperative victim who wanted to help. I could govern my interview accordingly. This is not to say that all law enforcement officers make good witnesses, because they don't. Yet one does lean toward the belief that the victim is going to be very cooperative.

There are basically two interviewing techniques used during a composite session. They should be used in conjunction with each other. The first is the *cognitive interview technique,* which allows the witness or victim to speak freely about the incident and the suspect being described. The artist gives little direction during this process. The artist will ask broad questions, such as "What did you see?" or "What happened?" This technique is usually used early during the initial interview.

Following are the four basic cognitive interviewing methods:

1. Have the witness reconstruct the circumstances surrounding the incident.
2. Explain to the witness that he or she should report everything, no matter how insignificant it may seem.
3. Have the witness or victim recall the events in a different order.
4. The witness or victim may also recall the incident from a new or different perspective.

All of these methods are not always necessary. Some of these methods are geared toward enhancing the witness's or victim's memory. The premise of talking freely is a natural memory enhancer for people to recall details. Basically, you want to get the participant talking early in the session. The more he or she talks to you, the more comfortable he or she will feel and the greater the chance of getting the information you need. Starting the session with a cognitive method of asking some broad questions will achieve this. It has been found that important insights are revealed about the description of the suspect during this early stage of the interview. You should listen intently to the words the participant uses to describe the subject at the start. This early descriptive information is most valuable. Comparing the similarity of the completed sketch to the preliminary descriptive words stated by the witness will offer insights into the sketch's success. Additionally, these cognitive interviewing methods can aid in phrasing the initial broad-based question according to the session's circumstances.

The second technique is the *police interview technique*. This is a question-and-answer technique that is used when more specific information is required. The questions should be phrased in an open-ended fashion so not to lead the witness. The concept of not leading the witness is very important. The way you structure your questions will affect this premise. Suppose you were trying to determine information about the size of the nose. An incorrectly phrased question would be

> Is the suspect's nose bigger than the one I have drawn?

This is a leading question. Even if you believe the witness is going to say a nose should be bigger, a better way to phrase this question would be

> How is this nose? Do think it could be bigger, smaller, or about the same?

In phrasing the inquiry in this manner, you have asked a question that requires a comment from the person. You have not directed him or her to a specific answer. This police interviewing technique is introduced later in the session. The balance of these cognitive and police interviewing techniques is paramount.

During the session's initial interview, you will evaluate the witness and/or victim. This is an integral premise. This evaluation will help you understand the strength of the participant's memory. The individual is categorized into one of three types. The first is an *active witness*. All victims are active witnesses and a witness directly affected by the crime. In the case of the "Psycho Straphanger," the witness is the victim, so he is active. An active witness could also be the person standing next to the victim when the crime occurs. If the detective in this case had brought a female witness who was sitting next to this victim on the train, she would still not be a victim. However, she was close enough to the incident to feel affected by it and would be considered an active witness. Active witnesses are generally strong witnesses. The next level is a *passive witness*. This is a witness who views the suspect during the commission of the crime but is not directly affected by the incident. If the detective's witness from the "Psycho Straphanger" case was sitting safely at the far end of the subway car when she saw the incident, she would be a passive witness. She knew a crime has happened, but she was not directly affected by it when she

saw the suspect. A passive witness is also considered a reliable witness. The lowest level of witness is the *inactive witness*. I refer to inactive witnesses as the preverbal "doorman witness." This witness views the suspect prior to or after the commission of the crime. At the time an inactive witness views a suspect, he or she doesn't have any knowledge of the crime and wouldn't have a reason to remember the individual. This witness has to recall the information when questioned later. If the witness from the "Psycho Straphanger" case was the train conductor, who saw the suspect board the train before the incident and later found out what happened, he would be an inactive witness. There wasn't any real reason for him to memorize the suspect when he first viewed him. An inactive witness is considered less reliable than active or passive witnesses. The composite artist can conduct a session with all levels of witnesses. This kind of situational information is usually revealed during the initial interview with the use of the cognitive interviewing technique.

It appeared that the "Psycho Straphanger" victim was going to be a good witness. I asked him to tell me what happened and what he saw. He was comfortable in the session environment, partially because he is a parole officer and involved with law enforcement. He was talking freely. He stated his best look of the suspect was prior to the attack when he was being eyeballed by the perpetrator. This raised the parole officer's suspicions of this individual, and he felt something was imminent. As he talked about what had happened, he described the suspect as a young, male, black, maybe in his early 20s. His first descriptive words were. "He was average-looking, but angry." This is an important statement. Though average or normal appearances are the most common descriptive words offered during a composite session, they still describe a specific facial type. It was noted that most likely nothing is unusual about this individual. He did add that he looked angry. At this point, if not already revealed, an inquiry is made if this perception was prior to or during the attack. If it was prior to, it becomes a significant characteristic. Common sense tells you it is expected that the guy would look angry during the attack. There would be a good chance that he didn't walk around with this expression on his face. However, there are people whose general nonexpressive facial features suggest an intensity or anger. This is caused by the angle of the eyebrows or brow ridge and the natural curve of the mouth. The "Psycho Straphanger" victim felt the suspect was angry even before the incident. This was mentally noted.

The essential information required during this initial interview is the suspect's human pedigree: basically age, race, and gender. Additional information that must be attained are the environmental factors that existed during the crime, such as the lighting, location, time, and any other condition that may have affected the person's perception of the suspect. Toward the end of the initial interview, if the before-mentioned facts have not been revealed, direct police interview questions are required. There are some particular elements that regularly require direct questions at the end of the initial interview. They typically lead me to ask my first police interview-type questions:

> Do you recall anything unusual about the suspect? Was anything covering part of his head, such as a hat, glasses, or facial hair?

This kind of information is very important. With these questions, your goal is to ascertain if the suspect had any peculiar facial features such as a bizarre nose, scars, or tattoos. A witness can forget to mention something as obvious as a hat. Mustaches and beards are often overlooked by the victim and sometimes left out in the initial description. It has been found that a witness can easily forget facial hair, but will not add it if it was not there. You want to ask these questions at first in a general fashion. You don't lead the witness. Nevertheless, they are significant features and cannot be overlooked. Victims and witnesses aren't aware of everything that you need to know. It is vital at some point to draw their attention to these elements.

During the initial interview with the parole officer, most of this pertinent information was revealed. I did have to ask those above-listed questions. The victim informed me that he remembered some kind of mark on the perpetrator's neck. It was mentally noted.

I want to emphasize that this was standard procedure up to this point in the "Psycho Straphanger" session. I conduct my sessions almost the same way every time. This is not to say that one doesn't have to adjust the procedure occasionally according to circumstances of a particular case. But through the execution of a standard procedure, you are assured that all aspects of the session and interview are covered. Once the composite sketch session procedure is ingrained, it affords the confidence and luxury of knowing that nothing is being missed.

Memory

Let's put the "Psycho Straphanger" case aside for a moment. This is a good time to explore concepts related to the witness's or victim's memory. Human memory is a complicated subject and would need volumes to explain. Nevertheless, knowing some of the following basic concepts about memory will help the implementation of any composite session. During the initial interview and evaluation of the witness, the artist acquires a good idea of the circumstances surrounding the case. The artist should also have some understanding of the strength or weakness of a victim's or witness's memory. The witness's or victim's memory is the primary source of information about the suspect for the artist. The artist must possess the ability to render a composite drawing with complete confidence. The real challenge lies in the retrieval and understanding of the descriptive information located in a person's memory. The witness/victim interview is the process used to extract this information. No matter how well the artist draws, he or she is always limited to the information stored in a witness's or victim's memory.

An understanding of memory is paramount to conducting a successful interview. To understand the participant's memory, the artist must first understand the formation of that memory. An individual's memory of the suspect is a product of the person's perception of that suspect at the time of the incident. The perceptions are affected by the conditions that existed during that moment, which include lighting, distance, viewpoint, shock, and viewing time, among others.

Time is a twofold issue. The two issues are: How much time did the witness view the suspect? How much time has passed since the crime was committed and before the sketch is prepared? The longer one views the suspect and the greater interaction one has with a suspect, the stronger the memory will be. Studies have shown that the memory is the strongest right after an incident but quickly and drastically drops off during the immediate time that follows. It eventually levels off. The amount of memory loss fluctuates from individual to individual. This settled memory stays constant for some time after the incident. The composite artist prefers, but is not always able, to conduct a session within an immediate timeframe due to the nature of investigations. Most composite sessions will take place during this settled stage of the memory, which has proven to possess enough information for the preparation of a composite sketch.

Shock is a very important factor. As a matter a fact, it is the best reason we can do our job as a composite artist. Shock is a memory imprinter and/or enhancer. This is why we forget the man we buy our paper from, but not the guy who points a gun at us. Shock can be a memory suppressor as well. Fortunately, studies have shown that even if an incident is being suppressed, there is still an underlying memory present. As composite artists, we have to find a way of tapping into this submerged memory. Knowing the mental state of the victim prior to the start of a session will help the artist conduct an appropriate interview. This is achieved with good interview skills and the ability to conduct a friendly, inspiring session (see "Session Dynamics" later in this chapter).

The angle from which the witness viewed the suspect will also affect perception. Extreme viewing angles will distort the perspective of the face. Understanding this distortion will help the artist rectify it in the drawing (Fig. 2.4). As an example, if a victim sees the suspect from the ground looking up, the suspect's head will be foreshortened and the nose will appear pig-like. The victim may describe the nose as such. As composite artists, we need to be aware of these kinds of distortions. Other perspective distortions include the fact that the forehead and top half of the skull appear smaller as we look up at a person. The opposite happens as we look down at someone. Ears will appear to be positioned higher or lower on the head according to the upward or downward perspective of the viewing angle. As humans, we understand objects in three-dimensional spaces. If we view a chair in one perspective and then turn it to another, we still know it's a chair. The human face is much more complicated, but the premise is the same. The artist will make appropriate perspective adjustments to the sketch for less extreme angles and keep the anatomy of the sketch human. Conversely, a problem develops when the viewer's perspective becomes too extreme, such as a profile view versus a straight or three-quarter view. You cannot draw a front-view composite sketch if the witness saw only a profile view of the suspect. There isn't any direct correlation between the shapes of the profile facial features and a front view of a subject's face. Two people can look similar in a profile, but completely different when viewed from the front. The same goes for the opposite.

The overall facial character of a suspect could affect perception as well. The more unusual a suspect's appearance is, the more memorable he or she will be.

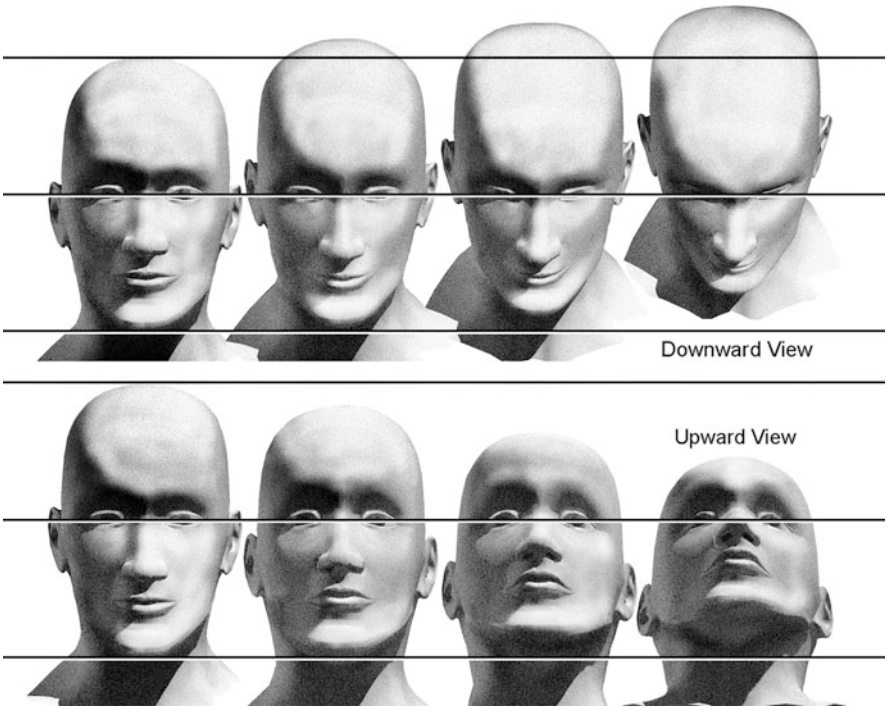


Fig. 2.4 Distortion perspective of witness viewing angles

The average- or normal-looking individual is harder to recall and less memorable. Additionally, the suspect's race can directly affect perception. How often have you heard that all Asian people look alike? Well, they don't. They are just like every other race. But if the witness is unfamiliar with a particular race, his or her perception will be affected by this. Maybe he or she lives in an area where there aren't many Asian people and he or she doesn't like Chinese food. He or she never really has any interaction with this race. Witnesses of this nature are going to think that all Asians look alike because of life experience. In contrast, certain individuals such as Hispanic and West Indian victims are able to distinguish, just by facial appearance, the country or island from which a particular suspect may have originated.

There are other obvious factors that may affect witness perceptions. Was the scene well lit or did the crime happen at night in the dark? How far was the witness from the suspect? The effects on perception from these conditions are obvious and should be noted by the artist at the start of a session. Was the suspect wearing a disguise like a mask or a bandana? When the person only saw the suspect with a particular disguise and that disguise was hiding facial features, the disguise becomes a facial characteristic (Fig. 2.5). Unless there is additional information available that describes the hidden area of the face, the artist will include the disguise in the sketch.

Fig. 2.5 Suspect disguise

Another consideration is the witness's or victim's state of mind. If a victim was out late drinking and then was assaulted, how sharp is his or her memory going to be? Most likely dull. His or her perception will be somewhat skewed. Unfortunately, some of these external and internal forces will be at work with all the witnesses and victims you are going to be interviewing. Not to say that any one of them or even any combination of them will exclude an individual from a composite session. Understanding these factors and how they have affected perception will help you conduct your interview, hopefully yielding some insight into what can be expected from a particular memory.

Case Study 1: "Impaired Victim"

The following case illustrates the effect external and internal factors will have on perception and demonstrates the pressure perception places on a victim's memory. The victim was a female. This was a sexual assault that occurred when the victim was very drunk. It was late at night in an unlit area. These are bad external and internal forces that will absolutely affect her perception. She was partially living on the streets. She would hang out with others like herself, getting high and drunk all night. On this particular night, she was attacked by one of these acquaintances. Even though her lifestyle put her at risk, it was still a crime and deserved the same attention as any other. The NYPD, in all of its professionalism, does just that. The detectives of the NYPD are some of the best in the world and see themselves as

such. The detective assigned to this case acted accordingly. Not having much to go on, he decided to attempt a composite sketch. Even as the appointment was made, he informed me of the circumstances. He had little confidence in this victim's memory of the incident because of the factors in this case. My rule of thumb is easy for all cases: You should always try to conduct a composite session when requested to do so.

At the start of the session, it was clear that the victim felt uncomfortable. She stated over and over that she had been drunk and much of her memory, now days old, was just a blur. She was still very upset with the incident and somewhat emotionally drained. It was clear that the normal session would have to be adjusted because this victim was not going to have many answers. We just talked generally about the circumstances. The goal was to make her feel at ease and comfortable. There wasn't going to be any judgment of her. She soon felt comfortable and believed what she did remember might be important. As the session continued, her impressions of the suspect were revealed. He was a male, white, maybe in his early 30s, and had light-colored hair with a wild appearance. Once we had reached this point in the session, I returned to my standard procedure. She searched some reference mug shots for similarities, but she had minimal success. Nevertheless, the drawing began and not much was expected from her memory in terms of specific features. I still gave her every opportunity to adjust and comment on the sketch accordingly. Her uncertainty of any particular detail was most likely attributed to the circumstances. However, from the conversation we were having, the perception of the suspect was clear. The following sketch is the completed drawing from that session (Fig. 2.6). He was a wild man. As you can see, the nature of the drawing technique enhances the caricature of the suspect. The words she would use to describe the suspect were all related to "wild" and "crazy." These words were the identifying characteristics that needed to

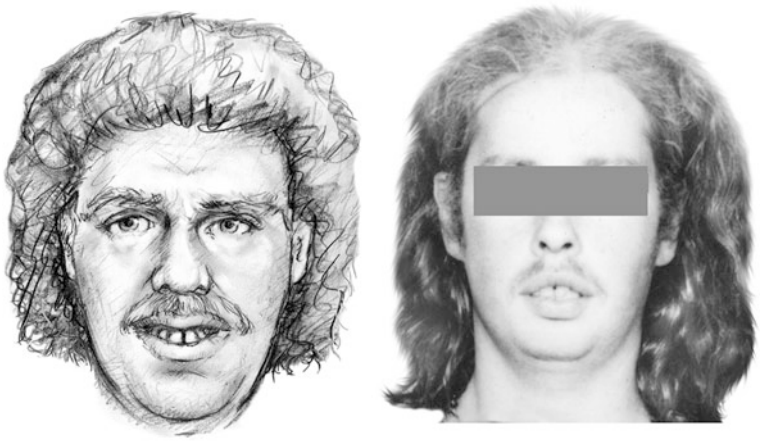


Fig. 2.6 Case study 1: Sexual assault hit

be illustrated. The victim, though weak on detail, was strong on impression, resulting in this type of composite. This composite is an image from a drunk, stoned mind and reflected just that.

This suspect was ultimately identified and arrested with the help of the sketch. It is always helpful if there is a geographical area for the officers to canvass that will narrow down the suspect possibilities. In this case, there was. The sketch was not exactly the suspect, but the essence of him was right on. It was enough to be recognized by a police officer on patrol armed with the sketch. This case not only demonstrates the power of perception, but again it demonstrates this effective investigative tool. Through the recognition of another, a detective can get a lead as to the identity of an unknown suspect. The composite sketch uses the process that humans are so good at to catch the bad guy through "recognition."

This divulges another aspect of memory. The artist needs to understand the processes used by an individual to retrieve the information stored in the memory. These mental processes are *recognition* and *recall*. Recognition is the ability to perceive someone or something you've seen before. This function is the stronger of the two. Detectives use witness recognition when executing lineups and photo-arrays. This is why lineup identifications are considered good evidence in a court of law. As human beings, we are very good at recognizing people. We have to be. Our whole society is based on knowing the people we have met. How often have you heard, "I am great with faces, but I always forget names"? Well, face recognition is easy, but we need to recall the name, which is hard. A good example of the difference between recognition and recall is the contrast of a fill-in-the-blank test and a multiple-choice test. Which is easier? The multiple-choice test is. We only have to perceive or recognize which answer goes with a particular question. A fill-in-the-blank test requires us to recall the answer out of thin air. Unfortunately, as composite artists, we are relying on the recall process. Recall is the summoning back of information stored in the memory. The artist relies on the witness's recall to retrieve the descriptive information of the suspect. Because this function is a more difficult task for a witness, the resulting sketch can be inaccurate or unable to be completed. It is the nature of the recall process that keeps a composite sketch in the realm of possibility and art. Given the inherent weakness of a person's recall, the person may still be able to recognize and positively identify a suspect even if a sketch cannot be completed (see the section "Session Terminations" in Chapter 8).

Memory consists of a number of elements stored in the brain. The retrieval of this group of elements is achieved through several memory access routes. These routes could be triggered and enhanced by outside reminders and/or techniques. There are some perfect examples that illustrate this. Our responses to songs and smells are two of them. Everyone has experienced a particular song that brings them back to a specific moment in their lives. Even a smell can trigger a strong memory from the past. Though these two enhancers are not necessarily helpful during a session, the artist will use a variety of techniques to aid an individual in recalling the information stored in his or her memory. When implementing different interview strategies, the artist can enhance the recall process. Some of these strategies include the cognitive interviewing techniques described earlier. In addition, getting the person to relax

and feel at ease will also help enhance these memory routes. Though I am not a big believer in hypnosis, there was a time when I first began as a forensic artist that this was in use within the NYPD. During hypnotic trances, witnesses were asked questions about the suspect in the hope that the witness would remember some suppressed information. I can't say that I ever really saw it dramatically help. There was a greater possibility that the questioner might inject false memories. This technique was stopped by court order. However, the concept of relaxation does help enhance recall and can be used during a session.

The greatest tool we have as composite artists to enhance memory access routes is the use of photograph reference. In fact, the random groups of mug shots or a facial catalog used during a composite session are mainly for this purpose. When viewing photographs for a similar characteristic to the suspect he or she is trying to describe, victim or witness is using the stronger process of recognition. The witness perceives images that remind him or her of the suspect. Photographic references are important tools in the forensic artist's arsenal. You want to use them accordingly. It has been noted while observing witnesses viewing photographs that a witness may view one image that triggers another memory of a particular feature on a different photograph. This process is definitely tapping into a person's recognition abilities.

The use of visual references will aid the individual in verbalizing that vague facial image he or she has stored in memory. The description of a nose is much easier if a person can show you one first. The old adage "a picture is worth a thousand words" seems to apply here perfectly. Verbal descriptions are all about words. Also, the possibility of the artist's misinterpreting the verbal description of the suspect is greatly reduced. It is one thing for a person to say the suspect had a round head if there are no visual references as to what the individual thinks is a round head. The artist will draw his or her own interpretation. This person's recollection may not be strong enough to question the artist's interpretation of "round." If the person shows the artist a picture of a round head, the artist may think it looks square. Yet the interpretation is drawn as the selected reference photograph suggests.

Let's now apply these memory concepts to the victim of the "Psycho Straphanger" case. He was on a well-lit train at the end of a work day. He was seated only a few feet from the suspect. He viewed the suspect when his suspicions first became aroused. He is a parole officer and has had contact with many individuals of this type. The composite session was conducted a very short time after the incident. What does this suggest? The perceptive factors leading up to the foundation of the victim's memory are ideal. As a matter of fact, these circumstances could be considered excellent. In a situation like this, there are high expectations for this composite session. The expectations can be compared to standing at the plate during a baseball game waiting for a pitch. As a batter, you are hoping for a fastball to the outside corner of the plate. The pitcher throws exactly that. You should get a hit. Even though in this case, the suspect had an average look. The memory of the victim should be strong. If I conduct a thorough interview, this victim's memory should possess a relatively good mental image. I can push a little on this victim's

recall. In other words, his recall of the suspect should supply answers even if he is not sure himself. Armed with this educated assumption, I conducted the interview and session accordingly.

The Composite Session Continues

At this point in the "Psycho Straphanger" composite session, the initial interview had been completed. As stated earlier, the victim's memory was strong. Visual references were now introduced. If a lookalike photograph brought by the detective is available, this is when it would be introduced into the session. The procedure to ascertain the usefulness of the lookalike image goes as follows. You want to make certain that the selection was done when the victim or witness had the opportunity to look at many photographs. The participant should have viewed these mug shots under similar selecting procedures that are used during a session. This inquiry is asked directly of the victim or witness. You want to know the context of the lookalike photograph. Once this has been determined and you are satisfied with the circumstances behind the selection of this photograph, it can be introduced into the session. It would not have been employed until now. By happenstance, there weren't any previously selected lookalike references for the "Psycho Straphanger" case. The victim was set up with a stack of 100 or more mug shots loosely organized by race and age. In this case, it was a group of African-American males in their early 20s. I now offered a second set of instructions to the victim. I explained to the victim how he should proceed with the stack of photographs:

> I want you to look through these photographs and pick out people or parts of faces that remind you of the suspect. You are not looking for the suspect—just features that look like him. Concentrate on the front of the face (or profile), and if you see anything that seems similar, pull it out of the stack. You can select as many photographs as you feel are necessary. You will get the opportunity to explain to me later why you have selected what you did.

You want any directions you offer to the victim to be clear and easy to understand. As artists, we know what is going to be done, but this will be the first time for the victim. He or she likely has never been involved in this kind of session before. You need to be exact as to what will be required of them at this point. I have heard some artists give too much explanation to a victim. Artists attempt to explain the whole drawing process to a victim as if the individual would understand the details of drawing a composite sketch. Victims don't need that kind of information. Keep it simple and directly related to the victim's role.

Viewing the photograph references is work time for the victim. Do not let anyone aid or question him while he is looking at the mug shots or reference catalog. The victim should be allowed a certain amount of time on his own. Let him work through his memory and pick out things that might help him recall the suspect. Detectives sometimes hover over the victim as he views photographs. They try to ascertain why

the person has picked this mug shot or that one. The detective is hoping the victim will identify a photograph of the suspect. This is a possibility, but as far as the needs of the session, it is not the point of the photograph references. This kind of intrusive hovering can be a distraction and influence the desired purpose. Believe me, if the victim thinks he sees the suspect, he will let everyone know.

Many kinds of distractive elements can also influence the whole session. For a moment, let's discuss other human distractions. As a rule, do not let the detective or anyone else interject during the session. If a detective interjects at any time, he or she is out of the office. I don't mind the detective being present during a session. A lot of times detectives are just interested in the process. The detective may have developed a close bond with a victim and the victim might want to have him or her there for support. Still, if he or she interjects, he or she is out of the office. Of course, it is done tactfully. Most detectives are professional and very aware of this and are welcome during a session. It is the first-timers who might need a little explanation as to their role in this process.

There are other possibilities of human distractions in and around the session environment. The victim of the "Psycho Straphanger" was accompanied by his wife. She was there for support, which is fine. Family or friends are generally there for emotional support and are welcome. They can add to the general conversation and help keep the environment light. Most children need parents to be present, and younger people like to have friends with them. Friends and family are fine as long as they don't interject their opinion about the incident as it relates to the suspect's description, a description they would know nothing about. Their presence will have a positive effect. On occasion, it will become apparent that the victim may be afraid or nervous to talk in front of a husband, wife, father, and/or mother. If this is the case, you will need to remove the guest from the session environment. Do it tactfully and explain it is standard operating procedure not to have him or her in the office during the composite session. There should be a comfortable waiting area outside the office. This was not the case with the "Psycho Straphanger" victim's wife. She remained in the office.

The *session dynamics* are very important. Creating a friendly, inspiring, and interesting session environment is crucial. During the normal course, an outside observer may perceive a session as casual and informal. My demeanor is engaging and spirited during a session. I want the victim or witness to enjoy the session as much as possible, notwithstanding the need for compassion during emotionally sensitive cases (see the section entitled "Difficult Composite Sessions" in Chapter 4). This was easily achieved during the "Psycho Straphanger" case. Nonetheless, many witnesses will enter a composite session afraid, upset, nervous, skeptical, and maybe even angry. In most cases, within only a short time, these barriers can be overcome. Hopefully, from their perspective, this is a breeze for the artist and it is going to be for them as well. Rest assured that in the midst of what seems casual, there is a deliberate and structured implementation of composite procedure. The wonderful thing about an artist drawing it that drawing is a natural ice breaker. You can use it to your advantage.

The pitfall of this session dynamic is the other possible human distraction. They are the coworkers in the outer office. The overwhelming majority of them are professionals and very aware of what is going on and would never intrude. They understand the circumstances and the need for a controlled environment. Except for the people mentioned earlier, nobody else is in the office while a session is being executed. It is hard enough to conduct a composite session with proper dynamics without intrusions. You do not need the office joker trying to get in on the act, which does happen on occasion. From his perspective, it is seems okay because the session environment is casual. On several occasions, it became quite a distraction for Artist Juan Perez, one of the other artists in the NYPD's Artist Unit. He is very good at creating a loose and friendly session environment. He became so annoyed with these intrusions that he comically put a red light outside our office door. He would turn it on at the start of a composite session. It was just a reminder that he was working. It was very effective. It really wasn't a serious problem, but all the same, you don't need that annoyance. Creating this kind of loose dynamic quickly is paramount to a successful session. When you master it, the rewards are great. It has been observed over the years that the contrast between the looseness of an experienced artist's session and the awkwardness of a beginner's artist session is very evident. This kind of relaxed environment can only come from confidence and experience.

The victim of the "Psycho Straphanger" case was now set up with photograph references. He was sitting at a large table by himself. He had been directed what to do. He was on his own for a while. I was carefully observing him, but I was not interjecting into the selection process. The amount of time the victim needs to look at photographs varies. Some look through mug shots for just a few minutes, while others can take up to an hour. It has been found over the years that you can attain a lot of information about the person's recollection from observing her viewing photograph references and from the images she has selected. There is nothing scientific about the following guidelines. Yet they are based on noted observations from countless sessions.

The weaker the memory, the longer the witness or victim looks through the photographs. A participant with a stronger memory will only need at most five or six images to describe a suspect. It can be done with as little as one photograph. When a witness has selected many photographs, say 10 or 20 from a stack, this could signify a weaker memory, with the exception when all the photographs selected look very similar. There are several reasons why a witness has looked at many photographs and has picked out none. The first is he or she is browsing the incorrect race and/or age group. Sometimes these factors are not easily determined and must be experimented with. Second, the memory is so weak that there isn't any recollection at all. If this is the case, the artist should already have a suspicion of this problem prior to viewing photographs. The circumstances in which the memory was formed would be very poor. Third, the witness's memory is very good and he or she is trying to get the perfect lookalike, maybe even the suspect. A solution is to restate your explanation to the participant about what is expected. The last reason for a victim or witness not to have selected any similar photographs is that he or she doesn't want

to participate. There are many motivations for this. Generally, he believes he can go home if he doesn't supply any information. The artist will attain insight into the state of the participant's memory and/or thought process when recognizing any one of these trends during the viewing of the photographs.

Case Study 2: "Racial Sensibilities"

This case demonstrates the insight the artist can attain from observing the victim viewing photograph references. The composite session was conducted a few years ago. It was a strong-arm robbery on a sidewalk in Manhattan. The victim was a Hispanic female in her 40s. It occurred in the middle of the day. The suspect grabbed the victim's pocketbook. She did not want to release it. She struggled with him back and forth, only a foot or two apart. She was looking right at him. The suspect eventually struck her and she fell to the floor, releasing the bag. A session was conducted with this victim that night. There was nothing remarkable about the case, but when she viewed the photographs, it demonstrated a frame of mind. The initial interview revealed the human pedigree of the suspect. He was an African-American male, in his 30s, tall, and a bit heavy. The initial interview was completed and the victim was given a stack of mug shots of African-American males in their 30s. She was instructed what to do. The evaluation of her memory was good based on the circumstances surrounding the case. A relatively effective description was expected. The victim looked and looked at the mug shots. She didn't select any similarities. After 15 or 20 minutes, I asked if we had the proper age group. Could the suspect seem older or younger than this stack of photographs she had been given? "No," she said, "these are just fine." She was redirected to find only similarities to the suspect and not to worry about finding the suspect himself. I informed her that the suspect would not be in this group of photographs. These were relatively older photographs, and anyone in this group would be a much older man now. She was given more time to work with the references. Again, she was unable to pick any individuals. She eventually offered this statement. "These photographs are all African Americans. How come there aren't any white suspects in here?" It was clear that her beliefs in greater social injustices were affecting her perceptions. She was finding it hard to select any black features. It was just going against her racial sensibilities. Ultimately, the session was completed. However, the resulting sketch was very bland and vague (Fig. 2.7). Every time I tried to draw features that might reflect an African-American race, she would change them back to non-descript. I was aware of this; later, when the victim was not present, I informed the assigned detective of these suspicions. The resulting sketch was insignificant to the investigation. The victim's perceptions were altered because of preconceived notions. The problem exposed during the viewing of the photographs revealed the weakness of the final composite sketch.

Fortunately, the overwhelming majority of victims and witnesses understand the concept of viewing the photograph references for similarities. The "Psycho

Fig. 2.7 Case study 2: Intentional vague description

Straphanger" victim was no exception. He selected four or five images within a few minutes. Once the victim has had the opportunity to view a significant number of mug shots and has selected a sufficient number of references, you will review each image with the victim. The victim describes why he selected each photograph. I am very careful to understand why he has chosen as he did. A victim may state a particular selection is similar to the suspect's eyes. On a closer examination, it may only be the color that is similar and not the shape. One should be careful to fully realize why the image has been selected. Keep in mind that you are not copying these images, but sketching the essence of the features the photographs are illustrating.

Upon review of the photograph references the "Psycho Straphanger" victim selected, an acceptable amount of descriptive information about the suspect had been acquired. I was ready to proceed. The following question is often debated: *Is there any written record of what a witness or victim says or describes?* You do not write anything down. As composite artists, our notes are in the form of a composite sketch. Any information you write down is considered Rosario material and could be called into question later in court. You temporarily commit to memory the descriptive information the witness or victim has told you. Hopefully, you will get the information to play out on the sketch.

Up to this point in the Straphanger session, I had not drawn anything. I first removed the stack of photographs from the viewing table and retained only the images the victim had picked out. The photograph references were set alongside the pad at the start of the drawing. Before I begin, I offered an additional explanation about the process to the victim:

> I am about to start the sketch. The composite sketch is meant to be a similarity to the suspect. We are not drawing a portrait of him, but would like to get the closest likeness possible. Even if we were able to get 100% of the image that you have stored in your memory sketched on the paper, it wouldn't look just like the suspect because nobody's memory is perfect. Our goal is at least to achieve a ball park resemblance and maybe get on base. However, we will try to hit a home run. As the drawing continues, you will get opportunities to comment on the sketch. You can make corrections to its appearance according to what you remember. Do you have any questions?

This statement is designed to explain the definition of a composite sketch and to relieve some of the pressure placed on the participant's recollection of the suspect. It has been found that witnesses, and more so victims, expect much more from themselves than may be humanly possible. As forensic artists, we know that in the realm of a composite sketch, almost is good enough. The participant doesn't.

Since the "Psycho Straphanger" composite sketch session was about to enter the drawing phase, it is a good time for us to review the procedure until now. A crime was committed and the victim got a look at the suspect's face. The detective assigned opted to have a composite sketch prepared, and an appointment was made. At that time, all the presession information from the detective was obtained. The detective escorted the victim to the session. The victim was made to feel comfortable and was given a brief explanation as to what he could expect. From the beginning, the session dynamics were good and the victim was responding well. The victim brought his wife; other than her, only the essential people were present in the composite session area. The interview started with the cognitive interviewing technique of asking general, broad questions to the victim about what happened. He talked freely. The basic human pedigree of the suspect was easily attained. Throughout the course of the initial interview, it became clear that the external and internal factors surrounding this case were conducive to the development of a strong memory. The session continued in the belief that this victim would have a keen recollection of the suspect. The victim was instructed to look through a group of reference photographs for similarities to the suspect. Within a relatively short time, he selected a few mug shots and explained why he had selected them. Up to now, this session has gone by the book and has lasted less than 45 minutes. I was ready to start the sketch and offered the additional explanation to the victim as to what we were about to do.

Concepts Before Starting to Draw

Some concepts should be explored before beginning to draw. You should have developed some level of rapport with the victim or witness prior to starting the drawing phase of the session. During this early phase, you must create a partnership with the victim or witness. You will need to work together as a team to achieve the best composite sketch. This is not always easy, but a certain level of teamwork is necessary for a successful session.

This artist and victim relationship is also directly affected by the amount of time you require to conduct a composite session. This reveals an important question:

How long does a composite session last? The answer is not a simple one. A session that is rushed and completed in too little time may not allow a rapport to develop and may jeopardize the amount of information attained during the session. This will result in an inferior composite sketch. However, a session that stretches on for many hours could be more devastating to the results. Though much of the session time may depend upon the witness or victim—for example, how long it takes for her to view photographs and how exact she is in describing the suspect. As long as the time is directly being used by the person participating in the process, it is time well spent. She is involved and does not become disinterested.

The major time problem occurs when the composite session stretches on for long periods of time and the time is used by the artist to complete certain tasks, which commonly is drawing the composite sketch. This is a notion the artist must be aware of. The inexperienced artist will undoubtedly take longer to complete a composite sketch than an experienced artist. This is to be expected. As artists develop their skills, they must be conscious of ways to speed up their drawing techniques and procedures. If a session has been going on for many hours and the majority of that time is spent by the artist ascertaining information that has already been revealed and/or rendering a drawing without input from the victim, it will have a direct effect on the success of the session. This will result in the witness's or victim's losing interest in the process. Her answers to questions and participation will become expedient, as her desire becomes to quicken the session. I have seen inexperienced artists lose the person's interest to the point that the person becomes frustrated and tired with the whole procedure. It is clearly evident when you observe the glazed look of despair on the victim's face, who is wondering when the session will end.

Here is a simple guideline to keep in mind, which will help the beginner artist with this possible time problem. Most of the excessive time of a session is spent during the drawing phase. Every artist wants to create a beautiful piece of art. A composite sketch is not a piece of art. It is an investigative tool that is almost mechanical in its creation and purpose. A sketch should not suffer from a poor or insufficient drawing technique, but the artist needs to develop a drawing technique that is quick and efficient. Spending hours shading the perfect cheekbone while the victim has been sitting uninvolved for a long period is counterproductive, especially if the artist can achieve a similar shading result from a quick smudge of the finger or a well-drawn line. The victim is most likely experiencing the worst day of his or her life. With all the normal investigative procedures that he or she may have already endured, it should be the artist's wish to make his part as painless as possible. Experience will help artists develop these quicker techniques as long as they are aware they need to. You will find keeping the participant involved in the sketch will benefit the overall results of the session and its dynamics. While you are drawing, keep track of the time. Allow the victim to see the drawing and comment even if you feel no comment is necessary. Do not forget to converse with the victim or witness while you draw. Yes, you will need to sketch and carry on a conversation at the same time.

Here is another question that has been discussed over the years: *When the artist is drawing, where should the victim or witness sit?* My work area is a large drafting

table. The participant's seating will vary from session to session. Generally, I have participants seated a few feet away. On a rare occasion, they sit right next to the desk if they desire to watch the process (Fig. 2.8). Composite artists' seating preferences will vary. I will explain my thoughts on this subject. The normal procedure is to have participants sitting away from the desk. I would prefer that they don't constantly see the development of the sketch. I can draw very fast, but not as fast as the human mind can think. People today are influenced by the immediacy of television and computers. I have found on occasion that as soon as I touch the pencil to the paper and draw one line, there are those who want to see a face. Some individuals start commenting on the sketch with just guidelines and some beginning marks drawn. You should always be interested in what the participant has to say. Yet logic dictates you need the simplest indication of the whole face before you can get any really meaningful comments. Witnesses and victims do not know this and can be eager to have input. This is not their fault. They just don't know. It gets back to the artist being in control of the session.

Those individuals who desire to watch the drawing develop will eventually grow a little bored with the sketching process. When this occurs, it is beneficial to have

Fig. 2.8 Artist Unit's seating setup

a seat they can retreat to. Otherwise, they could feel locked into this close seated position. Not wanting to insult the artist, they may just endure the situation. I encourage participants to approach the desk anytime they want. Nevertheless, they are free to move around as well and retreat back to their own space. Viewing a sketch after significant changes have been made is more advantageous. While the sketch is developed further and the requested changes are completed, the victim or witness would not have seen the sketch for a few minutes. This will allow the person to better notice mistakes and/or recognize success in the updated drawing.

No matter what seating position you use, there shouldn't be many quiet moments throughout a session. The person is always meant to feel involved. I regularly show the results of witness requests and the development of the sketch. I chat while I draw and maybe entertain the victim a little. I am always trying to keep the session energy high. It has been found that the most interesting time for the participant to watch the sketch develop is toward the end of the drawing. Most of the changes have been made and the suspect's appearance has been achieved. The final rendering can be fun to watch as the drawing comes alive. Nevertheless, at some point before the sketch is completed, I ask the witness or victim to step away from the desk for a few moments. The desire is for the individual to view the completed sketch with a fresh eye.

The sketching phase of the "Psycho Straphanger" session was about to begin. The work area was set up with the drawing materials and the photograph references the victim selected. The victim was sitting comfortably a few feet away. The drawing would be done in three stages.

Chapter 3
Drawing the Composite Sketch

Proportional Stage of the Sketch

The first stage of the drawing is the proportional sketch, which is a simple line drawing with all the facial features slightly suggested in their desired proportional locations (refer to Fig. 1.4 in Chapter 1). These proportional elements are the relationship between the facial features and their position on the head shape. It is easier to develop a proportional drawing when sketching on a consistent paper size, as revealed earlier. If there are unique proportions to the subject, they will be implemented appropriately on the sketch at this time. If the proportions are not a particular issue, average and normal proportions are implied for a particular race and age. This will be a common theme throughout the sketching process. When there isn't any specific information offered by the individual to a particular area of the face, *the rule is the draw the average and normal conditions for a particular race and age*. Needless to say, the less information that the victim can provide, the more average and normal the sketch will appear.

The proportional stage of the all composite sketches starts with a vertical guideline and a horizontal guideline that extend the full length of the paper. The center of the head is located at the intersection of these two lines. The face and head grow outward or inward from this center point. The features are only simply suggested. First, indicate the distance between the eyes with simple marks at the center location of each eye on the horizontal guideline. As a rule, the centers of the eyes are always on, and continue to remain on, the horizontal line, no matter what proportional changes are made throughout the session. The artist will now sketch a basic indication of the overall size of the eyes.

Second, move downward on the vertical line and indicate the length of the nose. Continuing down the vertical line, now indicate the location of the line between the lips. The marks drawn for these features will also indicate the desired width of these features. Next, denote the length of the chin and then the top of the head. The top of the head to the center point should be about the same distance from the center point to the bottom of the chin. Once these internal proportions have been implied, indicate the outer location of the sides of the head on the horizontal line. You can now block in the general shape of the overall head. Then delineate the hair mass shape and the location of the ears. You should sketch quickly, lightly,

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and purposefully. The pencil moves effortlessly over the paper. Basically, the sketch develops from the inside proportions to the general outside shape of the head (see "Proportion Drawing Tips" in Chapter 7).

Unless otherwise dictated by the participant, both sides of the head are symmetrical to each other. The horizontal widths of each facial feature should be equally distant from the vertical guideline. With a sheet of tracing paper, which is readily available, frequently check the distances from the vertical line to the outside edge, inside edge, or center of each facial feature. Keeping these distances the same on both sides will achieve facial symmetry.

All the proportional feature changes are done in relationship to the center point and their location on guidelines. For example, if the witness wants to move the eyes lower on the overall shape of the head, you would move the lower half of the head and features up toward the horizontal guideline rather than move the eyes off the horizontal guideline. All the vertical proportional changes are done accordingly. The eyes will always remain on the horizontal line, which, in theory, is the middle of the head. Conversely, the same goes for the width of the features. If the witness is requesting a nose, mouth, head, or any other feature to be wider, narrower, or closer together, the change is made in relationship to the vertical line. You sketch them equally distant on both sides of the head.

The proportional sketch is prepared within a few minutes. It is only a line drawing, and the level of feature detail is very simple. All of the subject's facial features are minimally blocked in and represented in their desired proportions. This includes all the obvious features as well as the hair mass, eyebrows, ears, head gear (Hats, glasses, etc.), and facial hair, but will not include pimples, pockmarks, or scars. These are added later. Eyeglasses may or may not be added at this time. The idea is to get the participant involved in the sketch as soon as possible. Once the proportional sketch has been completed, it is time to turn the sketch toward the participant and get his or her input. The sketch is now the witness's or victim's.

The proportional stage of the "Psycho Straphanger" drawing was completed in this fashion. In this case, the suspect had an average appearance. The proportions of the sketch echoed this (Fig. 3.1). I drew what would be average and normal for this race and age. The sketch was physically turned toward the victim, and he was asked for his input. His attention was directed to the proportional aspects of the drawing. Do not offer a lesson to the victim about proportional anatomy, but do ask these types of interviewing questions:

> How is the distance between the eyes? Should they be closer, set farther apart, or spaced like on the sketch?
>
> How are the length of the nose and the location of the mouth?
>
> How are the width and overall shape of the head?
>
> Should the hairline be higher or lower on the forehead?
>
> Look at the length of the chin and the overall head mass. Are they okay?

Fig. 3.1 "Psycho Straphanger" sketch at the proportional stage

Questions like these will encourage a response to these proportional elements. Pursue each proportional relationship with similar questions. If the victim requests a minor proportional adjustment, you can wait to make the change until additional proportional comments are made. Many of the proportional relationships of the face are related to each other. If the request is a significant proportional change, the artist should explore it further with a more detailed series of questions before making any changes. For example, if the victim requests the nose to be shorter and wider, follow up with these types of interviewing questions:

> Is the nose wider at the nostril flare, at the bridge, at the top between the eyes, or its overall proportion?
>
> When I make the nose shorter, are you comfortable with the distance between the bottom of the nose and the lips as it looks now or do you feel the gap between them needs to be adjusted as well?

Answers to these questions may trigger additional questions that are asked once the requested adjustments have been made. A follow-up question to the above issues would be

> Now that nose has been drawn shorter and the lips have moved up on the head a little, how are the length of the chin and the overall shape of the head?

This query has to be asked because most proportional adjustments affect other proportions of the face. Continue with this line of questioning and adjustments until the victim is satisfied, at least to some degree. You will not always receive a definitive answer for every proportional aspect of the face. The victim will struggle with the answers to many questions. This is to be expected. Subsequently, to solve these

issues, rely on the *average and normal rule*. You can also refer to the essence of the reference images that were selected as similarities for such information. A participant may not be capable of verbalizing certain descriptive elements, but could have clearly selected a specific component in the mug shot references. At the early stages of the sketch, the victim can refer to the selected photographs as often as needed. You can do the same. These techniques will usually work to overcome a sticking point. But if the victim is still struggling with his or her memory, rephrase the particular question and add the *realm of possibility*. This is a vital interviewing concept.

> According to what you are seeing on the paper, are these facial proportional issues in the realm of possibility?

You want to be certain before continuing that the sketch is not heading totally in the wrong direction. The notion of the "realm of possibility" helps determine this. Keep in mind that during the course of a session, a participant may convey all kinds of answers to your questions. You could be inquiring about a proportional component, but the individual will keep talking about the hair or the shape of the mouth. This is fine. It is our job to remember what is being described and incorporate it into the sketch when appropriate. You are not going to shade the texture of a dark curly hairstyle at the proportional stage of the drawing even if the person is insisting. Inform the witness that you will put that information on the sketch later on, but for now, inquire if the sketch is in the realm of possibility. The proportional sketch is somewhat abstract and could be a little difficult for the victim to connect with at first. It is also this early sketch stage that most beginner artists have difficulty creating and working with. Even as artists, we want to see a fully drawn face. Nevertheless, you should think of the sketch as slowly developing from a white sheet of paper to a completely rendered drawing. No one feature on the face is more complete in detail and/or contrast than another at any given time. This will help you understand the usage of these stages. For example, you should not have a great rendered eye while the rest of the proportional drawing is still in line. The whole sketch must be developed equally. This is the mechanism that will allow the victim and the artist to work into the drawing slowly. If you operate within this concept, you will not find yourself having to redraw a fully rendered feature over and over again. This requires more time. Plus, it is distracting if one feature is darker and more rendered than another. The viewer's eye will be constantly drawn to the darkest and most contrasted element on the drawing, making it difficult to notice the other parts of the face.

As stated earlier, the "Psycho Straphanger" victim was asked to comment on the proportional stage of the drawing. The victim did request some minor proportional corrections to the composite sketch. The changes were made with the direct involvement of the victim. He was standing right next to the desk while I made the adjustments, which were quickly completed. The victim was satisfied with the composite to this point. This is imperative to achieve before the sketch can be developed further. The "Psycho Straphanger" sketch was about to enter the second stage, the characteristic stage.

Characteristic Stage of the Sketch

The second stage of the sketch is the characteristic stage. The artist is delineating the shapes of the facial features (Fig. 1.4). The features are drawn anatomically correct in the location of the suggested proportions. At this stage of the sketch, you are working closely with the participant. The characteristic stage begins linear in appearance and continues to become more developed as the participant is comfortable with what is being illustrated. While illustrating these facial elements, you are consistent with the descriptive words used by the participant and the essence of the photograph references that were previously selected. This is an attempt to achieve the best likeness to the suspect with the information that has already been ascertained. The sketch's appearance is a well-developed line with some lightly toned areas to the overall shapes of certain features such as the hair. Every facial feature is delineated equally, each with the appropriately described characteristic elements and anatomically correct detail. Yet none is rendered. As stated during the proportional stage of the sketch, the same list of facial features is included and excluded at this phase of the drawing.

Such is the case with the "Psycho Straphanger" sketch. The confidence level was high that the features drawn would be in the correct proportional location on the head. The shapes of the facial features were now delineated. About 10 minutes elapsed between the time the "Psycho Straphanger" victim was satisfied with the proportional stage of the composite to the moment the first attempt at the characteristic stage was completed (Fig. 3.2). It was time to show the victim the sketch and get his input. When the victim is shown the working sketch, it is turned completely toward him. He is provided full access to the sketch. The next set of inquiries starts with this interviewing question:

So how does the sketch look so far?

Fig. 3.2 "Psycho Straphanger" sketch at the start of the characteristic stage

After asking a specific question, the use of a momentary pause is crucial. A properly posed question has a little to do with timing. This will let the participant have a second to reflect on the answer. Don't be quick to request a response. At the moment the above question is asked, you are entering the heart of the composite session. The victim's response to this question will range from, "The sketch is appearing very similar to the suspect," to "It is not similar at all," and everything in between. These responses will generate your next set of questions.

At a positive response, the confidence level on the sketch rises. The following set of general inquires is asked about each feature:

> Do the eyes, nose, and mouth appear similar?
>
> How about the shape of the head, ears, and hairstyle? Are they heading in the right direction?

The artist is careful not to force a response when one may not be needed. Nevertheless, it is an effort to attract the witness's attention to each feature. A small affirmative statement or an accepting body language gesture from the victim implies he has observed all the features. Any change requests will be made immediately and cautiously. You do not want to lose the success a sketch has already achieved.

On those rare occasions that the response to "How does the sketch look so far?" is negative or, commonly, somewhere in between, a different strategy is implemented. For the former, revisit the proportion elements. Additionally, review the photograph references selected and the descriptive information previously determined. You want to be sure you have a complete understanding of the essence of what has been described up to this point. Once you are comfortable with your understanding of this information, the line of inquiry for both of these responses is different from the positive-response line of questioning. You need to do some investigative work in an attempt to figure out which facial elements are similar and which are not. You will ask the following series of questions:

> Are there any aspects of the sketch that you feel are somewhat similar?

Determining what is successful will lead you to the problems. Once you have an idea as to the areas that need work, you will relate your questions to those elements. For example:

> Are the lower half of the face and the overall shape of the head heading in the right direction?
>
> As best you can, try to tell me what seems to be wrong with the eyes or nose.

With these types of questions, the successful areas of the sketch are defined and the victim is directed to the possible problem elements. It now comes down to the words the victim says. Fine-tune your questions and drawing solutions as new information is revealed. Listen intently. Redraw the features in question in an attempt to get them right. It is impossible to cover all the descriptive responses a victim may offer (see Chapter 5, "Descriptive Terminologies, Responses, and Solutions"). As your experience grows, you will develop a mental library of victim terminology. Moreover, how you successfully solve each descriptive word will become part of your solution strategies.

For now, according to the extent of a requested adjustment, you may have the person continue to watch as simpler modifications are made. On the other hand, if the adjustments are more complex, have the victim sit for awhile during the reworking of the sketch. The overall sketch is further developed during this reworking process. The enhancements of the successful features are continually advanced as your confidence grows that these elements are visually correct. It will be necessary to keep all the features of the face equally delineated. This includes the problem facial elements that are being modified. In the early course of reworking the sketch, you can refer to the photograph references selected while drawing and questioning the victim. Once you feel the sketch has been modified properly, ask the following type of questions:

> Did the changes to the specific feature move the appearance of the sketch in the right direction or was it better the way it was before?
>
> Are the eyes or nose now in the realm of possibility?

The ultimate goal is the get a positive response to "How does the sketch look so far?" The extent of pressure exerted on a participant's memory is again related to the previous assessment of that memory. The weaker the memory, the more one will rely on the normal and average rule and the realm of possibility. After all the desired corrections have seemed to have played out, reiterate one of these types of questions:

> How does the sketch look now?
>
> Are we in heading in the right direction?
>
> So far, is the sketch in the realm of possibility?

When feasible, phrase a question to suggest that the victim and the artist are working as a team. This is exemplified by the following contrasted statements: "How am I doing?" vs. "How are we doing?" This is really more the victim's sketch than it is the artist's. You want the victim to feel that way. When the response seems positive to the success of the composite sketch up to this point, it is ready to be developed further. Explain this to the victim.

> I know this is not easy, but you are doing well. I am going to develop the sketch further, and you will have a chance to see it again and make comments.

The statement keeps the participant informed. The sketch is still in the characteristic stage but will be further developed. This will be done without direct input from the participant for a short time. Hence, letting the person know he or she will get to make additional comments is important. Moreover, the use of encouraging words when the victim is struggling or succeeding is helpful. Your introduction of these kinds of statements into the session is related to the needs of the victim or witness. They are generally used at any point in the session and as often as necessary. If applied properly, encouragement gives additional confidence to an individual. Likewise, it can release some of the pressure on a fraught memory.

However, the overuse of encouraging statements could run the risk of diminishing their effectiveness. Obviously, the artist should never criticize the victim or witness.

The characteristic stage of the sketch could undergo many changes. It will depend upon the person's responses. Be prepared to erase and change almost anything the individual requests. All redrawn and modified features are always sketched back to the level of completion of the rest the drawing. (Tip: The further along the sketch has been developed, the more time the resketching of modified features will require.) As long as the changes stay within the human realm, you try to accommodate the individual's requests. There are occasions that a request from a witness or victim may be extreme and cause the sketch to appear nonhuman. It is the artist's job to keep the anatomical aspects of the face proper to a particular race and age. As illustrated in one of my early sketches (Fig. 3.3), it is a common problem for the witness not to recall the jawline. As an inexperienced artist, I allowed the witness to remove the jawline right down to the chin, which resulted in the sketch having a fish-eye quality. As we all know, everybody should have a jawline. When the witness is seeking an unusual facial feature configuration that you know is anatomically incorrect, simply resolve this issue by asking the person the following question:

Was the suspect extremely weird-looking or deformed?

Most likely, the suspect wasn't, or you would have known this earlier in the session. Keeping it human is our job no matter what the person says. Sometimes an extreme request could be attributed to an unusual perspective view of the suspect, as mentioned in the previous chapter (Fig. 2.4).

The characteristic stage of the drawing continues along this method, adjusting the facial features, developing the sketch further, and receiving a positive response to "How is the sketch proceeding so far?" As you draw and the confidence level

Fig. 3.3 Missing jawline composite sketch

on its success increases, advance the composite sketch accordingly. The amount of time spent during this phase of the session will vary. The characteristic stage of the drawing could take a little as 15 minutes or as much as an hour. Much depends on the victim or witness.

The "Psycho Straphanger" sketch proceeded along with this same method. The victim had ample opportunities to comment on its outcome. He requested feature adjustments here and there. Drawing solutions were applied to the sketch according to the descriptive words he used. He did not have all the answers, but this suspect was somewhat average-looking and the features began to reflect that. He had little difficulty recalling certain characteristics. It would be unusual for a witness or victim to have all the answers. He had direct involvement in the sketch from the beginning. I pressed him fittingly, having determined his memory should be strong. The police interview technique described in Chapter 2 was implemented, and a careful consideration was made not to lead the victim. As the interview continued, I strove for specifics, but stayed comfortably within the realm of possibility. The "Psycho Straphanger" victim was happy with the outcome of the sketch so far.

Toward the middle stages of the drawing, remove the photograph references from the process. The references are no longer needed. All the information they offered should be present on the sketch toward the end of the characteristic stage. The idea is for the sketch to become the focal point of the person's attention. The references could become a distraction. It is the outcome of the composite sketch that is imperative. As revealed, the concept of the participant's comfort with the appearance of the sketch at each stage is paramount. Getting an affirmative response to the overall appearance of the sketch confirms your confidence in the information you've illustrated. Knowing the sketch resembles the suspect affords you the opportunity to develop the sketch further.

Keeping in mind that a hesitant response may be the best you will get from an individual, and you may have to continue with only that. A characteristic-level sketch ends up looking almost complete. Every feature is well defined in line, tone, and partially rendered. All the facial features are equally sketched at this point. Head gear, glasses, disguises, and facial hair are all considered facial features and are dealt with like any other feature. However, scars, pimples, pockmarks, and tattoos are added at the end, once the sketch has been fully rendered (see the section entitled "Characteristic Drawing Tips" in Chapter 7). Before continuing to the final rendering stage of the sketch, always ask the victim this question:

> The drawing is not fully completed. However, does the sketch resemble the suspect right now?

You should ask this question directly; do not beat around the bush. You must know if the composite is successful at this point. If you have conducted your session correctly when you ask this question, you should already have an idea of the answer. It would be very unusual for me to be surprised at a positive or negative response at this point in the session. This doesn't mean every person always responds positively.

A hesitant response is common. However, after working as a team with the individual for the duration of the session, you become aware of the person's sentiment on the sketch's success. This type of question is done when you feel you have acquired all the information the participant has to offer and you believe you are ready to complete the sketch. The response to this inquiry will generate your next course of action.

If the response is negative or hesitant, you will establish which parts of the face are similar to the suspect. As before, determine which are similar and which are not. If there is clear facial element that is incorrect, adjust it appropriately. If there is some uncertainty, implement a similar questioning and reworking process as described before. The reimplementation of this process should not be as extensive as earlier in the session. If the procedure was done properly, the majority of the available information should have already been revealed and illustrated. The modifications commonly will be minor. Having said that the success rate of a composite sketch is directly related to strength of the person's memory, this could limit the level of success to only a resemblance.

The chance is greater than average at this point that the response from a participant to the sketch will be positive. Once this has been achieved, explain the following:

> As you stated, we have a pretty good likeness so far. I am about to complete the sketch. I will add any scars, marks, or pimples at the end (if necessary). If there is anything you want to add or tell me, this is a good time to do so. Otherwise, I will render the sketch.

Make this statement when you are confident you have obtained all the pertinent information the person has to offer. Two purposes are achieved with this statement. First, the person is given an additional opportunity to comment. Maybe there is something he or she wants to say, but didn't find a time to say it. Generally, at this point, you will be told things like, "The suspect looked meaner," "He was younger or older in appearance," and a variety of comments related to facial elements that are better handled as the sketch is rendered. If this is the case, inform the participant that these requests will be dealt with during the rendering stage of the drawing (see Chapter 5, "Descriptive Terminologies, Responses, and Solutions"). A second reason for this statement is that the individual is being informed that the session is coming to an end and a likeness or similarity to the perpetrator should have been achieved.

The "Psycho Straphanger" victim was asked if the fully developed characteristic sketch resembled the suspect (Fig. 3.4). I expected the response would be yes. He responded just that way. The sketch was ready to enter the final stage. With the above statement, the victim was informed how we would proceed. He mentioned the mark on the suspect's neck. I informed him it would be added at the end.

Before starting the rendering stage, inquire about texture, skin tone, and feature value distinction if not already determined. These elements are required for the final phase of the drawing: the rendering stage.

Fig. 3.4 "Psycho Straphanger" sketch at the developed characteristic stage

Rendering Stage of the Sketch

The third stage of the sketch is the rendering stage. During the rendering stage of the drawing, the artist depicts the forms and textures of the head in light and shadow (Fig. 1.4). This will include the basic rendering concepts of contrast, halftone, highlights, cast shadows, and reflected light (Fig. 3.5). Additionally, the elements of texture and the feature value distinction will be developed. *Feature value distinction* is the tonal quality of each facial characteristic as it relates to another, such as skin tone vs. hair color or the contrast of lighter-toned lips on darker skin. This is a key concept. The overall appearance of a person is related to the light and dark contrast of their features (Fig. 3.6). A clear illustration of this is the example of a fashion model prior to applying makeup. Her eyes are not as visible and are plain in appearance. This contrasting effect can appear on normal facial features of subjects as well.

Composite artists execute one of two lighting patterns when shading the sketch. They are the *standard lighting pattern* and the *oblique lighting pattern*. The more commonly used lighting is the standard pattern. The light source is imagined directly above and in front of the subject. This results in an appearance that is very similar to most suspect mug photographs and photographs with flash photography (Fig. 3.7). Equal shadowing is depicted on both sides of the head. A more dynamic shadowing is achieved with the oblique pattern. In this case, the light source is imagined above, at a 45° angle, and in front of the subject (Fig. 3.8). This rendering technique is more dramatic and results in a greater illusion of dimensionality to the sketch. The shadowing will be more apparent on one side of the head. The artist can utilize a

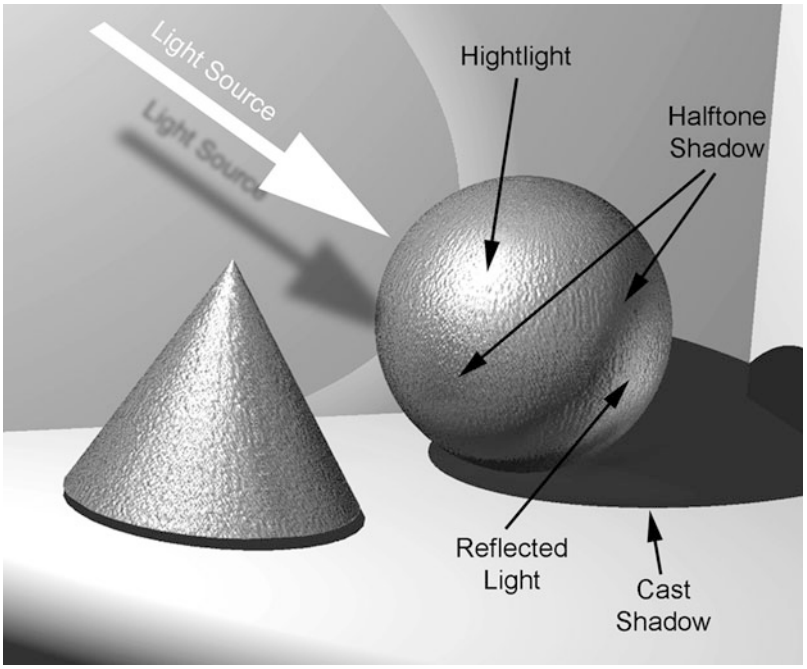

Fig. 3.5 Basic rendering elements

Fig. 3.6 Halftone value distinction diagram

combination of both as well. Either can achieve the shading contrast required to define the features of the face. The sketch is rendered to reflect anatomically correct features and the underlying structures of the head. The desired goal is not to render an image that looks like a photo, but an image that is clear and distinct. Hence, someone not present during the composite session will plainly indentify the features and characteristics being illustrated. Facial textures are added during this phase of the sketch, such as hair consistency, scars, pimples, and pockmarks. The rendering

Fig. 3.7 Standard lighting pattern

Fig. 3.8 Oblique lighting pattern

stage of the drawing is generally completing the sketch. If not satisfied that you have recovered all the descriptive information the individual possesses, you should not be rendering the sketch. The sketch is fully rendered when you feel you have achieved the best likeness to the suspect that the participant has to offer (see "Rendering Tips" in Chapter 7).

The "Psycho Straphanger" composite session continued, and the final rendering was done. In this case, it was shaded according to the standard lighting pattern. It seemed the circumstances surrounding the case dictated this simpler lighting pattern which would accomplish the desired results. The mark on the suspect's neck was now added to the sketch as the victim described. (Tip: When a mark or scar is to be added, a useful procedure is to let the person actually point to or lightly draw the location and size of the blemish directly on the sketch. This avoids any confusion.)

During the final render, it is probably the longest time the victim has not seen the sketch. This is good. The artist and the participant have been working together directly on the sketch for some time now. This pause gives the person a chance to view the completed sketch with a fresh eye. In most cases, rendering takes a few minutes. When the participant is shown the completed composite sketch, hold it off the table straight up and in the direction of the individual. You want him or her to have an unobstructed view of the suspect drawn on the sketch. As before, the artist should typically have a pretty good idea what the person's reaction might be. No matter how successful or unsuccessful the sketch may be, always hold it up right in front of the witness and generally ask:

> The detective and I haven't any idea what the suspect looks like. Only you do. Does the sketch appear similar to the suspect we are looking for?

As before, the range of a victim's or witness's responses to this inquiry runs the full gamut. I have experienced extreme emotional reactions to hesitant affirmations. Yet the overwhelming responses are positive by far, because this composite session technique affords the victim or witness a direct involvement in the creation of the composite sketch. Participants are made to feel that this is their sketch.

On occasion, participants will request an end-of-session modification to the sketch. If the requests are related to a shading issue, the artist will make appropriate tonal adjustments. Actual feature adjustments can also be made at this late stage as well, but keep them to minor corrections. Consider that if a sketch is completed, the person should have had ample opportunity to modify the composite. Acknowledge that you can only be as good as a person's memory permits. If the sketch has continued to this level of completion, enough information should have been described for an effective composite. Any major adjustment request at the end of a session is a futile attempt to improve that which should be already effective.

An extremely infrequent final response to the completed sketch is the dreaded, "The sketch is not similar to the suspect at all." There are a variety of reasons (see the sections "Negative Responses" in Chapter 5 and "Difficult Witnesses and Victims" in Chapter 6). When this occurs, one may wonder if the sketch should have been completed in the first place (see "Session Terminations" in Chapter 8). Nonetheless, it has been noted that when the information offered by an individual is insufficient,

a sketch most likely shouldn't have been completed. It is usually related either to the fact that the individual did not see enough of the suspect or to the circumstances that affected the person's perception.

The Composite Session Ends

I am often asked the following question:

> When assessing the success of a completed composite sketch, should a numerical scale be used, such as requesting the participant to rate a sketch from 1 to 10?

Never use a numerical scale. This rating technique is arbitrary. It could be misleading and suggest an inaccurate assessment about the outcome of the completed composite. In actuality, victims can't fully be certain how successful or unsuccessful they were. Not until the suspect is apprehended will this be revealed. Though this numerical scale is helpful to investigators during photograph arrays for possible identifications, the composite sketch only needs to achieve a resemblance to the suspect to be useful. The assessment inquiry is achieved by asking, "Does the sketch appear similar to the suspect we are looking for?" The response will provide all the level of certainty that the composite sketch requires to be a useful investigative tool.

The "Psycho Straphanger" composite sketch was completed according to the rendering procedure described. It was shown to the victim (Fig. 3.9). He was pleased with the outcome and stated the composite sketch was a good resemblance to the perpetrator, the man who caused havoc and fear on the New York subway system. At the end of every composite session, no matter how successful or unsuccessful the session has been, you should always thank and congratulate the participant on a job well done.

The circumstances surrounding the "Psycho Straphanger" case, the strength of the victim's memory, and the implementation of the standard composite session effectively aligned. The result of this composite session later proved to be instrumental in the apprehension of this perpetrator. The "Psycho Straphanger" session took a little over two hours, which is about average for a composite session. The general time it took to complete certain tasks during the composite session was noted.

It is not easy to answer the question, *how long does a composite session last?* Many variables must be considered. Commonly, two hours is about average. Adding 15 minutes or so for the preparation of the wanted poster, we are looking at approximately two and a half hours. Not counting some of the composite sessions from early in my career, there have been rare occasions a composite session has lasted as long as four or five hours. This is very unusual and mostly related to circumstances beyond my control (see "Difficult Composite Sessions" in Chapter 6). In contrast, I have had some sessions completed in an hour and a half as well.

The "Psycho Straphanger" session was completed in an acceptable time. The evaluation of the success of the session and composite sketch were high. The artist

Fig. 3.9 Original "Psycho Straphanger" completed composite sketch

should always inform the detective of his or her opinion on the outcome of a session, especially if the evaluation of the completed composite sketch is low. Do this when the participants are not present. You want the detective aware of your insights about the victim or witness and the reasons for the level of success the composite sketch achieved. Fortunately, for the "Psycho Straphanger" composite sketch, the assessment was high, and this was conveyed to the assigned detective.

Once the person is satisfied with the outcome of the completed sketch, the drawing is done. There is no further sketching on this composite except in certain circumstances (see "Multiple Witnesses" in Chapter 6). The "Psycho Straphanger" composite was logged, as all sketches are. The log entries are simple. The only information recorded is the following: a sketch number, the date the session took place, the crime, the requesting squad, police department case numbers, the detective assigned, the artist's name, the witness's or victim's name, and a brief description of the crime or place of occurrence. These particulars are logged so the sketch can be tracked down at a later date. No other data are recorded. All other pertinent information you acquired during the composite session is represented on the completed sketch.

A question is related to this issue: *Should the artist keep a record of the photograph references selected?* Absolutely not, under any circumstances; these images were for reference only. Though the photograph references aided during the composite session for the reasons previously stated, they were not the main source of information. These images were not the subject of the sketch. The suspect description illustrated in the completed composite sketch was develop directly from the

victim or witness during the implementation of the composite session. No doubt the essence of facial information developed with the help of the references would have been adjusted and modified during the course of the session. The particular facial features drawn on the composite may only bear a likeness to the features on the references. Any comparison made after the fact is meaningless. The sketch is a depiction of the participant's perception of the suspect. If your procedure is generally consistent and the sketch has been rendered clearly and distinctly, you will always be able to explain how and why a sketch was prepared if called upon to do so at a later date, even if, undoubtedly, you have forgotten the details of a particular session.

The NYPD's Forensic Artist Unit standard procedure is to keep the original sketch on file. The assigned case detective is given copies of the printed wanted poster. These copies are excellent reproductions of the original sketch. However, the Straphanger suspect's sketch was prepared prior to the use of desktop publishing. Back then, the detective would have received a couple of Polaroid photographs and some Xerox-type copies of the completed sketch. It was the best we could offer at that time. The wanted poster would have been prepared by the Print Section at a later date. This old process could have taken a month or more before the wanted poster was received by the assigned detective. Today the completed sketch is digitally scanned. The new image file is prepared with digital imaging software such as Photoshop. Certain quality adjustments are made to the sketch's digital image. The goal is to have the image print as closely as possible to the original sketch. (Tip: How you adjust your drawings digitally is related to your technique and the printer you are using.) The tweaked image is exported to a desktop publishing program and inserted into the wanted poster format. This is done immediately after the completion of the composite session. The use of computers and digital technology is paramount for today's forensic artist. It is extremely desirable to have quality control over the printing of one of your sketches. Digital technologies will afford this control. Taking the time to develop these digital skills is well worth it. The NYPD's Artist Unit only releases the prepared wanted poster to the assigned detective and will distribute it within the department. The artist should never release a copy of the wanted person to the public, press, or victim unless instructed to do so by the requesting department or detective. This is not the job of the forensic artist and could jeopardize an ongoing investigation (see "The Press" in Chapter 6).

Shortly after the preparation of the "Psycho Straphanger" composite sketch, the squad did release the sketch to the press. It appeared in the most New York City daily newspapers (Fig. 3.10). Not all composite sketches are released to the public-as a matter of fact, most are not. In this case, the public safety was considered since this perpetrator was a serial criminal. He was committing the same crime on other occasions. It was apparent that this thug had no intention of stopping. It was deemed prudent to make the public aware of his likenesses. Besides, the squad needed a lead, which is ultimately the purpose of a composite sketch. The fact the beatings were taking place on a specific subway line, the "A" train, narrowed the geographical area. Very quickly after the composite appeared in the paper, the police received a lead to the identity of the "Psycho Straphanger." A Queens resident,

FACE OF TERROR: *Police sketch of subway psycho,*

'Psycho Straphanger' is stalking the rails

Transit police are warning straphangers to be on the lookout for a well-dressed, neatly groomed commuter who has viciously attacked as many as 10 men on the A train.

The unknown attacker has been dubbed the "Psycho Straphanger" by cops.

He stares intently at his victim — always a man — as he slowly approaches, pulling a knife or a lead pipe from a canvas bag.

For no apparent reason, he savagely slashes, clubs or beats his prey, leaving him bloodied and gasping on the floor of the train.

In nearly every case, the victim has been seriously injured.

Fig. 3.10 "Psycho Straphanger" case original newspaper article

along with other subway riders, recognized the sketch as a 19-year-old male from Rockaway, a neighborhood in Queens. When the suspect was apprehended by the Transit Police, the newspaper headline read, "THAT'S HIM! Sketch does in subway suspect" (Fig. 3.11). It was noted that the suspect had an uncanny resemblance to the composite sketch. The "bad guy" had been caught.

The "Psycho Straphanger" composite session was conducted according to a standard composite session procedure. A well-developed session technique creates the avenues needed to develop the most effective composite sketch possible for a given circumstance. Applying these described methods as they relate to session dynamics, memory assessment, interviewing techniques, questioning strategies, and the three-stage drawing procedure has been proven with many successful outcomes. In addition, the composite session reveals many pertinent insights about individual


4★ NEW YORK POST, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 1989

'THAT'S HIM!'

By MARGIE FEINBERG

Queens residents and subway riders identified a Rockaway teen as the A-train attacker because of his uncanny likeness to a composite sketch, transit police said yesterday.

Sketch does in subway suspect

"The comparison between the suspect and the composite is unbelievable."

CHIEF MICHAEL O'CONNOR

New York Post: Kevin Cohen

ON THE MARK: *This police sketch is credited with breaking the case of the subway "psycho." Its accuracy, including the birthmark on the neck, helped civilians finger suspect , shown in custody yesterday.*

Fig. 3.11 *N.Y. Post* "Psycho Straphanger" case news article

types and victim/witness descriptive vocabulary. Needless to say, there will be occasions where even the most professional standard procedure will need to be adjusted for a specific situation. During these special situations, the contrast to the standard procedure will offer additional insights about the victim or witness and the session results (see "Difficult Composite Sessions" in Chapter 6). Yet for the overwhelming majority of cases, this standard composite session procedure and the implementation of these discussed rules, guidelines, notable concepts, and tips will prove themselves time and time again. It works!

Chapter 4
Witnesses and Victims

Witness and Victim Types

It is essential for the artist to acquire perceptiveness about different types of witnesses and victims. Interviews, which are conducted with the greatest variety of individuals, will afford the artist an avenue to develop these insightful presumptions. It is during the composite session's interviewing process that the artist will recognize recurring trends. Common sense will dictate that each unique individual may react differently to a composite session. The following observations are not absolutes. Undoubtedly, all composite artists will develop their own theories about why people respond the way they do to a crime or composite session. Having said this, there have been recurring trends that are worth noting. The way certain types of witnesses and victims responded in the past during composite sessions has revealed these trends. Acknowledging some of these impressions will help artists to conduct their composite sessions. The manner in which one applies this philosophy will be up to the artist and the circumstances of particular cases.

The composite-session participants are defined into several basic categories. Exploring how each type has generally responded in the past will reveal beneficial strategies. We are already aware that each individual is unique and could certainly oppose any one of these concepts. The acceptance of stereotype assumptions has exposed some legitimate conclusions. These conclusions are beneficial to the implementation of the composite session.

Males and Females

The most basic category is the male vs. female factor. There largely aren't many significant differences noted between their responses. The male or female witness has proven to be equally successful and unsuccessful. Their abilities to describe a suspect are about the same. However, male and female interests are stereotypically different. A female may pay closer attention to hairstyles or makeup compared to a male. The artist can question a female witness as to a male suspect's attractiveness. This is something a guy would not offer an answer to. Yet either a male or female

S. Mancusi, *The Police Composite Sketch*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-60761-832-4_4,

will give an opinion about the attractiveness of a female suspect. If a suspect had a unique facial feature or cosmetic surgery similar to a witness's, the witness tends to recognize it in another. Cosmetic nose surgery, which is more common in females, comes to mind. There have been female witnesses who brought attention to this issue during composite sessions.

The effects of stress and emotion caused by the circumstances are projected differently between males and females. Given that females are stereotypically more affected by emotion, the artist can expect a greater incidence of this during these sessions. It is paramount to be sensitive to the emotional state of the victim or witness. This sensitivity should be reflected in the artist's demeanor (see "Difficult Composite Sessions" in Chapter 6).

A male victim will display far less emotion during the session and/or in response to a completed sketch. Your interviewing technique can be more direct, with the exception of a witness to a crime whose victim was a loved one, such as a child or wife. Emotions will be expected to play a much greater role for males and females. In this case, it will require a higher level of compassion.

The victim's ego can play a role during the composite session as well. This issue is mostly a male bias. It exposes itself as a rationalization related to why he could not have stopped the crime from happening. During the session, he will want to explain this. The artist will reassure him that there was nothing he could have done. Many female victims also show a need to rationalize their response to the incident. It seems more related to a feeling of responsibility for the incident. They make statements like, "I shouldn't have been there," or "If only I were stronger." Reassure her that she did nothing wrong and the bad guys do not own the parks or streets.

Another gender aspect is one that plays a greater role for the female victim. It is related to the specific crimes committed against women. Ironically, these types of crimes offer an advantage during a session. Sex-related crimes are perpetrated on women much more than on men (see "Crimes" later in this chapter). It is the invasiveness of such crimes that is psychologically more intense than other crimes. It would be expected for the victim's reaction to sexual crimes to be more severe. This intensity will solidify the victim's memory of the suspect, which could be an advantage during a session. The artist's compassion plays an important role during these sessions (see "Difficult Composite Sessions" in Chapter 6). There are some guidelines the artist should keep in mind when questioning sexual assault victims, especially a male artist questioning a female victim. Keep your questions related to the suspect's descriptions and ascertaining the strength of the victim's memory; you do not have to ask about the salacious details of the actual sexual assault. This will only result in the victim's reliving this horrible event. On occasion, the victim will want to convey this information. It has been noted that this could be a little therapeutic for some victims. If the artist responds with a level of concern and from a professional demeanor, it could diminish the horror of the incident for a moment. This professional posture will be in direct contrast to the deep concern and distress the victim has been receiving from her family. It will help her cope with her circumstances and focus on the job at hand, which is the preparation of the composite sketch (see "Difficult Witnesses and Victims" in Chapter 6).

Case Study 3: "Dual Victim Rape"

This case will illustrate the contrast between victims' responses and how it can be an advantage during a session. A dual rape was committed on two 20-year-old females at the same time. The victims in this case were roommates. After returning to their apartment building in the early evening, they were attacked by a sexual predator. He was armed with a gun and forced the victims to a deserted roof stairwell. The suspect restrained both victims with duct tape and blindfolded them. He proceeded to rape each of them. Both victims were brought to the composite session for a multiple-witness sketch (see "Multiple Witnesses" in Chapter 6). The first victim was much more casual about the incident. The second was not. She was very upset and quiet. During the session, the first victim was eager to tell the circumstances of the incident in great detail. She even described the suspect's genitals. This apparently was the first victim's defense mechanism for coping with the rape. Therefore, letting her speak seemed appropriate. It also aided in acquiring the information about the circumstances and environmental factors that might have affected their perceptions. Unfortunately, even though both females did get a quick look at the suspect at the start of the abduction, they were eventually blindfolded. It turned out that the second victim was able to see the suspect from underneath the blindfold while the first victim was being assaulted. This afforded her a better opportunity to view the suspect and formulate a stronger memory, which proved to be better than the first victim's initial quick glance. In spite of the second victim's withdrawn demeanor, it was necessary to utilize both females. The first victim was clearly more dominant when answering the questions. Her answers were not as informative as required, but the second victim was content in letting her take control. Still, it was

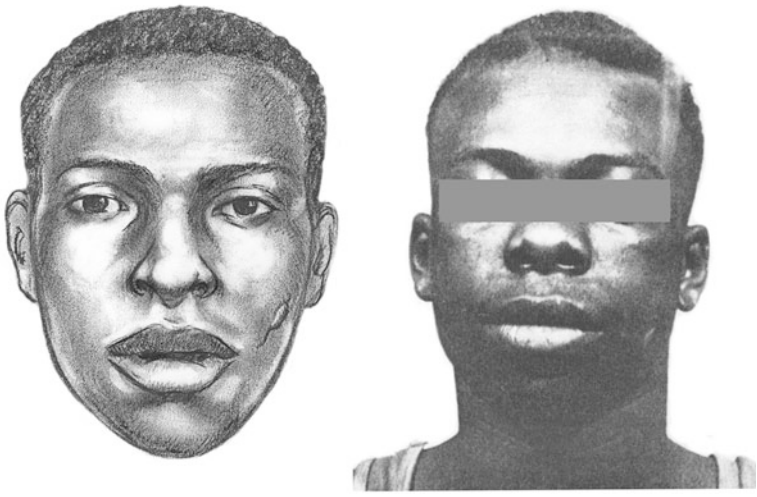

Fig. 4.1 Case study 3: Dual-victim rape hit

evident that the second victim had to have a stronger recall of the suspect. It was imperative that the second victim be more involved in supplying the description. The demeanor of the first victim provided the means. The effect of her casual personification toward the incident aided the session dynamics. This created a momentary diminishing of this horrible event in the mind of the second victim. She began to offer information. Recognizing this change, I was quick to direct my attention to her. Furnished with the confidence to comment on the sketch and add to the descriptive information, she remembered a scar on the perpetrator's cheek. This was revealed toward the end of the session. The resulting composite sketch achieved a more specific-looking individual than otherwise could have been illustrated without her input. The perpetrator was later indentified as a local thug from the area and was apprehended (Fig. 4.1).

Age

The next significant category of witness and victim is age. There is certainly a distinction in the response and success of the various age groups. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of these age groups is very helpful.

At a forensic art conference, the topic of a very young victim or witness was raised and discussed. The question asked was, *what is the youngest age that a victim or witness can participate in a composite session?* Common sense tells us that it depends upon the child. During the discussion, five-year-olds emerged as a good benchmark. Some artists had attempted sketches with four-year-olds. The youngest I have worked with was a street-smart three-year-old. She was probably closer to four. It can be said that less than three years old is too young. In spite of this, children in general make very good witnesses. I relate it to a computer's hard drive space. Children's brains have a lot of hard drive space to store new memories. It appears that children are less affected by perceptive distraction as well. They have fewer preconceived notions. One of the hurdles you will have to overcome will be the age of the suspect. The younger the child, the older everyone seems. They have some understanding of the ages of teens, parents, and grandparents to an extent. However, this is easily dealt with when using photograph references or making an age distinction to someone the child knows. Otherwise, once the suspect's age is dealt with, the child witness has shown to be quite effective. There will be obvious adjustments when phrasing your questions. Children will require some level of entertainment as well. I offer drawing materials. It seems to do the job (see "Children" in Chapter 6).

In contrast to the child witness or victim, the elderly witness or victim is generally less effective. It will depend on the individual, but as the person becomes older than 70, it becomes more difficult to retain new memories. They can convey some very interesting stories from the distant past, but have trouble with recent events. Questioning these elderly individuals can be frustrating. There are many more preconceived perceptions that may be impossible to overcome. The elderly have a tendency to select many photographs when viewing the reference materials

without supplying much detail as to why the images have been selected. Over 80 years of age might be as ineffective a group to interview as those younger than three.

Case Study 4: "Elderly Victim"

There was a pattern case of push-in robberies committed against elderly female victims. The suspect was a female African American. The perpetrator would follow the victim home. She would tie up her victims. Then she would proceed to search the apartment and steal any valuables that she could find. In one incident, she stabbed an 81-year-old female in the stomach. The participant for this composite session was an elderly Caucasian female. However, this particular incident was not as brutal. A sketch was completed, but the victim offered very little detail. Even though the suspect spent quite a bit of time with the victim, while the suspect searched the apartment, the elderly female insisted the suspect was friendly-looking. She had trouble recalling African-American features. This is common. Individuals will often rely on preconceived notions when the memory is failing. They will describe what they believe a face should look like. The completed composite was average-looking and slightly Caucasian in appearance (Fig. 4.2). The victim relied on her perception of what a nice person looks like. Fortunately, she did supply a particular hairstyle, which helped. The suspect was later identified and arrested. She was in possession of a 12-in. knife. The apprehended suspect's facial feature clearly suggested her race and her demeanor didn't seem all that friendly (Fig. 4.3).

The elderly are often victims of cons as well. Generally, these perpetrators prey upon the victim's greed, lack of awareness, or parental fears. These deceptions usually begin near a bank where the victim frequently makes deposits or withdrawals. This perpetrator approaches the victim with a story that he just found a large sum of money in special bank checks. The suspect explains that he has a friend who

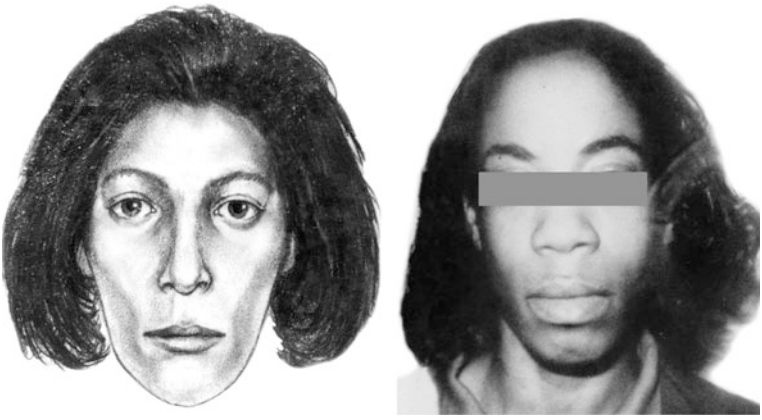

Fig. 4.2 Case study 4: Push-in robbery pattern hit

SHE'S SUSPECT IN FOREST HILLS PUSH-INS

Nabbed as robber

By JAMES DUDDY
and DAVID J. KRAJICEK
Daily News Staff Writers

A young woman accused as the push-in robber who preyed on eight elderly women in the Forest Hills section of Queens since July was collared last night on Queens Blvd.

The cops recognized her from a police sketch that had been distributed in the precinct. A woman who police said was carrying a 12½-inch knife when arrested, is unemployed now but was trained as a Queens Family Court receptionist last year.

Fig. 4.3 *N.Y. Daily News* article for case study 4

is a bank teller and can cash these kinds of checks. The suspect offers to split the money with the victim as long as the victim is willing pay the suspect's bank-teller friend a percentage of the found amount in good faith. The good-faith payment would be paid from the victim's private bank account. A second player enters into the conversation to enhance the tale. In an attempt to confuse the elderly victim, the second player is eager to be part of the transaction as well. From an unsuspecting victim's point of view, the victim has been offered an opportunity to double or triple her investment if she acts quickly. Feeling the pressure, the victim makes the withdrawal and gives the good-faith payment to the suspect. The victim and the second player are instructed to wait on a designated street corner for the suspect to return from the bank with the cash proceeds of the checks, which, of course, never happens. The victim is left without her good-faith payment. Though these crimes usually take place during the day over a significant period of time, they have been noted to be difficult sessions due to the fact that most of the victims are very old.

Case Study 5: "Con Game"

Let's examine a similar case that illustrates this concept. In this con, the perpetrators are not preying on greed, but parental fears. When I was first introduced to this pattern of deceptions, I found it quite intriguing. This composite session was attempted with several elderly couples who were victims of this pattern of case. The cons of this pattern were similarly executed as follows. One older couple was awoken when the phone rang very late in the evening. After answering the phone, the victim was addressed by a male voice that just said, "Mom!" in a nervous fashion. The victim responded like any other concerned parent:

"David, what's the matter? Are you all right?"

These con artists are experts at their game and quickly returned the newly acquired information back to the mother:

"It's David. I had a car accident."

The mother, believing she is talking to her son David, offers additional information:

"Where are you? Were you coming home from work? Are Diana and the kids with you?"

Again, the con artist uses the information to build credibility to the story. The male voice on the phone responded accordingly.

"Yeah, I was working the late shift. Don't worry. Diana and the kids are home sleeping. I do not want to wake them up."

Mom responds again:

"Where are you? I will send your father to get you."

The caller then says,

"No, I am at the auto shop. I am very upset and need to talk to the mechanic now. Here, I am going to give you the guy I hit. He will explain it to you."

The false "son" is quick to get off the phone and tries to say as little as possible. He doesn't want to be discovered. The next person Mom talks to is the second player. This player can speak more freely, restating previously acquired information. He explains how David is fine and doesn't want to upset his wife and kids. He tells the victim that David would like to handle this before he goes home. The second player is willing to let the whole thing drop as long as he gets the money to fix his car first thing in the morning. This would be in a few hours. He further explains that he and their son will meet with them to pick up the money. The second player acquires the address. In some cases, the bogus son reassured the victims that he will work it all out with them later that day. Upon meeting with the parents, the con man states the mechanic insisted that David stay with the cars. These incidents were before cell phones. Once the second player has the money, he is gone. In this case, he swindled the couple of $2,000. It took them almost a day to get in touch with their son. By coincidence, the son happened to be a police officer working an extended tour of duty that evening and knew nothing about this. The father did say he was very hesitant to give the man the money. He wouldn't have, but the man became very agitated toward him and eventually he complied. All three of the elderly couples present at the composite session had similar experiences. One couple even gave the suspect additional money later the same day of their incident. The couples were all in their late 70s and 80s. They had a similar hazy description of the suspect. He was a middle-aged white male who looked like a mobster. The sketch reflected a vague suspect for this particular type of character (Fig. 4.4), demonstrating the difficulties this age group may have with short-term memories. This recall phenomenon has presented itself many times. In an interesting sidebar, the detective assigned to the case told me that these con artists would achieve this deception by making countless calls throughout a given night until they hooked a victim with the word "Mom!"

Basically, all other age groups perform similarly and have not revealed any real differences between them except for personal individuality. Standard interviewing techniques are applied for most age groups, with one minor exception: the teenager.

Fig. 4.4 Case study 5: Con game sketch

Teenagers want to be perceived as cool and appear at first to be a little aloof. Yet they will ultimately be eager to participate. When recognizing this trend, the artist will adjust his or her questioning technique. On average, teenagers are good witnesses. It is only in the extreme age groups that some actual distinctions are revealed.

Race

The next significant group of composite-session participants would be race. On the whole, victims or witness of varying races will perform equally during composite sessions except in some particular circumstances. There are occasions when a victim of one race has difficulty describing a suspect of a different race. As demonstrated in one of the previous case studies, elderly white females have difficult describing African-American features. Almost all races have trouble describing Asian suspects, unless the victim or witness is Asian. These racial difficulties only occurred in a small percentage of the witnesses or victims of interracial crimes. Most people in the confines of New York City have abundant interaction with all types of people, attributed to New York's large, diverse population confined in a relatively small geographical area. This can be expected for most metropolitan areas. These conditions provide the average city inhabitant an advantage in recognizing racial differences.

Hispanic or Latino witnesses or victims are a group that often requires a Spanish translator (see "Miscellaneous Difficulties" in Chapter 6). Furthermore, in today's

multicultural society, interracial distinctions have become blurred. The victim, witness, and criminal populations reflect this. This could result in racial confusion during a session. It is helpful to allow additional time for a witness or victim to view a greater variety of suspect photograph references during interracial cases.

Case Study 6: "Interracial References"

In this case, an African-American female was sexually assaulted on a beach at Coney Island. The victim stated the suspect was Hispanic, but felt strongly he was of Mexican descent with some American Indian qualities. It would have been nice if I could have gone to the mug shot reference files and pulled out a stack of appropriate images. This was not the case. Ultimately, a selection was used of Hispanic males and Asian males in the appropriate age group for the victim to view. In doing so, we were able to complete this composite sketch with the desired racial characteristics (Fig. 4.5).

Fig. 4.5 Case study 6: Composite sketch

There are some positive noteworthy observations as they relate to the race of a witness or victim. This is when the person and the perpetrator are the same race. Some victims and witnesses can offer much greater detail on the suspect's appearance. Often they can clarify the country the suspect may have originated from. This may be a product of a particular dialect. It can also be attributed to the suspect's appearance. This is simply exemplified by a suspect having been identified as a Caucasian of Italian or Irish ancestry.

Another minor notation is the Asian victim or witness. As a group, they have shown to be the most demanding in their descriptions, desiring the sketch to have a much greater likeness to the suspect than might be possible under their specific circumstances. This is not a scientific observation, but it seems to occur more frequently than for other racial types.

Crimes

The next set of victim or witness groups pertains to particular crimes. A simple rule that clearly fits is unfortunately demonstrated with victims of sexual assaults. Sexual assaults yield the best circumstances for the formation of memory, which will avail better suspect descriptions. We attribute this to the fact that these victims have close contact with the suspect over a longer period of time; it is compounded by the horrific invasiveness of the crime. This is in contrast to a robbery, which may happen in only moments. It can be confidently noted that many successful composite sketches are the product of composite sessions in cases of sexual assaults. This demonstrates the following rule perfectly. The longer the victim-to-suspect contact and the more horrific the crime, the greater the chances a stronger recollection of the suspect will be manifested.

Robberies, certain random assaults, and larcenies are generally quick incidents. The witness or victim may not have the time to really view the suspect completely. In the case of some robberies and larcenies, the victim may not feel a great sense of personal violation and never gets an intense imprint of the suspect in his or her memory. This is not to say that these crimes have not resulted in many successful composite sketches. They have. Yet as a concept, the above rule will prove to increase the average rate of success. In the cases of serious assaults that are preceded by a prolonged argument or interaction, the rule could apply.

Homicides are in a league to themselves. By their very nature, you will never have the victim to supply you with the suspect's description. It will always be a witness. The circumstances surrounding the case will govern the strength of the witness's memory.

Profession

The witness's or victim's profession has yielded some recurring observations as well. For the most part, victims with many different professions respond equally during the composite session. Yet some distinctions have been observed. It is not so much the profession itself, but the distraction the witness's profession may inflict on the focus of the individual. It has been observed that the more high-powered and/or responsibility-driven the profession is, the more distracting it will be on the person, as with doctors, high-level businesspeople, lawyers, salespeople, and even politicians. Their time is limited, or time means money to them. Their thoughts are

on issues other than supplying descriptive information. They will more often than not multitask during a composite session. This will affect the normal flow of the session. In contrast, a person with a less demanding profession will be more accessible. A participant free of job responsibilities once off duty will be more relaxed. Furthermore, if a person's job allows the individual to attend a composite session on work time, it is certainly going to be an advantage for the session. This is a situation an investigating detective should try to achieve. Many times it will only take a request from the detective to the employer to make this happen. This will have a positive influence on the composite session dynamics, a premise amply demonstrated on many occasions.

One of the toughest professionals for the composite artist to conduct a composite session with is a police officer. You would think it would be different, but, strangely enough, it is not. The police officer's main concern is not for identification. The concern is about responsibility in a particular situation. During an incident, he or she is contemplating the next course of action, such as affecting an arrest, public safety, or aiding the victim. In cases where the cop is a victim, you will encounter a host of other issues. Embarrassment is one. Cops do not like to be victims even if they are off duty. Their defense mechanism will be the classic law enforcement cynicism to its highest degree. "Who cares?" or "this really does not matter" will be their attitude. This will make interviewing them very difficult. From their point of view, the composite sketch process will be inconsequential. Cop-victims want to put the whole incident behind them.

Another difficult profession is the taxicab or livery cab driver. These people are often victims of robberies due to the work conditions of their profession. Throughout their work day, cab drivers will have many interactions with different individuals, which can confuse their memory of the suspect. This is compounded by the fact that they never really get a good view of the suspect. They commonly see the perpetrator through a rear-view mirror of the car and never have direct visual contact. All these elements will affect the memory process. This is contrasted by professionals who have interactions with all types of individuals but with good opportunities to see their faces. A paradigm is the owner or cashier of a small supermarket or bodega that is frequently robbed. Such people have contact with many types of individuals; fortunately, some of them will be repeat customers. Additionally, they will get a direct view of the suspect when the crime is committed because, in most cases, the cashier is positioned to face the patrons when servicing them. Other professions such as health care workers, certain salespersons, and even some prostitutes fall into this advantageous category.

A little obscure is the profession of graphic artists. They perceive themselves as image-oriented and have stated many times during composite sessions that they are very visual. Disappointingly, the artist-victim rarely proves to be any better than the average witness. Artist-victims are very attentive to the actual drawing of the composite sketch and occasionally lose the focus of their description of the suspect. Instead, they become distracted with the composite sketch as a piece of artwork. If this should arise, it is the composite artist's job to refocus the person. Your experience, confidence in your abilities, and your knowledge of the purpose

of a composite sketch should supply the avenue for you to get a session back on track.

As a sidebar to this profession category is the forensic artist. Except during training workshops, I have never conducted an actual composite session with a victim or witness who was a forensic artist. Being a member of this group, I would expect a forensic artist to be a very strong witness given warranted circumstances. This is what we do. We should be able to view a subject and analyze the subject's facial characteristics fairly quickly, achieving a greater understanding as to why an individual looks the way he or she does. This theory has been proven during training exercises.

Intelligence

Another question related to specific types of witnesses or victims is the individual's level of intelligence: *Does the intelligence of a victim or witness play a significant role during a composite session?* There isn't any way to be certain of a witness's or victim's mental aptitude in a short period of time. A drug addict could appear ignorant. This most likely is a drug-induced effect and may not be a product of his or her intellect. It is advantageous to the composite session when an individual has good communication skills. Uncertain is the correlation to the person's intelligence. The distinction between levels of intelligence is unclear as it relates to the success of a sketch. The artist should be aware that the less intelligent individual may be more easily influenced. When questioning such persons, the artist should be careful not to lead the witness with his or her interviewing technique.

On several other occasions, participants have declared a photographic memory. As in other unique individual abilities, no notable distinction has been observed in the outcome of these persons' composite sketches. Additionally, people known to have a high level of intelligence, such as doctors, lawyers, or professors, have had similar results as any other individual. Thus, the recognition of intellectual differences will govern the way the artist conducts the session interview, but this is to be expected. The success of the resulting sketch will be more a product of the circumstances than the direct intelligence of the participant.

Police Department Supporters and Skeptics

Witnesses and victims are from every walk of life. There aren't any exceptions to who might become a victim or witness to a crime. There are those who support law enforcement and those who are skeptical of the police in general. The supportive persons are generally more cooperative. Because they are a little eager to please, the artist should be careful not to lead them. They are quick to concede to your authority and are easily swayed if questioned inappropriately.

Skeptical persons or individuals who just don't like the police will need a little persuading. First, keep in mind that they are dissatisfied with the institution of law enforcement and not with the artist. These persons will approach a session with a hard, cold cynicism and a distrust of police. The artist must attempt to melt this boundary early in the session. A nonpolice environment and the ability to conduct a friendly, inspiring composite session will aid in this task. Regrettably, there will be individuals who have such distain for the police institution that this wall will never be penetrated. Luckily, this seems to be the exception.

A related situation is the witness or victim who is an arrested perpetrator. I have conducted quite a few sessions where the witness arrived in handcuffs. Needless to say, these individuals aren't going to be all too happy and will exude a degree of distrust. There is special presession information about the case that will be required from the assigned detective, such as why the witness is a perpetrator. The composite session is conducted according to standard operating procedures. Keeping the witness handcuffed or not during a session is governed by the department's rules. As for the NYPD, the perpetrator-witness stays handcuffed. During these sessions the artist should be attuned to the possibility of the subject's lack of truthfulness. Lying is not always going to be the case. Often the arrested perpetrator wants to help in return for leniency, but there is a chance for deception (see *"How does the artist identify deception?"* in Chapter 6).

Unusual Case 1: "Unique Victims"

This is an interesting instance of a specific pair of victims. They didn't fit into any basic category. This crime occurred in Bay Ridge, a section of Brooklyn. It is a nice residential area with a few nightclubs and restaurants on a particular avenue. One winter evening in front of a nightclub, a few patrons harassed and committed a minor assault on two females. When the detective arrived at the Artist Unit the next day for a sketch, he was escorted by the two victims. One was a young African-American female. The other was a young white female, in full makeup, with big blond hair, spiked heels, and leopard skin outfit. She made quite a stir as she walked through the outer office. I began with the preliminary inquiries of the assigned detective. I knew something was up. He answered my question with a little grin. I then directed my attention to the victims, "Hi. How are you doing? I'm the artist. What are your names?" I did a double-take when they answered me. Their voices, how should I say it, were not feminine. It took me a few moments to connect the sound with the person. As you may have guessed, they were not exactly who they appeared to be. They were not females. They only dressed that way. No big deal; they were relatively nice people. The session went smoothly except that the blond kept dancing around the room. There was music playing on a radio in the other office. Once the session was over, the blond raised a few eyebrows again as she left. The session went fine and a sketch was completed. Actually, the hardest part of the session was informing the guys in the outer office of who these girls really were. I guess a few of

them were talking to themselves that night. As far as victims and witnesses go, you have to expect anything.

How the forensic artist applies these witness and victim impressions and presumptions is certainly subjective. It is always imperative for the composite artist to keep an open mind to each person at the onset of any composite session. In spite of this, including these conceptual models as part of your strategy will be useful when conducting a session and developing a successful composite sketch.

Chapter 5
Descriptive Terminologies, Responses, and Solutions

Descriptive Terminologies

Communication is the cornerstone of any composite session. This communication between the artist and participant reveals a lexicon of terminology. This terminology is a valuable facet for the development of a composite sketch. Understanding the words used by a person to express his or her perception of a suspect's appearance is principal to the success of the composite. A composite sketch is an interpretive illustration of the victim's or witness's descriptive verbiage and hopefully a successful manifestation of his or her recall of the suspect. A virtual library of descriptive terminology in the mind of the composite artist is vital. The extent of this mental database is a consequence of the artist's level of experience. The successful solutions the artist discovers to these descriptive words are crucial. The following is an exploration of these words and some solutions. This is not a complete list of descriptive lingo, but recurring idioms.

Average, Basic, and Shape Words

"Average" and "normal" are the most frequently encountered words for the composite artist. These common words are used by witnesses and victims to refer to all the elements of the suspect's features. The reasons will vary. These terms suggest a typical appearance of a regular-looking individual (Fig. 5.1). However, this is a particular characteristic. Unfortunately, it will encompass a greater cross section of a specific population than may be desired. The witness or victim could use these words when unsure. It is expected an individual will answer the artist's inquiries with a generalization when the memory fails. This is not necessarily a bad thing. The artist relies on the rule of "average and normal" for a particular race and age anyway. The witness or victim is unknowingly doing the same. The resulting illustration of the feature in question will have a lesser impact on the completed drawing than a dubious answer may inflict.

Other common words that fit into a basic category are "large," "small," "wide," "narrow," "long," "short," "thick," "thin," "big," "little," "fat," and "skinny"—all

S. Mancusi, *The Police Composite Sketch*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-60761-832-4_5,

Fig. 5.1 Average composite sketch

very common terms that are used to described all the features of the face. These terms are more descriptive than "average" and "normal" but are still general terms. They are most effective in conjunction with each other or when used to distinguish a request change. These words are commonly applied as a person explains the differences of certain features that were selected from the photograph references or when correcting certain facial features on the developing sketch. A simple example is a statement such as, "The nose is like the one in the photograph or drawing, but longer."

Typical overall shape connotations are basic verbiage as well. "Round," "oval," "square," "triangular," and "rectangular" will be heard repeatedly. They often pertain to the eye, head, and nose shapes, but can be used for other features as well. A witness or victim will refer to these terms early during a session. The implications of these particular words are very subjective. The individual's perceptions of these shapes and how they exhibit themselves for a specific feature are pertinent (Fig. 5.2). The composite artist cannot draw his or her preconceived notion of a square-shaped head without fully understanding what a square head means to the participant. Many times it will be different and even in direct contrast to the artist's notion of square. The photograph references will aid in distinguishing these perceptions.

Fig. 5.2 Basic shape distinctions diagram

Case Study 7: "Silver Gun Bandit"

The "Silver Gun Bandit" was wanted for 25 rape/robberies in an exclusive area of Manhattan. He was given this label because he was always armed with a silver handgun. In one incident, he made off with $50,000 in jewels. In another he raped a female victim while her bound husband and children were forced to watch. Still another victim was compelled to leap out a second-story window to escape her assailant. She suffered two broken legs. In a composite session, one of the recent female victims described the perpetrator as a black male in his 20s. She stated he was neatly dressed and well spoken, an average guy with a round head. The point worth noting in this case is the round head shape. The victim strongly felt


NIGHTSTALKER HUNTED AS HE STRIKES AGAIN

He attacked three . In one case, he forced a during a robbery. silver handgun.

SUSPECT SEIZED IN 'SILVER GUN' SPREE

His girl told him he was like the sketch

MICHAEL looked so much like the police composite sketch of the "silver gun bandit" that when his girlfriend saw it in The news last December, she told him his picture was in the paper. 'He just laughed and said 'No, that's not me. You know me I wouldn't do that.'" "All his friends who saw the picture said the same thing.

Fig. 5.3 Case study 7: Robbery pattern newspaper articles and suspect hit

that the essence of the suspect's head was round. Interpreting the round shape was the main thrust of this session. As you can see in the completed sketch, "round" meant round. The normal concept of a round head would not be as extreme as in this completed sketch, but accepting the victim's insistence proved to be correct. The suspect did have a uniquely round head. Though in reality, he was more inline with an anatomically correct oval shape, his characteristic was definitely round (Fig. 5.3). After the suspect was apprehended, his girlfriend at the time said she had joked with the suspect. "I held the sketch up and told him he it looked like him," she stated. The perpetrator was identified by many victims and faced multiple offenses.

Age Indications

There are many terms for referring to the age of a suspect. How an individual describes the possible age of the suspect is related to the witness's or victim's age. As mentioned earlier, children perceive everyone as older. They use phrases like, "The perpetrator was a big kid or a man." Children make a clear distinction between teenagers and young adults. The teenager is a big kid. Conversely, a young adult or an older suspect is referred to as a man.

Many individuals will try to guess the actual age of the suspect or give a specific range. They make statements indicating the suspect was between one age and another, most of the time in a six- or seven-year span. These will be arbitrary assumptions but will reveal the participant's perception of the suspect's age. When this is done, keep in mind the age of the participant; if necessary, inquire how old he or she is. This will aid in the application of the person's speculation. It is beneficial when there are two perpetrators for a particular incident. The victim can now make an easy distinction between the two such as, "Suspect A was younger than suspect B." The resulting composites will reflect this distinction.

Elderly persons will use expressions like "young kid," "young boy." or "he/she was just a kid" when referring to late teens and even 20-year-olds. Sixteen- or 17-year-olds are often referred to as children by older participants. For most people, suspects in their 30s, 40s, and older are clearly men. When an individual indicates the suspect is a grown man. the suspect is generally 15 years older than the individual. On occasion, the witness will relate the age of the suspect to a person in the immediate room. The artist really doesn't require the actual age of this person, just how old he or she may appear.

Demeanor, Character, and Build Words

Witnesses and victims will frequently articulate the subject's demeanor and character early during a session. Most common is the angry, mean, stern, scary, aggressive, intimidating, and intense perpetrator. These words basically denote the same thing as far as their association to a composite sketch. The artist will illustrate levels of

the expression of anger. The eyebrows are closer to the eyes and arch downward toward the center of the head. The mouth bends downward at the ends and can be slightly off center. Also, darker and deep-set eyes, with a hard, edgy line and a slight squint, will help achieve an intimidating, aggressive character (Fig. 5.4). All of these solutions or a combination of them will solve these issues.

Fig. 5.4 Angry demeanor sketches

Another common category of demeanor and character includes the opposite connotations. The suspect seemed nice, friendly, happy, and approachable. These descriptions are used more often than one would think. This may be attributed to the way the suspect presented himself or how he spoke. It is also a product of the suspect's appearance. A solution for this kind of request is to draw the suspect with a softer expression. The eyebrows are raised slightly without a downward angle and the eyes are opened a little wider. The mouth is sketched with a basic upward bow curve. The sketch's line quality is softer. This will achieve a friendlier-appearing suspect. Additionally, the suspect will appear nicer when the face reflects average proportions (Fig. 5.5). If the suspect is described as clean-cut, neat, or collegiate, apply the same solutions as with the friendly suspect. The artist can illustrate a smooth rendered complexion, a well-groomed hairstyle, and trimmed facial hair if required. You can drive the point further with the neck area of a collared shirt (Fig. 5.6). The terms "well-dressed" or "well-spoken" can imply similar characteristics.

The suggestions of nervous, sad, or scared suspects are additional words of descriptive character. On occasion, as in other descriptive lingo, cases where there are two suspects can yield easier distinctions. One thug may be the aggressor and the second may be along for the ride. Many times the second will appear nervous to the victim. The resulting sketches will reflect these contrasting demeanors. This

Fig. 5.5 Nice demeanor sketch

Fig. 5.6 Well-dressed sketch

is not the only example of this kind of demeanor perceived by a victim. Many times the victim states that the perpetrator's character was one of tentativeness and even submissiveness to some extent. These words and phrases are usually dealt with similarly on the composite sketch. The eyebrows move up from the eyes and very slightly angle downward toward the outside of the head. The mouth is almost straight (Fig. 5.7). The eyes are glassy in appearance, with a prominent highlight. The eyes can droop slightly downward toward the outside edge of the head. A submissive demeanor can also be illustrated with a slightly downward tilt to the head. This perspective will result in a foreshortened chin and the top portion of the head having a larger appearance. Do not overstate this element or the drawing may look anatomically incorrect. A greater defining of the temple, shading as the brow ridge buckles inward and upward during expressions of distress, will also help achieve this character request. As in other suggested solutions, not all of these elements are required. The particular description will govern their application.

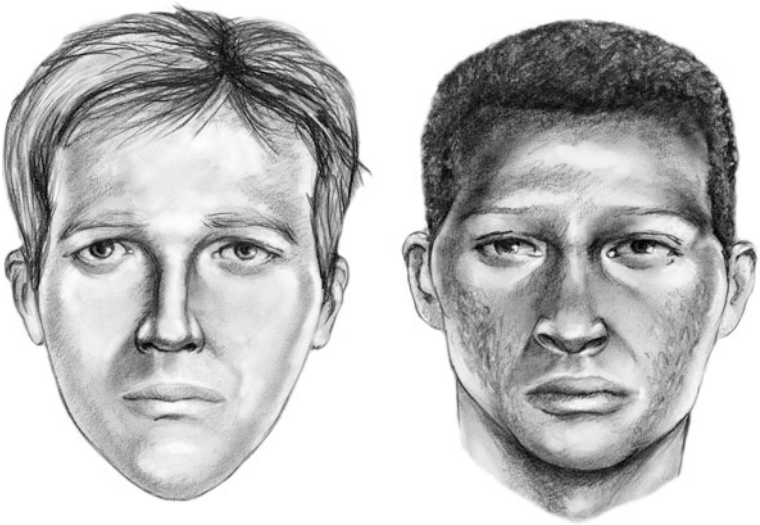

Fig. 5.7 Nervous and tentative demeanor sketches

Suspects described as tired, stoned, and drunk are drawn with the following facial elements. The irises of the eyes roll up behind the upper lid. The less the iris is visible, the more sleepy or stoned the suspect will appear. The fleshy part above the eye and the upper lid will droop. The upper lid may appear thicker (Fig. 5.8). Commonly, most of the facial features will droop downward. Bags under the eyes are rendered according to the suspect's age. The suspect's hair and general appearance in the sketch will be unkempt, disheveled, and messy, which are additional descriptive lingo for this character (Fig. 5.9).

The next unique character reference is the weathered, worn, ugly, sketchy, homeless, vagrant, bum, and smelly suspect. These words are represented on a sketch

Fig. 5.8 Stoned or tired sketch

Fig. 5.9 Unkempt or disheveled sketch

Fig. 5.10 Weathered or worn sketch

with texture and asymmetrical features. The weathered or worn subject will possess a higher degree of facial lines, puffiness around the eyes, and sunken cheeks. Enhancing slight distortions on the face and detailing underlying skull structures are all possible solutions. The worn individual will possess rough skin and could have pockmarks (Fig. 5.10). If the suspect is described as homeless or living on the street, these elements will become more exaggerated on the sketch. The drawing's shading will be uneven and loose. Additionally, textures of pimples, patchy facial hair, and unkempt hairstyles are illustrated. A slightly open mouth is also representative of these kinds of descriptions (Fig. 5.11). The ugly subject will have a few of the above elements. Such faces will be asymmetrical. The facial proportions will not be average, but peculiar. Their gaze might be askew and facial characteristics could be crooked (Fig. 5.12). A frequent remark made by a witness or victim that may hint at the need for these kinds of adjustments to the sketch are statements like, "The person in the sketch looks too good," or "This person looks too plain." These kinds of remarks can be solved with revising the sketch with these textures, facial discrepancies, and peculiarities. Most of these textured elements are applied to the sketch toward the final stages (see "Texture Tips" in Chapter 7).

On the other extreme of character terminology are the suspects who are described as pretty or attractive. Pretty is hard to draw. Illustrating these terms takes a careful drawing hand. When drawing someone who is attractive, the artist can consider leaving out unnecessary marks and lines. It is additionally important to have anatomically correct shading. The "good-looking and pretty" solution is related to perfect proportions or textbook proportions (see "Proportion Drawing Tips" in Chapter 7).

Fig. 5.11 Homeless or vagrant sketch

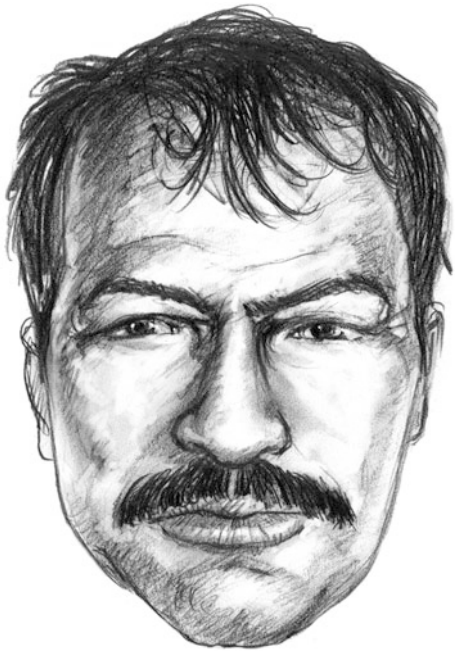

Fig. 5.12 "Ugly suspect" sketch

Fig. 5.13 Attractive suspect sketches

The completed composite sketch will exemplify these basic feature relationships. The shapes of the facial characteristics are drawn even and clean. They should appear very symmetrical. The facial expression can be illustrated similarly to the suspect described as friendly or nice (Fig. 5.13).

A common reference is related to the overall suspect's build, as in strong, muscular, husky, and big, but not always associated with weight or height. Possible solutions are linked to the neck, width of the head, and jawline. There is a delicate balance between muscular and fat. When sketching these traits, the artist should be mindful of this (Fig. 5.14). To imply strength and muscles, the jawline is squared off and well defined with a sharp line. The jaw will be a little wider than normal. This is contrasted to a fat trait, where the jawline is not squared, but rounded and the line

Fig. 5.14 Fat to muscular distinction diagram

gives way to the fleshy area under the chin or jowls. The less or more the distinction is rendered between the jaw and the neck, the greater the suggestion of fat or muscular will be achieved. Furthermore, the neck can be delineated for both instances on a given sketch. The neck will appear as wide or somewhat wider than the head, according to the desired girth of the subject. Only the shortest suggestion of the neck is necessary. Add the whole of the shoulders is not required (see "Rendering Tips" in Chapter 7).

Another set of character terminology includes the phrases "nondescript," "ordinary," or "looks like a cop.". These are slightly analogous to the "average and normal" terms, with small variations. "Nondescript" is utilized when the suspect's appearance is extremely ordinary, even to the point of distinguishing race and age. Compared to "average and normal," a participant may suggest when he or she is uncertain. The nondescript suspect was clearly seen by the victim but has almost no character (Fig. 5.15). You will encounter statements from the victim such as, "The guy was standing right by me and if he hadn't robbed me, I wouldn't have even known he was there." The completed drawing will exhibit very little detail. The resulting composite sketch may be of virtually no value. The question arises of why do a sketch at all? The logic is that the victim is not saying he or she doesn't remember the suspect, but that the perception of the suspect was ordinary.

The statement "He looked like a cop" is a reference to the standard stereotype picture of a police officer from the past. This kind of verbiage is not only offered by individuals when the perpetrator impersonates a cop, but for other crimes as well. The suspect is generally an ordinary-looking male of a specified race. Today, cops are from every walk of life. They are of all genders, races, sizes, and creeds. Yet

Fig. 5.15 Nondescript suspect sketch

when the artist hears this phrase, the person is not suggesting the present condition of our police force. This is a reference to a nondescript male with short hair between the ages of 28 and 40. He will have an authoritative demeanor. As a resolution for this request, the sketch can illustrate an ordinary guy of a particular race and age with little detail. The suggested demeanor is similarly drawn as for terms of aggression (Fig. 5.16). In most cases, the completed sketch will be of limited value. Police officer impersonators naturally project this stereotypical appearance. This affords them the ability to blend into this category. An example of this character is illustrated by actual police officers. For those police officers who fit this typical description, ask yourself how many times you have been identified as a cop in your everyday life. Victims frequently state that they truly believed the suspect was a cop.

Fig. 5.16 "Looked like a cop" suspect sketch

Terminology related to gang member- or thug-type suspects signifies two elements. The first is youth; commonly, the person should be drawn young in appearance. Second, it is largely a fashion statement linked to head accessories and gang tattoos (Fig. 5.17). These head accessories will change with the times. Presently, they are represented with oversized baseball caps, bandanas, skull caps, and doo-rags (see "Hat Terms" later in this chapter). The baseball caps and bandanas usually have audacious printed patterns. Frequently, the subject will be wearing a combination of headgear. The "hoodie" or oversized sweatshirt hood is a perfect manifestation for the thug. The hood will sit large on the head and most of the time be fully opened. The face of the subject will appear in deep shadow, and the

Fig. 5.17 Thug sketch

facial features will be hard to discern. On occasion, the suspect will pull the drawstrings tight around the face. This has the effect of defining all faces as oval, but the facial features are still visible (Fig. 5.51). The term "gangster" is generally similar to "thug" but can also refer to a "mobster-type" suspect. The word "mobster" is different from "thug." It is often a middle-aged individual of Italian, Irish, or Russian decent. Figure 4.4 shows some basic solutions.

Facial Feature Terminologies

There is a recurring vocabulary individuals use to describe specific facial features. You will encounter a whole variety of words describing these elements. It would be impossible to cover the complete lexis. In spite of that, this will be an attempt to address some of the more common jargon.

Head and Face Words

The head and face connotations most often will be the basic shapes, such as oval, square, round, rectangular, and triangular (Fig. 5.2). As stated earlier, understanding how an individual perceives these visual representations is important. Photograph references will help. Other descriptive words are "long," "short," "narrow," and "full." These terms are pretty straightforward and are represented as one would expect. When drawing a long head or face, one should be wary of the proportional aspect of the facial features. The artist will note where the proportional lengths are to be added, such as the length of the forehead, nose, the distance between the nose

Fig. 5.18 Narrow head sketch

and mouth, and/or the length of the chin (Fig. 5.18). "Narrow" verbiage can be related to a long face, but not always. When sketching a narrow head or face, be aware of exactly what the witness is referring to. The word "narrow" many times is describing just the front plane of the face, which includes the forehead width between the temporal ridges, the outside of the eye socket, the cheekbone, the smile muscles (zygomaticus muscle), the chin, and all the features in between. Often, what is not be considered by the witness for "narrow" implications are the side planes of the head, which include the full width of the brain case, the ear location, and the angle of the mandible (basically, the jawline). The "horse face" description is similar to the long face (Fig. 5.19) but may have a more defined muzzle area.

The "short," "small," and "mousy" suggestions are somewhat related. The short head or face is depicted square. The overall width of the head appears almost equal to the overall length of the head. "Small" and "mousy" descriptions are short heads with weaker chins and jaws. In these cases, the chin will appear shorter. The bottom half of the head is slightly smaller in proportion than the upper half. The chin can be receding; in the case of "mousy," the ears might protrude (Fig. 5.20).

The connotations of full, large, and heavy-faced are illustrated as such. The solution is in the cheek area and the proportions of the bottom half of the head. Wider cheek mass and fleshier jowls illustrate heavy and full. The bottom half of the head will be proportionally greater than the top half (Fig. 5.21). The forehead may recede

Fig. 5.19 Horse face sketch

Fig. 5.20 Mousy sketch

Fig. 5.21 Large face sketch

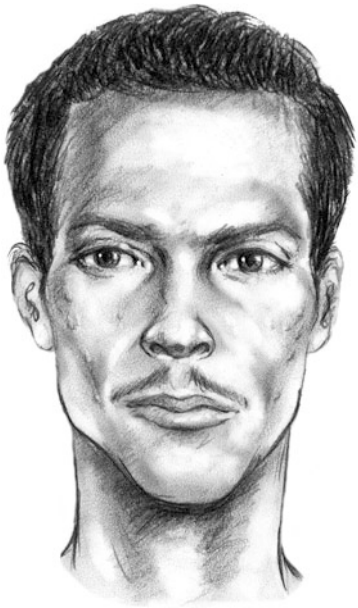

Fig. 5.22 Thin face sketch

somewhat, which is depicted as a shorter forehead. The features of the face may also be more pronounced or larger, but not always.

Suggestions of thin and drawn are different than narrow in some cases. These words are associated with the rendering of the underlying skull structure. Though the thin face may be narrow as well, sunken cheeks and pronounced cheekbones are part of this solution (Fig. 5.22).

Eye Words

The eyes are the most talked about feature during a session. The overwhelming assumption is that they are very important, if not the most important feature. This is not exactly true. In fact, they are defined by the structure around them. Yet the eyes are the focal point of every interpersonal encounter and one of the main facial features of expression. This alone elevates their significance. The intentions of the individual are resonated through the eyes. They are regarded as the windows to the soul and provoke people's attention. There will be a lot of illumination by the victim about these projected emotions and intents of the suspect. It is possible to illustrate some of these vague manifestations, but not all. The master portrait artist will spend a lifetime trying to achieve this phenomenon. The composite sketch is not the avenue for this accomplishment, and an exorbitant amount of time should not be spent trying. Nevertheless, by suggesting some basic elements of expression to the drawing, the artist can solve some of the victim's concerns.

Generally, the eyes will be described as "almond," "round," "big," "small," "opened," "narrow," "squinty," "closed." and "Asian" (other than for race). By far, "almond" is the most common eye term. This is because at its most basic delineation, eyes are almond-shaped. The eye can be a fat almond or a slender almond, but they are still almond in shape (Fig. 5.23). The majority of eyes drawn will be of this garden variety (see "Characteristic Drawing Tips" in Chapter 7). The words "round" and "open" suggest the same eye character. The more opened the eye, the rounder it will appear (Fig. 5.23). No matter how much an individual requests the eye be opened more, the eye is never drawn so that the white of the eye is completely visible around the whole of the iris. A portion of the iris is always covered by some part of the upper lid, except in circumstances of extreme fright or panic. Round can also be attributed to the folds of the eyes, but this characteristic is often described by other terms.

"Squinty," "narrow," "shifty," "closed," "slanted," and "Asian" (other than race) denote a similar eye character. The eye shape becomes more slender as the lids close. In some cases, the upper lid will appear thicker, except for most Asian subjects. The slit of the eye can be so narrow that the white of the eye is barely visible. For older subjects, the squinty eye will be accompanied by age lines extending out from the corners of the eyes, better known as "crow's feet" (see "Forehead Words" and "Special Facial Feature Words" later in this chapter). The "cat's eyes" term suggests

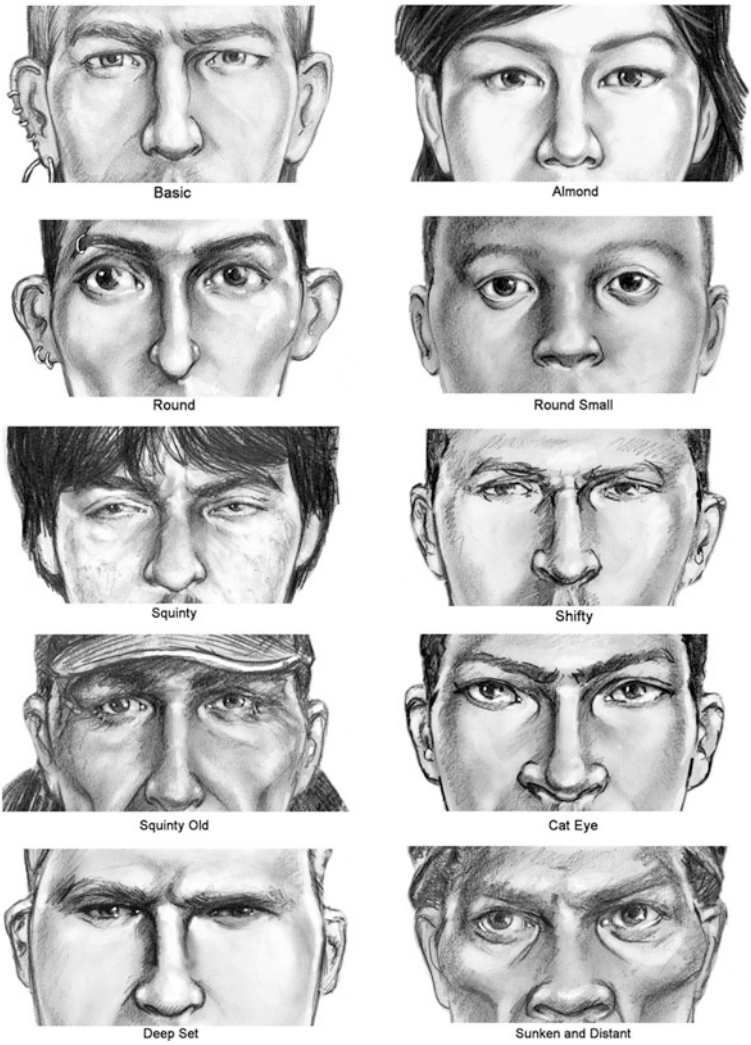

Fig. 5.23 Eye solutions 1

narrow eyes with longer eyelashes. Long eyelashes are represented with a thicker lash line toward the outside corner of the eye. As the lashes become longer, the line will extend past the outer corner of the eye and curve slightly upward. Additionally, cat's eyes will have a pointy quality at the eye corners, especially around the tear duct. These eyelash solutions can also be applied for eyes with makeup such as eyeliner or mascara. The lash lines will appear darker and well defined. Thin eyebrows for female suspects may also be part of the cat's eye and eye makeup solutions (Fig. 5.23).

Persons stating that the suspect's eyes were big or small are often referring to the overall size of the eye. Any eye shape can be drawn large in size. "Bulging," "frog eyes," "fish-eyes," or "bug-eyes" are big eyes, opened wide and set farther apart. Ordinarily, the larger the eyes, the farther apart they are set. Bulging eyes protrude and are rounded. The ball of the eye is clearly defined. The upper lid is thick and the folds of the lids follow the contour of the sphere of the eyeball. There can be a well-defined lower lid, which is usually in shadow. The thickness of the cross section of the lower lid will be visible and represented as a highlight. Bulging eyes are not deep-set (Fig. 5.24).

Terms that suggest small or beady eyes are dealt with similarly. Just as with "big," any eye shape can be drawn small. The smaller the eyes, the closer they are set. A small eye can also be deep-set. A witness using the word "small" may be suggesting a small iris circumference, but this is rare (Fig. 5.24).

"Deep-set eyes" is a very common phrase. When sketching this characteristic, position the eyebrows very close to the top of the eyes. There is a prominent shadow under the brow ridge and the eyes are dark. The brow ridge is often distinct. Intense eyes are similar, with an aggressive expression. When the witness says "sunken eyes," it is represented similarly to deep-set. There is an additional darkened area below the eyeball. This is the eye socket of the skull exhibiting itself through the skin. It can also be visible on the sides of the eyeball as well (Fig. 5.23).

The word "puffy" is mostly a perception for the eyes of older suspects. It is illustrated by rendering the fleshy area above the eye and the proverbial bags under the eyes. The fleshy area will droop downward and can fully hide the upper eyelid. The eye bags will also hang downward. If "puffy" is used to describe a younger suspect, it will be related to a thicker fleshy area above the eye, but this area won't be rendered as drooping or hanging. There won't be bags under the eyes. However, the subject's cheeks may be full and impede on the eye socket, illuminating a puffy appearance (Fig. 5.24).

Some irregular terms are "wild eyes," "sleepy eyes," "cockeyed," "cross-eyed," and "distant stare." The solutions are a product of the iris location. For wild eyes and cockeyed, one or both of the irises will appear askew (Fig. 5.24). Cross-eyed has an obvious solution. The concept of a distant stare has both irises wandering off in the same upward and outward direction. This solution can be applied when the victim states that the suspect wouldn't look directly at him or her. Many suspects will have an indirect stare. Sleepy eyes are the same as a sleepy character, with the majority of the pupil being covered by the upper lid. Droopy eyes are similar to sleepy (Fig. 5.8). Additionally, all the structures around the eyes will hang downward. The horizontal axis of the eye will angle downward toward the outside of the head (see "Characteristic Drawing Tips" in Chapter 7).

It is a little unusual for an individual to recall the color of the eyes. However, from the artist's point of view, it is not color that is important. It is the light or dark tone of the iris that is pertinent. Blue and hazel are light-toned colors. The pupil is always black, but the iris will be shaded light in value. Browns will be the medium-shaded irises. The iris will be shaded as dark as the pupil for black or very dark-colored eyes.

Fig. 5.24 Eye solutions 2

Bloodshot, red, and yellow eyes are related to the whites of the suspect's eyes. The artist will add a shaded value to the sclera (Fig. 5.24). Also, very little eye highlight will be present. Bright eyes have several solutions. It could be related to the opening of the eye and the expression. Often it is related to the whites of the eye being very white. "Piercing eyes" is solved with rendering light-colored eyes such as blue or hazel with a slightly smaller pupil circumference.

Nose Words

The typical terms of "average," "normal," "big," "small," "long," and "short" are used to describe the nose. We have already discussed "average" and "normal" as descriptive words. The connotations are basically the same as for the other elements of the face. They are illustrated as basic nose shapes for a given race and age. Long and short are aspects of length, and any nose shape can be drawn longer or shorter. Big and small are additional verbiage of dimensions. Narrow, wide, thin, and thick are descriptions of nose width. They are used to describe the essence of the individual characteristics of the nose, such as the bridge, nostril flare, ball, or the entire nose. The word "full" has similar applications but is mostly used as a reference to the overall shape of the nose (Fig. 5.25).

The words "sharp" and "flat" are opposites. When the nose is suggested as sharp, the artist should render a distinct nose bridge. This is achieved with a strong contrast difference between the shadow tones of the side planes of the nose and the lighter-toned area of the top plane of the nose bridge. A slight line could appear between the side shadow planes as they transition to the plane of the nose bridge. This will, in effect, produce a greater angular appearance. Adding a thin, long highlight down the length of the bridge will add to this effect. The nostril flare and the tip of the nose can look pointy, but not always. The term "flat" frequently applies to the bridge of the nose. The shadowing of the bridge becomes less defined and less contrasted. The flatter the nose is described, the more shadow tones that will be present across its bridge. The highlight on the bridge of the nose will only be visible at the top. For some races, the nose bridge can be almost nonexistent. A flat nose is usually accompanied by a wider ball and nostril flare, but not always.

There are many terms associated with the nature of the tip, ball, nostrils, septum, flare, or wings of the nose and how they appear in unison with each other (see "Characteristic Drawing Tips" in Chapter 7). "Pig," "pug," and "upturned" noses are words that mean the same nose character. The tip of the nose is set higher than the wing flare. The nostrils and septum are cleary visible. As the nose becomes more upturned, a slight crease may appear on the bridge just above the ball of the nose. The upturned nose can also be associated with a flatter nose bridge. The word "snub" could suggest a similar upturned facet, but can also mean a small, flat nose. A suggestion of a flared nose is illustrated with distinct nostrils and well-defined nostril wings (Fig. 5.25).

The implication of a hooked or downturned nose is solved as such. The tip of the nose is lower than the wing flare. The nostril and septum are barely visible, if visible at all. As this characteristic becomes more prevalent, it is typically accompanied with a sharp nose bridge and the presence of a bump in the middle of the bridge. A distinct shadow will appear directly under the nose (Fig. 5.25).

The solution to a request of a protruding or more defined nose is related to the shading and rendering of the nose structure. It is difficult to represent a protruding nose with just line. Many times the witness will want to see this feature early during the development of a sketch. They will insist that the nose appeared to stick out farther. Nevertheless, as for other anatomical structures, it will be necessary to wait

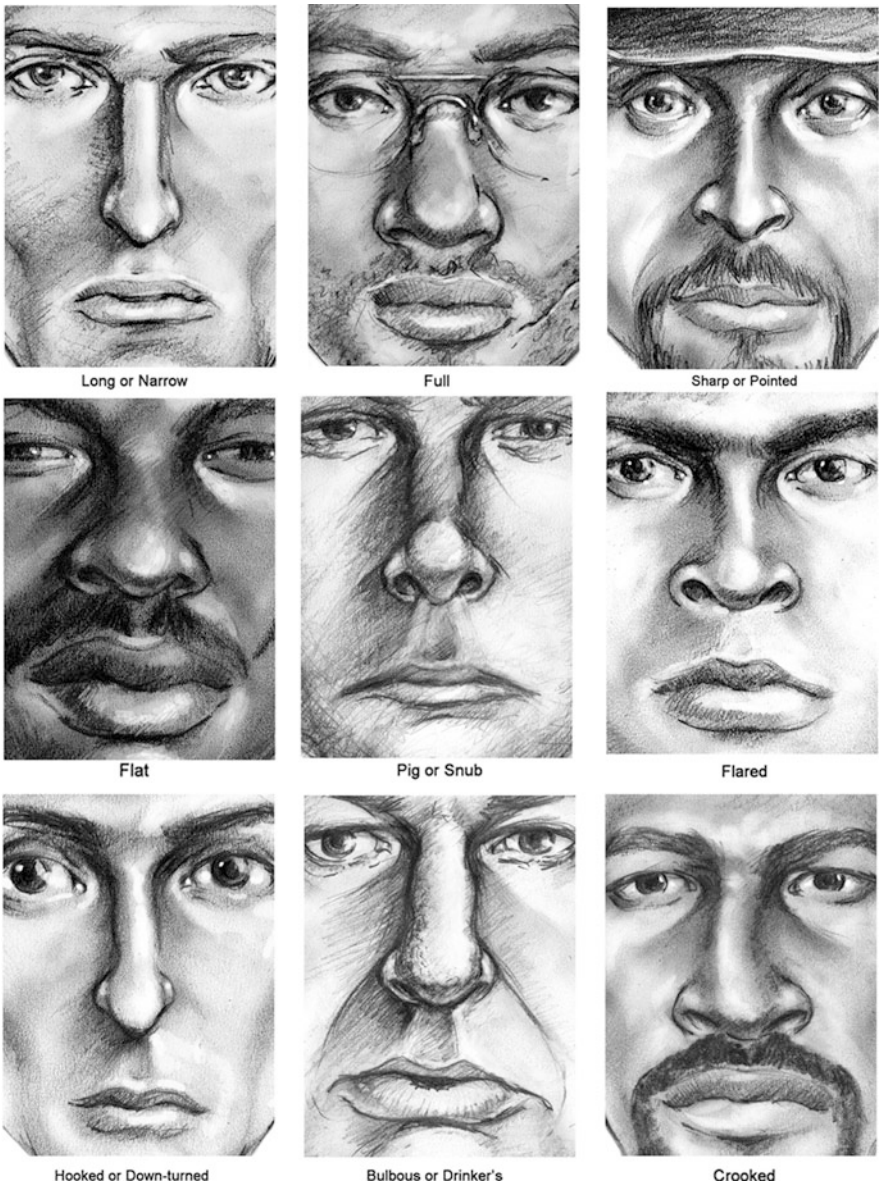

Fig. 5.25 Nose solutions

until the final stage of the drawing to tackle these requests. The artist will apply the basic techniques of contrast when rendering these forms. As contrast and halftone are applied to these areas of the face, the greater the illusion of dimensionality will be achieved (see "Rendering Tips" in Chapter 7).

"Bulbous" is associated with large and protruding nose. These noses are illustrated with a full round ball on the tip of the nose. This feature is clearly demonstrated in every illustration you have seen of Santa Claus. The nostril flare will commonly be hidden behind the ball, but can also be illustrated as fleshy appendages. A drinker's nose is a bulbous nose with a distinct bumpy texture. These characteristics are fun to draw. It is always helpful when the suspect's description involves an extreme characteristic. It makes it easier to get a likeness and is generally more interesting to sketch (Fig. 5.25).

The pointy nose is sharp, narrow, and protruding. The ball of the nose will be small and forms a point at the septum. The nostrils are higher than the septum and angle downward toward the tip of the nose. The nostrils are often visible. The distinction between the nostril opening and the edge of the nostril wing is sharp and can be defined with an appropriate line. However, in some cases, the angle of the nostril flare will be more extreme and the nostril opening will be hidden underneath, as in a hooked nose (Fig. 5.25).

The "crooked" nose is another unique term. Any other nose shape can be accompanied with this depiction. The crooked aspect is delineated with the bridge of the nose. The bridge will bend to the right or left accordingly. If extreme, it may create a slight distortion to the horizontal axis of the nose base. The nose base will appear to angle one way or the other (Fig. 5.25).

Mouth, Lips, and Teeth Words

By nature, the mouth is a fluid facial feature; it will be in motion during most incidents. Like the eyes, it is a facial element of expression and intent. Except for the hint of a line that suggests the division between the upper and lower lips, the mouth is not represented with line, but with form and shape (see "Characteristic Drawing Tips" in Chapter 7). These factors make the mouth and lips among the most difficult characteristics for an individual to remember.

The artist will encounter all the basic language for the description of the mouth and lips. "Average" and "normal" will be sketched appropriately for a particular race and age. "Big" and "small" are words of overall dimension. Other typical words will have dual size applications. "Thick," "narrow," "full," and "wide" are terms that can refer to the overall vertical and horizontal aspects of the mouth as well as the width and length of each lip. The artist should take care when questioning a witness or victim about these terms to determine which dimension is being articulated (Fig. 5.26).

The lips will be described as uneven, unequal, or different sizes when the upper lip is bigger, smaller, wider, or narrower than the lower lip. "Long" is a suggestion that generally applies to the horizontal length of the mouth. "Thin" is mostly a suggestion of the vertical width of the lips. Many times a narrow mouth will be long in length. "Tight-lipped" means very thin lips that are barely visible. They are defined mainly with the horizontal center lip line that divides them (Fig. 5.26).

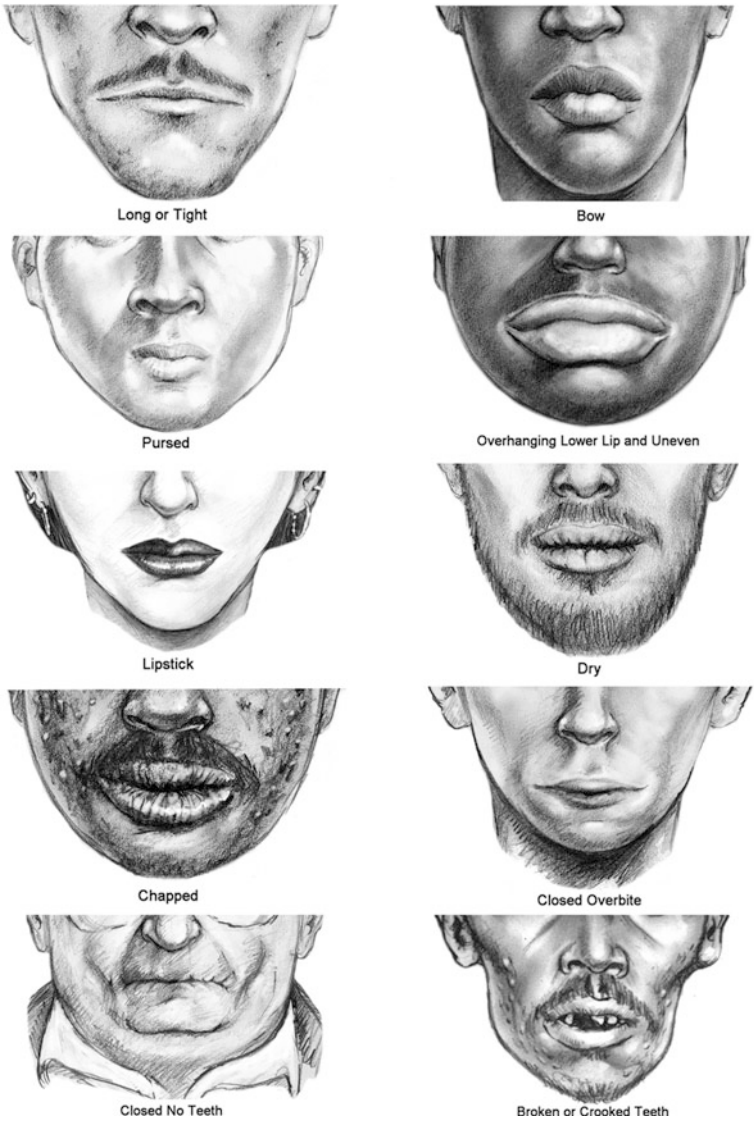

Fig. 5.26 Mouth solutions

The mouth is often described as "bow-shaped." It is partly the philtrum's effect on the upper lip and exhibited as a dip in the top lip rim. The center of the mouth's horizontal fissure (center lipline) will be curved upward as in the lower half of a convex lens. It is reflecting the fleshy bulge of the center of the upper lip. The horizontal fissure will curve back downward on the outer edges as it follows the contour of the lower lip. The bow-shaped mouth will frequently be a manifestation of fuller lips,

but can be drawn small or large in size. Pursed lips are drawn as a small, bow-shaped mouth with full lips (Fig. 5.26).

An overhanging lower lip is sketched thick with a distinct shadow directly under the lower edge of the lip. The surface of the lower lip is highlighted with a sharp contrast to the dark shadow under the lip. The hanging lower lip will reflect a lot of luminosity from the suggested light source of the sketch (Fig. 5.26).

"Wet" and "moist" connotations are rendered as a shiny surface. The tone of the overall mouth is slightly darker, with bright luminous highlights. This is also part of the solution for lips with lipstick. Furthermore, lips with lipstick will appear as obvious bow-shaped lips and fuller. Lips described as smooth or soft won't have vertical fissures. Their surface is evenly shaded. The majority of lips drawn for suspect sketches will be smooth.

The "chapped" and "dry-lipped" distinctions are dealt with similarly. The horizontal center line of the mouth will be well defined. The lip surface will have vertical fissures that follow the contours of the lips. These fissures radiate upward and downward from the horizontal center lipline. The more the lips are described as dry, the darker and deeper the fissures are rendered. Furthermore, the outside edges of the lips become less defined and irregular. The area around the mouth may appear darker for extremely chapped lips (Fig. 5.26).

Drawing an open mouth will occasionally be requested (Fig. 7.5). It has been noted that for the overwhelming majority of cases, the mouth will be sketch closed. It is rare even when a witness or victim desires to see the mouth open that it remains opened as the sketch develops. Eventually most witnesses and victims will request the mouth return to the closed position on the completed composite. The reasons are as follows. First, an open mouth suggests a certain character that may contradict the suspect's. Second, the open mouth query may be based on the fact that the suspect was speaking. This is commonly not the way people are typically envisioned. Third, the person may be requesting the sketch illustrate yellowed, discolored, or gold-capped teeth. Yet when it is manifested on the sketch, the character of the subject will seem wrong. For these cases, it is not necessary to render the composite with an open mouth. These teeth discoloration elements are easily stated in a written description of the suspect that will accompany most composite sketches. Normally, illustrating an open mouth is not recommended. It has a distinctive effect on the overall appearance of the subject. Yet, if required, it should be used warily. The need for an open mouth is related to the subject's teeth. Teeth have a direct effect on the mouth and its appearance. If there are specific distortions to the teeth that the witness or victim noticed, an open mouth may be required.

For situations of buckteeth, overbites, and large protruding teeth, an open mouth can be illustrated, but it is not always necessary. Overbites are described when the upper teeth are positioned in front of the lower teeth. This can be represented with the mouth closed. The lower lip will partially be covered by the upper lip. The lower lip is rendered in shadow cast by the upper lip. The chin and jaw will appear to be receding. The upper muzzle area of the face will be more defined as the upper teeth protrude forward. A closed-mouth solution for buckteeth is similar to the overbite and can be accompanied by a small suggestion of the two front teeth extending

just below the upper lip. Large protruding teeth are illustrated with a well-defined muzzle of the face and the mouth closed. The underlying jutting teeth will push the mouth and muzzle outward. If these elements are extreme, the mouth can be sketched open. On the rare occasion the witness states the suspect was toothless, the mouth is drawn closed. The center lipline is positioned slightly closer to the nose. The lips are sucked into the mouth cavity and aren't visible. The chin is shortened, as it positions itself up to replace the gap left by the missing teeth. Lines curving upward and downward radiating from the center lipline will enhance this effect. These lines are representing the folds of the skin as it is pulled into the mouth cavity. The muzzle area of the mouth will appear sunken. A description of a broken or missing tooth and crooked or gapped teeth will require an open mouth. The level of severity will govern if this is necessary (Fig. 5.26). When deciding to illustrate the open mouth, proper anatomy is paramount (see "Characteristic Drawing Tips" in Chapter 7).

Hair Words

Hairstyles are the most fashion-oriented feature of the face. They are a product of the era and fads. Keeping up with them is the responsibility of the artist. It is the hair that will offer the greatest sense of a particular period. As demonstrated in the 1970s and early 80s, men wore full hairstyles with perms, large afros, or long straight hair parted in the center. Bald men used combovers and wore bad toupees to cover up. The size of the overall head shapes on the composite sketch had to be smaller to accommodate those full hairstyles. This changed toward the end of the 80s when Michael Jordon shaved his head and made bald fashionable. It was a great historical moment for bald men all over the world. Being a member of this elite group myself, I would know. Besides personal reasons, these shorter hairstyles influenced composite sketches as well. It took additional time to shade a full afro hairstyle. The shorter hairstyles require less time to render. The composite sketch can be completed a little quicker. Women's hairstyles change almost monthly. Women also have greater recall of hairstyles. More emphasis is placed upon a female's description of a hairstyle when faced between a female's or male's descriptive input. Nevertheless, acknowledging the endless variety of hairstyle trends, there are still a few lexicons worth discussing.

Most hair terminology is an attempt to describe texture and shape. All hairstyles start on a sketch with the overall shape of the hair mass (Fig. 5.37). This shape must be included early in the preparation of the sketch during the first stage of the composite. The victim or witness will supply a multitude of shape terminology to describe these overall hair masses. The hair texture is added to the sketch toward the end. When an individual is requesting long, full, big, or lots of hair for the suspect, the artist will need to plan for this dominant shape at the start. Otherwise, the artist will run out of paper space to complete the sketch. In cases of very long curly or straight hair that extends past the shoulders (mostly related to women's hairstyles),

Fig. 5.27 Woman's long hair solution

the length may be truncated on the sketch. This is required because the longer the hair, the less paper surface that will be left for the head itself. The smaller the head size, the less detail that may be illustrated for the facial features. In these cases, include the neck and only a suggestion of the shoulders of the subject. One side of the hair will be represented behind the shoulder line; the other side may or may not be drawn in front of the shoulder line and gradually end (Fig. 5.27). For large hairstyles that extend upward and outward, surface area on the paper will need to be provided. These styles should not be truncated, but fully rendered.

Ponytails and buns are manifestations of long hair. Both are required to be illustrated on front-view composites. The ponytail will extend from one side of the head above or below the ear. The shape and length of the tail will be governed by the description of its properties, such as "long," "short," "straight," or "bushy." A rare solution is to add a small profile sketch alongside a front-view composite to illustrate the ponytail. On some occasions, the ponytail can be represented on the top of the head. This will be the case for all hair buns. They will be drawn as a portion of a bulging oval on the top of the head toward the back. The size and shape of the oval will be governed by its description. For both circumstances, the remaining hair mass texture will typically flow back toward the ponytail or bun. In the majority of cases, the hair will be tight to the head and appear as a short hairstyle, but can appear looser and fuller as well (Fig. 5.28).

Braids are a commonly described hair feature. The solution is to draw the overall shape of the hair and then the individual shapes of the braids, which are depicted as long, thin rectangles. These braid shapes will ultimately break the outer line of the

Fig. 5.28 Ponytail solutions

top of the head at some point. Textures are added later. Braids are mostly depicted as framing the face but can also be pulled back. When this occurs, they are drawn similarly to the ponytail. However, the bumpy rows of the braids will be apparent from the front view of the head. "Knot" or "knotty" are words often used to describe short braids that stick up (Fig. 5.29).

Dreadlocks are solved like braids, with a modification. They appear unkempt, thick, and loosely shaped. They have a large presence on the head. "Cornrow" is a descriptive phrase that falls into this braid category. It should be drawn as distinct rows that follow the contour of the skull toward the back of the head. The hair is sketched as tight-fitting individual braids that culminate in a short tail behind the back of the head. The cornrow may also require a braided tail sticking out above or below the ear according to its described length. When cornrows are sketched, the skin of the scalp will be visible between the rows. Occasionally, "cornrows" will be used to describe rows that traverse from left to right along the top of the head (Fig. 5.29).

Words like "wavy," "curly," "nappy," "straight," "bushy," "kinky," and "soft" are all suggestion of texture. They are handled like any other texture. When rendering these texture elements, you apply basic rendering techniques. Keep in mind the following: Always draw the overall shape of the hair and how it sits on the head first, before adding the texture. Some phrases such as "shiny," "slick," "jerry-curl," and

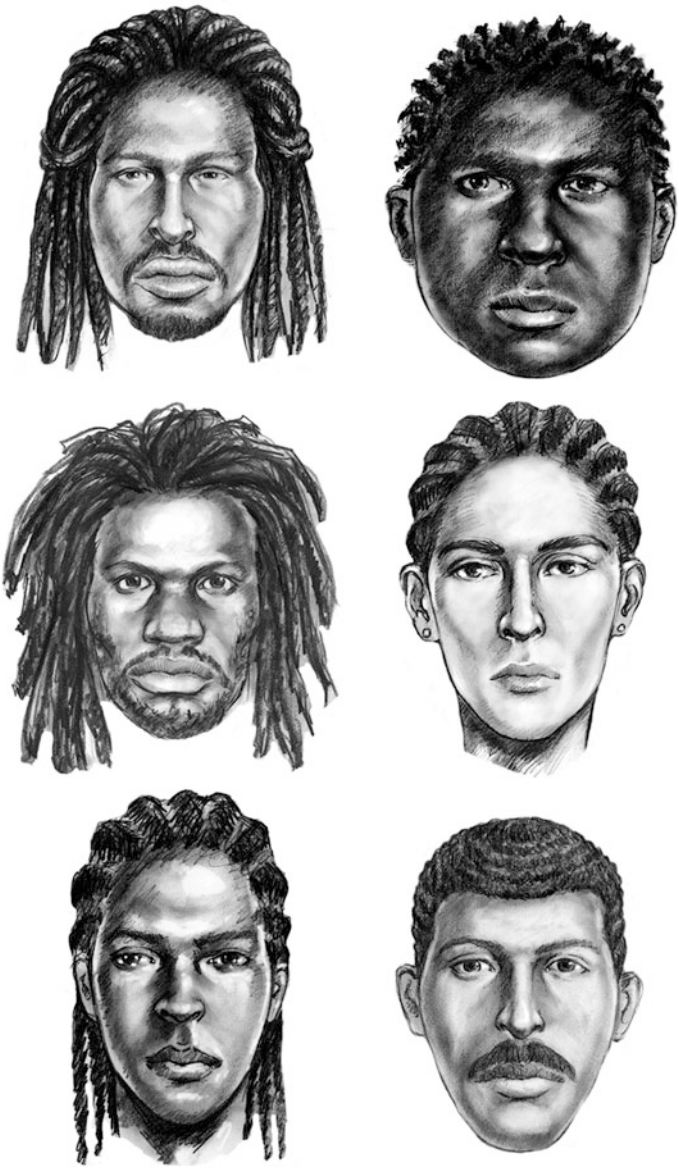

Fig. 5.29 Braids, dreadlocks, and cornrow solutions

"gelled hair" are textures of sheen. They are represented with extreme contrast and a sharp edge. These textures are direct textures (see "Texture Tips" in Chapter 7). This is contrasted to the matte or flat finish, which has less contrast and can be rendered in shaded stages. The words "matted" or "matted down" are rendered as a hair texture that is flat to the head, caused by dirt or grease (Fig. 5.30).

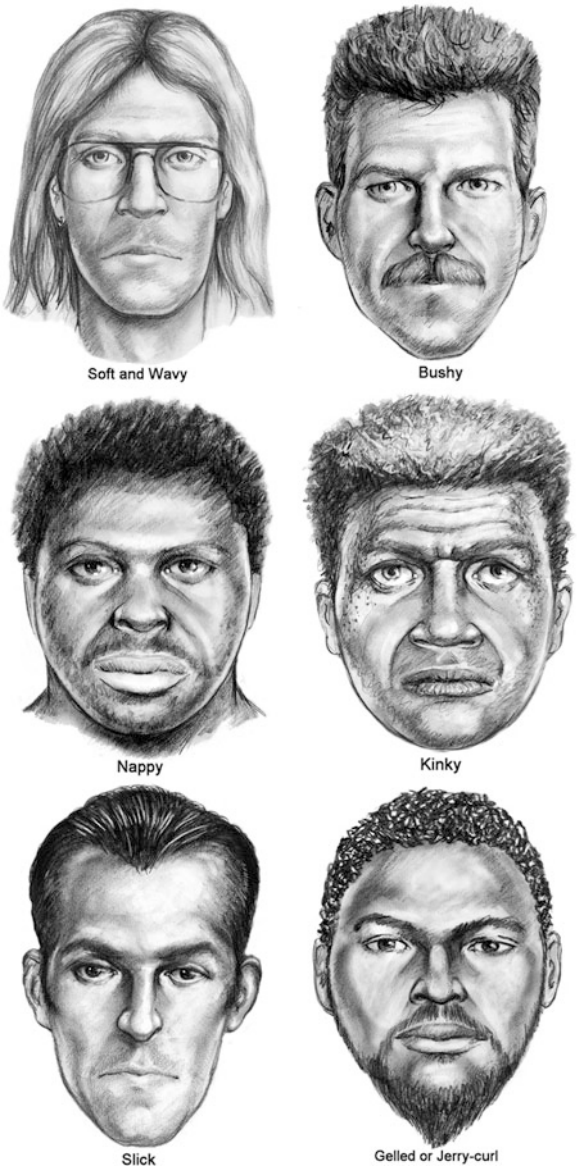

Fig. 5.30 Some basic hair texture solutions

The words "bald," "shaven," and "no hair" have basically the same connotation with some minor variations. "Bald" is mostly a description of an individual with no hair. In most cases, the subject's hair has apparently fallen out. Yet the subject may or may not have some hair on the sides of his head. The term "shaven" is a subject without hair by personal choice. This feature can be represented as a bald head or more effectively with the slightest hint of the hair as a shaded tone (Fig. 5.31).

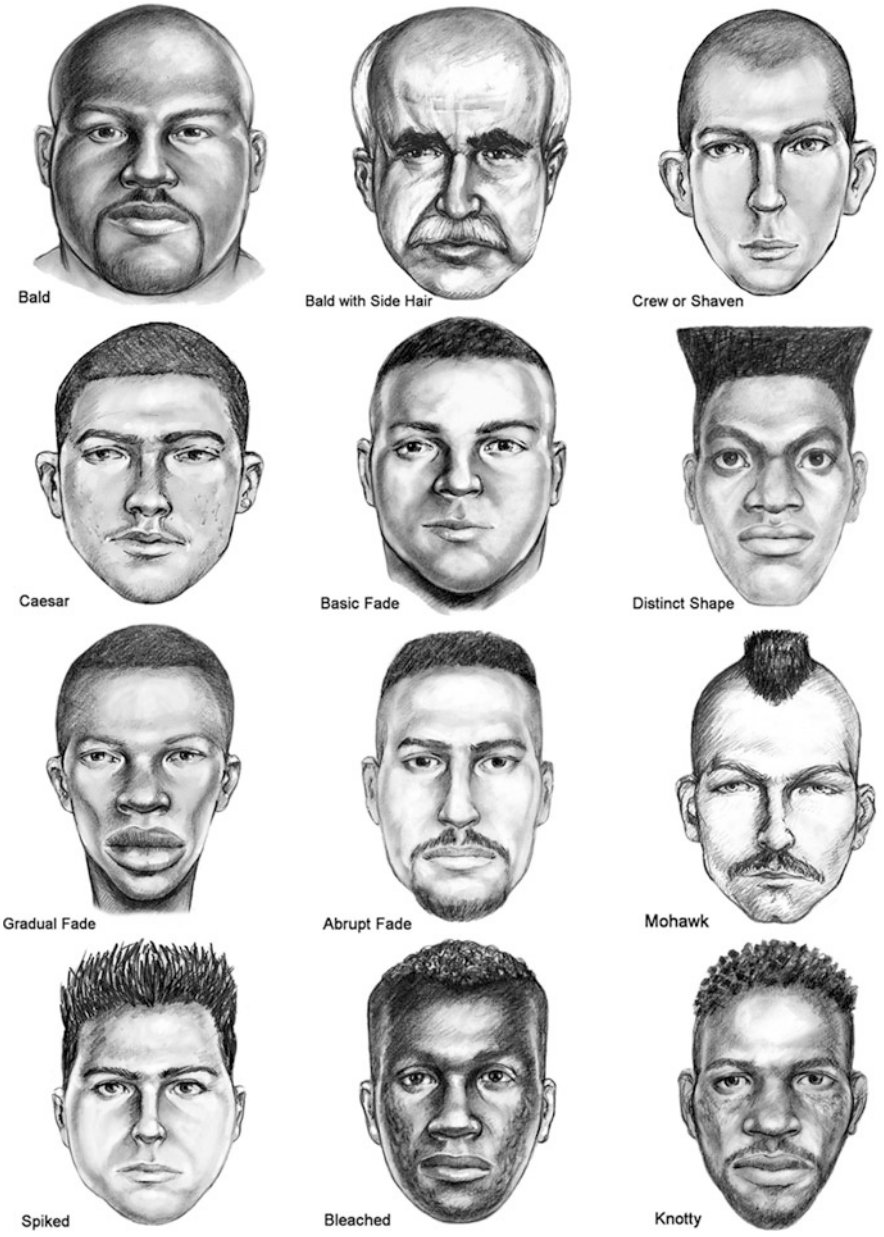

Fig. 5.31 Bald to fade hairstyle solutions

The “crew cut,” “Caesar cut,” and “fade” are common terminologies of men’s short hairstyles. The crew cut or very close-cropped hair is sketched as an obvious hair shadow on the head. It may appear to have a very slight length. The Caesar cut is drawn as short hair. The hair length can appear up to one 16th of an inch. The hair is evenly cut over the whole of the hair mass. For Caucasian males, very short bangs may be present. The “fade” is mostly used to describe an African-American hairstyle. It appears as very close-cropped hair on the sides of the head and longer on the top. For today’s styles, the hair on the top is generally just a little longer than the hair on the sides (Fig. 5.31). However, in the past, the hair on the top did get much longer, creating some distinct shapes. Once in a while, these longer-style fades are still described. The fade styles are illustrated as a gradual transition from the shaven side hair to the longer top hair or as an abrupt distinction at the point when the hair becomes longer. This is the situation for a Mohawk hairstyle, which could be considered an extreme fade. Some fades are accompanied by designs chiseled into the hair on the side of the head. When this design element is being described, it should be clearly sketched on the composite in a visible location. These chiseled design elements are in the form of lines, words, objects, and shapes. They are a strong identifying characteristic.

Other common fade hairstyle descriptions will include “spiked,” color variations, and a “knotty” connotation. “Spiked” is drawn with a shorter hair length on the sides of the head and longer spike texture variations on the top. The hair on the top is drawn pointing straight up with a hard edge. Commonly, it will be a gelled texture. Often the top hair of the fade will be bleached and have a distinct lighter tonal appearance. Knotty textures along with other connotations can also be described as longer hair at the top of a faded hairstyle (Fig. 5.31).

Hairlines are often described by the witness or victim using words like “straight,” “curved,” “high,” “low,” “thick,” “pointy,” and “widow’s peak.” These references are suggested for shorter hairstyles. The hairline can appear almost perfectly straight across the forehead. In most cases, however, it will be described as an upward or downward curved line that contours to the skull and will be delineated as such. Not withstanding hair loss, even a thick head of hair can be described as high on the forehead. In contrast, thinning hair could also be described as low on the forehead. Thick hairlines are an element of texture. They are used in conjunction with descriptions of full heads of hair. A widow’s peak and pointy are similar hairlines. They are drawn with the center of the hairline extending forward as a bump or spike and with the ends of the hairline receding back onto the scalp. Pointy can also be attributed to a series of extreme bangs hanging on the forehead (Fig. 5.32). Hairlines for longer hairstyles are generally products of the bangs. They are referred to as “straight,” “wavy,” “curly,” “Dutch-boy,” and “falling or hanging on the face.” The actual hairlines for longer hairstyles are less significant. It is the intrusion of the hair onto the face and forehead that defines its character.

A receding hairline is generally associated with men who are losing their hair. However, it could be a reference to a suspect with a full head of hair as well. When the hair is described as receding, the hairline withdraws backward off the forehead. This could occur only at the two ends of the hairline just above the temple hair. The

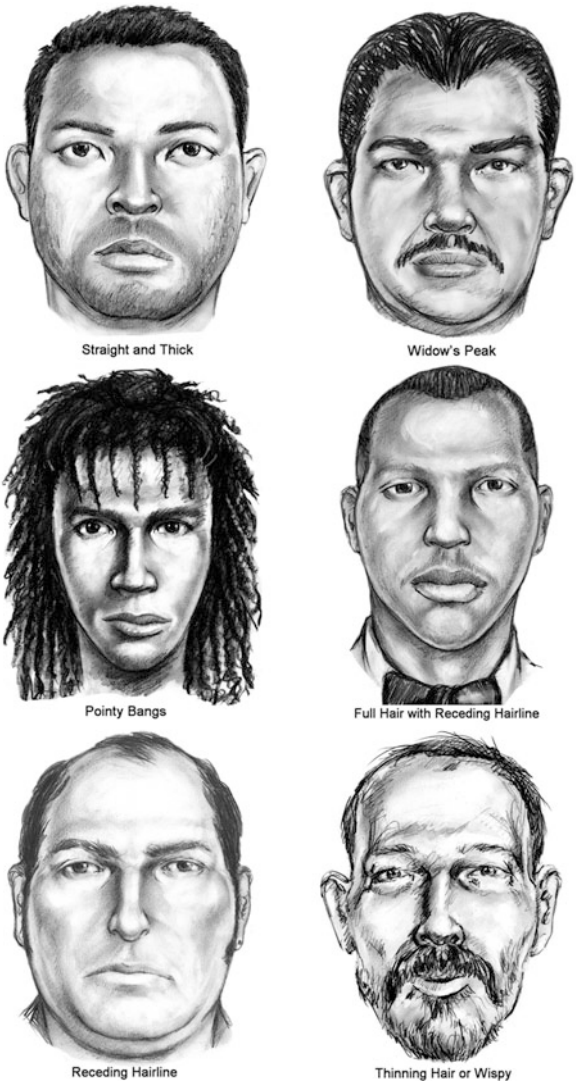

Fig. 5.32 Some hairline solutions

more the hairline is described as receding, the deeper it retreats onto the top of the scalp (Fig. 5.32). This results in the forehead appearing higher. For subjects who are losing their hair, the receding hairline is sketched faintly. Additionally, the hair at the center and top of the scalp is sketched sparsely. Sporadically, an isolated patch of sparse hair may be visible in the front and center of the scalp. This transition hairline can resemble an extreme widow's peak. Though a widow's peak is often a

reference to a full head of hair, on occasion it can be used to describe a receding hairline.

Thinning hair is also associated with suspects who are losing their hair. The solution may include a receding hairline. A thinning hairline is suggested as wisps of hair across the forehead. Furthermore, the solution will include an outline of the scalp visible through the thinning hair on the top of the head (Fig. 5.32). The thinner the hair, the more individual hairs that will be discernible and the more visible the scalp will be.

The artist should note the location of the suspect's hair part if one was present. This helps find the visual solution of the suspect's hairstyle. These hair parts can be located anywhere on the scalp and may not necessarily extend all the way to the back of the head. They can be distinct enough that the skin of the scalp is visible and exhibited as a lighter-toned line within the hair texture. A little trick is an inquiry as to the method a suspect appears to brush his or her hair. This will help determine the location of the part and the flow of the suspect's hair.

Almost every account of the hair will be accompanied with a color suggestion (Fig. 5.33). The following are common hair colors: black, brunette, brown, auburn, red, dirty-blond, blond, bleached-blond, salt and pepper, gray, or white. There were a few years purple, pink, green, and orange were thrown into the mix as well. The solutions are related to the value scale (see "Rendering Tips" in Chapter 7) and the relationship to the overall skin tone. This contrast distinction is pertinent to the resulting appearance of the subject's character. Black and brunette are the darkest values. Bleached-blond and white are the lightest. Browns are medium tones. Auburn and red hues are the trickiest values. A black-and-white photograph of red hues will appear dark in value. However, to represent a proper distinction on a composite, they are rendered as an overall middle value slightly lighter than the tones for darker brown hair. Additionally, some darker areas will be included in the overall hairstyle shape as well. Salt and pepper is solved as levels of gray governed by the extent of the salt. The more salt and the less pepper, the lighter the overall gray. Erasing thin lines of light gray hairs will add to the salt-and-pepper effect. Be careful not to represent the gray hairs as too thick and contrived. A good tool for these highlights is the electric eraser. It can also be easily achieved digitally on the completed sketch after the composite has been scanned into the computer. These gray highlights may only be present on the sides of the head or evenly dispersed throughout the hair mass. It is also helpful to note that blond hair in all its lighter-toned manifestations will have darker areas or lines within the hair mass as well. Nevertheless, the overall tone suggestion of the hair mass still must portray the lighter halftones of blond. Streaks and highlights are added to the hair texture at the end. They are erased out or conversely added as darker tones according to the desired effect. They should be clearly placed in a visible location.

There will be a multitude of hair vernaculars the artist will encounter that have not been mentioned. Finding solutions is part of the session's challenge. One last phrase worth mentioning would be the word "Asian" as a texture or color of hair. This is generally straight jet-black hair.

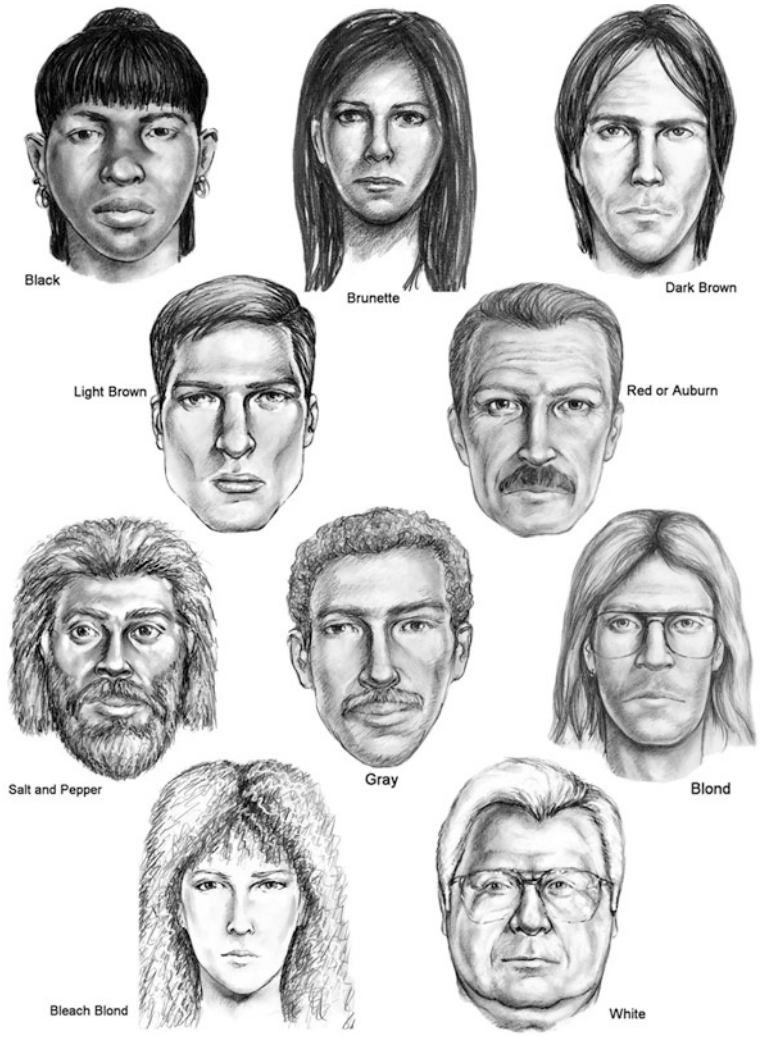

Fig. 5.33 Hair color value solutions

Facial Hair and Eyebrow Words

Facial hair is all the hair on the face other than the top of the head and eyebrows. This includes sideburns, mustaches, beards, and other unusual instances (Fig. 5.34). A rule of worthiness about facial hair: People frequently forget beards and mustaches on a suspect. Conversely, if these elements are recalled, it is a strong indication that the suspect did have a mustache or beard. The individual will rarely fabricate facial hair that was not there. Furthermore, it is likely that the recall of this feature will be somewhat understated by the witness or victim.

Fig. 5.34 Unusual mug shot "neckstache"

Facial hair is another fashionable feature. It is a characteristic of fads and styles. Recently, I heard an interesting example of changing norms on this subject. In the 1930s, if a criminal defendant wanted to be perceived as insane, he would grow a beard. During that time, this was associated with persons who were unstable. On the other hand, there was a time in history that most presidents of the United States had facial hair. Today things are different and many forms of beards and mustaches are acceptable. A case in point: Older teens and young adults of Hispanic and black descent often have an indication of a light mustache.

As with hairstyles, the overall facial hair shape must be partially delineated during the early stage of a sketch. The artist will draw the overall shape and proportions of the requested facial hair before adding tone and texture. Most of the basic terms previously mentioned about hair will be heard to describe facial hair. Their applications are fairly straightforward and obvious.

Pencil-thin mustaches and beards are unique feature descriptions. In these cases, the facial hair feature in question is rendered not only thin in width, but also dark and well defined. The pencil-thin mustache, beard, and sideburns often appear in unison with each other. Hair directly below the lower lip connecting with a thin beard may or may not be present. To illustrate pencil-thin sideburns, the sideburns should appear slightly forward the outside line of the head (Fig. 5.35). In some cases, it will encroach onto the cheek. The desired width is clearly visible. If the sideburn is described as thick and bushy, it will cover the outer line of the head. It will have a width, length, and depth. Mustaches that are thin or thick may or may not connect in the center. A thicker mustache will overlap the upper lip, but not always.

"But not always" is a recurring theme. Unfortunately, this is the nature of the beast as it relates to the composite session. If this were not the case, wouldn't police composite sketching be easy?

Fig. 5.35 Some beard and mustache solutions

Beards that are described as full and thick can be cropped fairly close to the chin and jaw. They will still cover varying portions of the lower half of the face. Traditional full beards are uncommon except in certain geographical areas of the

world. Traditional full beards extend well past the jawline and cover the neck. If it is said the facial hair is "trimmed and neat," a clear distinction is rendered between the skin and the edge of the beard and/or mustache (Fig. 5.13). Normally, the transition from the facial hair to the skin of the cheek will be gradual. The messier and more unkempt it is described, the less of a distinction that will be evident (Fig. 5.11). Goatees are sketched following the contours of the mouth, muzzle area, and chin (Fig. 5.45). When drawing facial hair, relate the proportions, location, and dimensions to the other features of the face, such as the ears, jaw, or mouth. Due to these varieties and styles, a detailed inquiry is made of the witness or victim when facial hair is required.

"Sparse," "faint," "light," and "thin" are additional words of facial hair amount and texture. For an adult male, these terms usually are a description of facial hair that is not fully grown in. These words can also be associated with the terms "five o'clock shadow" or "unshaven." A five o'clock shadow is rendered as a shaded tone and should include small angular lines indicating hair texture. Stubble is a five o'clock shadow that is represented with less shadow, but with many more short, hard lines in the mustache and beard areas. Its texture appears rough. "Sparse," "thin," "faint," and "peach fuzz" are frequently said in connection to youthful facial hair. This type of hair is not illustrated with shadow, but with thin, soft lines delineating the individual hairs of the mustache and beard (Fig. 5.35).

Eyebrows are a basic facial characteristic and are not considered facial hair. They must be included on every sketch and at least a hint of them is delineated on the earliest stage of a sketch. However, eyebrows are associated with some common verbiage related to facial hair. "Thick" and "thin" are words often heard for eyebrows. "Thick" is directly related to the width and overall length of the eyebrow. Thick eyebrows are occasionally expressed as a uni-brow. The uni-brow is not always a consistent width across its length, but could be depicted with sparse hairs between them (Fig. 5.35). Thinner eyebrows are associated with the amount of hair and the overall width of the brows. "Short" and "long" are references to the length of the individual eyebrows. The slants of the eyebrows are described as angling downward, upward, or straight across. Words of expression are often used to describe the eyebrows. Almost all eyebrows will contour to the brow ridge with a downward curve on the outside. The individual hairs generally flow toward the outside of the head. Many eyebrow characteristics can be seen in the illustrations throughout this book.

The contrast between the color halftone value of the facial hair, including eyebrows and the overall tone of the skin, are an important part of the composite sketch. This is directly related to the concept of feature value distinction (see "Rendering Stage of the Sketch" in Chapter 3). Many times the reason a person is having difficulty remembering facial hair, especially eyebrows, will be related to this contrast distinction. Certain light-toned eyebrows are barely visible on a person with a pale complexion. The opposite is true for darker-skinned individuals and darker-toned eyebrows (Fig. 3.6). This can be said about all facial hair. When this occurs, it important to properly render the halftone value of these features. This feature value distinction is also applied to the suspect's eyelashes.

Fig. 5.36 Unusual mug shot "ears"

Ear Words

Ears are often overlooked by the witness and victim, even when they are extreme. It is just not a feature of focus when first encountering a subject. Unfortunately, they can play a very prominent role in a suspect's character (Fig. 5.36). An inquiry should be made to investigate this element during the composite session. If the ears are said to be big or large, it could signify longer ears and/or ears that stick out. Small or little ears are typically related to a shorter length. Protruding ears are drawn sticking out from the side of the head. They can be short or long in length according to the stated description. Ears pinned close to the head can also convey a particular-looking character. If the witness or victim is having trouble remembering the ears, this could be the reason. If pinning the ears close to the head on a sketch results in a spark of recognition from the victim, a solution has been found. A fatter face could cause the ears to appear closer to the head and longer in length, but not always. On a rare occasion, an individual may suggest pointed ears or a dangling ear lobe. "Pointy" is a suggestion about the curve of the upper ear. "Dangling" will appear as a fuller unattached ear lobe. It is extremely rare for anyone to remember the interior structure of the ear. Time should not be wasted on this element; concentrate on the overall appearance of the ears if available. Only a suggestion of the interior structure is required. When descriptive information is not available for the ears—which will be the norm—you should sketch an average ear. This would be a pair of ears that are visible and about the length from the eyeline to the bottom of the nose. They should not greatly affect the overall appearance of the resulting sketch one way or another.

Forehead Words

The forehead structure includes a front plane, two side planes, and the brow ridge. These structures are molded accordingly to implement the words used to describe the forehead. A high forehead is represented as a longer–than-normal distance from the hairline to the eyebrows. For a shortened forehead, the distance between the

eyebrows and hairline is shorter in length than normal. “Wide,” “narrow,” and “pinched” are terms of the horizontal dimension’s appearance. One solution is to sketch the temple hair receding back and off the sides of the forehead for a suggestion of wide. Another solution for wide is to render to front and sides of the forehead as one continuous plane with the temple hair positioned normally. “Narrow” and “pinched” are solved by sketching the temple hair encroaching onto the forehead. These two connotations are additionally solved by rendering the sides of the forehead in a steeper perspective, which will put them in deeper shadow. A distinct shadow line will be present where the front of the forehead gives way to the sides of the forehead. When illustrating this steeper perspective, make use of the underlying anatomy of the skull at the upper outer edge of the eye sockets. Shadows are rendered around the upper eye sockets and flow up into the depression of the temples. A small suggestion of line may be applied to strengthen this effect (Fig. 5.10).

“Heavy,” “pronounced,” and “protruding” brow ridges are common terminologies. This is easily solved with a well-defined and rendered ridge just above the eye sockets. The more the brow ridge protrudes, the darker the shadowing will appear under the ridge on the inside edges of the eye socket. This shadow is less intense just above the bridge of the nose. A highlighted area will be present along the top edge of the brow ridge. It is not continuous across the length of the brow ridge, but is interrupted in the center. The brow ridge consists of two separate bony masses. Sometimes a hint of shadow is applied at the center of the ridge between the left and right bony masses. This is also the location of the vertical frown lines on older suspects (Fig. 5.30, fourth sketch). A slightly darker indication can also be present at the depressions of the temples. The upper structure of the brow ridge along the front of the forehead is defined with a soft shadow. However, as the brow ridge becomes more extreme, this upper shadow will be darker and could have a slight indication of a line. This upper shadow will angle downward toward the center of the brow ridge on both sides.

Keep in mind that the eyebrows are positioned on the lower edge of the brow ridge and contour to the forehead and eye socket. The downward-appearing angle of the outer part of the eyebrows occurs at the point that the front of the brow ridge gives way to the receding perspective of the side planes of the skull.

Many foreheads will be described as flat. When this occurs, the suspect’s forehead will not have any of the distinctions previously mentioned. It will be rendered with a minimum of shadowing and illustrated with a mere hint of highlight at its overall center.

Cheek and Cheekbone Words

The cheeks seem like an insignificant feature, but they represent a large area on the face. There are some specific words often mentioned about cheeks, and the solutions are crucial to the character of the suspect. The cheeks are a product of the cheekbones and the fleshy mass that makes up their structure. How the flesh of the

cheek interacts with the nose, underlying bone, jaw, and muzzle areas of the face is all part of the solution. A good understanding of the cheek mass is vital. This cheek structure is difficult to explain and would never be referenced by a witness or victim directly. Their verbiage will imply these structures. It is anatomical information the artist must recognize. The following is a basic explanation of these cheek masses.

The fleshy mass of the cheeks is not one continuous structure that stretches from the cheekbone to the jaw; rather, it consists of several masses. Often these fleshy masses are undistinguishable from each other and can appear as one structure, especially for younger, average-weight suspects. However, being aware of these forms helps offer solutions for a variety of cheek descriptions (Fig. 5.37).

The main cheek mass is the fleshy structure that hangs off the nose and extends down to the jowls or chin. It is this mass that forms the smile lines when smile

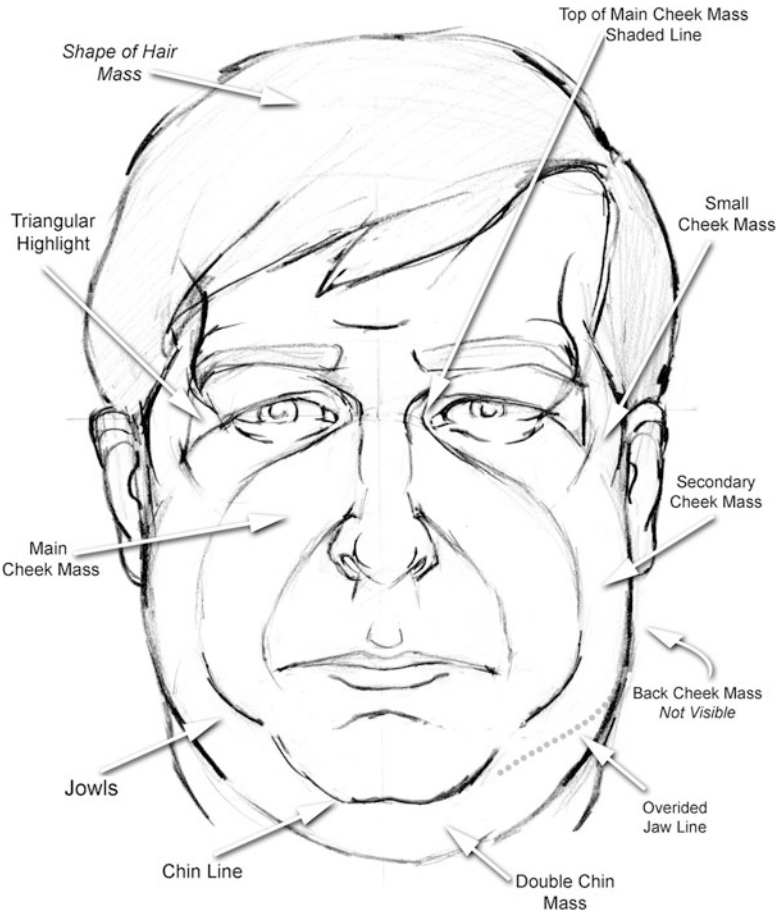

Fig. 5.37 Basic facial cheek diagram

lines are present. The top of this main cheek mass is always visible on African-American subjects. It exhibits itself as a shaded line that extends down from the shadowed areas defining the upper bridge of the nose and the inside corner of the eye socket. Furthermore, for African Americans, it is further enhanced with a thin highlighted indication that wraps around the tear duct of the eyes. It extends along the upper side of this shadowed line as it fans out across the face. This upper main mass indicating a shadow line is visible on Caucasian suspects as well, but it is not as clear. If this shadow line defining the upper area of the main cheek mass was overstated, it would continue to fan out and extend about halfway to the outside of the face. It would then turn downward along the side of the face, eventually merging with the chin or defining part of the jowls. This shadow line is never fully rendered, but can be faintly apparent on some individuals. This structure is often obvious on heavier individuals but can be present on just about anyone. Normally, this main mass gradually softens and blends into the shading of the jaw, chin, and muzzle of the face when jowls are not present.

Another cheek mass is located directly behind the main cheek mass. It starts around the cheekbone and extends the full length of the face. This second mass is rarely visible and often appears as part of the main cheek mass. When it is visible, a highlighted narrow strip emerges alongside the main cheek mass. As the second mass recedes back to the outside of the head, it falls into shadow and helps define the shape of the lower half of the face. Normally, it culminates and blends into the shading of the suspect's jawline. Alternatively, for heavy suspects and when jowls are present, this secondary mass will override the jaw line and become part of a double chin.

A smaller mass is in the area directly around the location of the cheekbone. This minor mass is not as prevalent and can be considered the top portion of the secondary cheek mass. It is generally a product of a protruding cheekbone. The cheekbone is always touching the skin at some point, even on heavier subjects. As this smaller upper cheek mass becomes more defined, a distinct triangular highlighted shape appears next at the outside corner of the eyelids. This triangular shape defines the upper area of this smaller cheek mass and the outside of the fleshy area directly under the eyebrows just above the eyelids. The fatter the individual, the more obvious the triangular highlighted shape becomes.

Extremely rare is a back cheek mass. This could appear on very heavy, older suspects. It is behind the secondary cheek mass along the outside of the head. It extends the length of the face and becomes part of a fat neck.

Yikes! Confusing? I would agree. Hopefully, it will be clearer as we explore the solutions to cheek descriptions and examine the illustrations demonstrating these concepts.

The cheekbone is also an integral part of the cheeks. Cheekbones are said to be "defined," "pronounced," or "prominent." These phrases often are used in conjunction with each other. They are suggestions of similar characteristics and are delineated as distinctive bulges on the outer line defining the shape of the head. The curve of this line will angle back onto the face. The sharpness of the the angle and the amount it encroaches on the sides of the face will determine the extent

of bone definition. Sketch the outside line darker where the bone is closest to the skin. This will achieve and delineate a higher cheekbone (Fig. 5.38). Immediately following this outside line of the head toward the center of the face is the indication of reflected light. This is followed by the shadowing of the cheek and then the lighter-toned front plane of the cheek. The cheekbone highlight is positioned on the point in which the bone touches the skin. It is located in the smaller cheek mass, below and to the outside of the eye sockets. It occurs at the intersection of the light and shadow of the face.

When high cheeks are described, they are commonly mistaken as a description of a prominent cheekbone, which once in a while is the solution. More often than not, the "high cheek" connotation is a description of a full, fleshy cheek that appears rounded and impedes slightly on the lower eye socket. It sometimes causes a minor shaded groove just under the eyeballs. Terms used to describe the cheeks like "full," "fleshy," "cheeky," "puffy," and "round" are suggestive of a similar characteristic. They can apply to any individual. Moreover, fatter and heavier individuals will almost always be associated with these kinds of terms. For these descriptive words, the solutions are similar. The cheekbones are hardly apparent and the main cheek mass is rendered thick and wide. It pushes up and out, causing the secondary mass to do the same. Both masses could appear as one. Frequently, a distinction between them is visible. The triangular highlight next to the outside of the eyes will be present. These words are not only associated with heavy individuals, but are also offered in connection with average build and younger subjects as well (Fig. 5.38).

"Sunken" and "drawn" cheeks are frequently associated with defined cheekbones. This solution usually includes the solution associated with a prominent cheekbone. In addition to this, the fleshy area of the secondary cheek mass concaves inward, creating a depression that is represented as a distinct shadow. As the subject becomes more emaciated, the depression is rendered deeper and darker. This depression is behind the main cheek mass, which is now represented much thinner. The main cheek mass still hangs off the side of the nose and defines the smile lines that begin behind the nostrils. The main cheek mass will end by flowing into the chin structure. This sunken rendering configuration will reflect the underlying structures of the muscle and the upper mandible of the skull. When rendering this characteristic, shade the overall cheek with appropriately tonal halftones. The tone will eventually grow darker in the sunken area. Immediately following this toward the outside of the head, the secondary mass becomes lighter. The cheek will return to shadow, followed by the reflected light, and then the outside line of the head. This shading effect is caused by the masseter muscle and the rear of the jaw protruding outward and pressing against the skin. In these cases, the jaw line is always well defined (Fig. 5.38).

Cheeks described as flat could be considered a common and average term. As in the flat forehead, many of the characteristics previously mentioned will not be rendered on the sketch. Keep the cheeks simple with the most basic of shading techniques. The shadow of the cheeks will only suggest the front and side planes of the head. All the masses will appear as one structure.

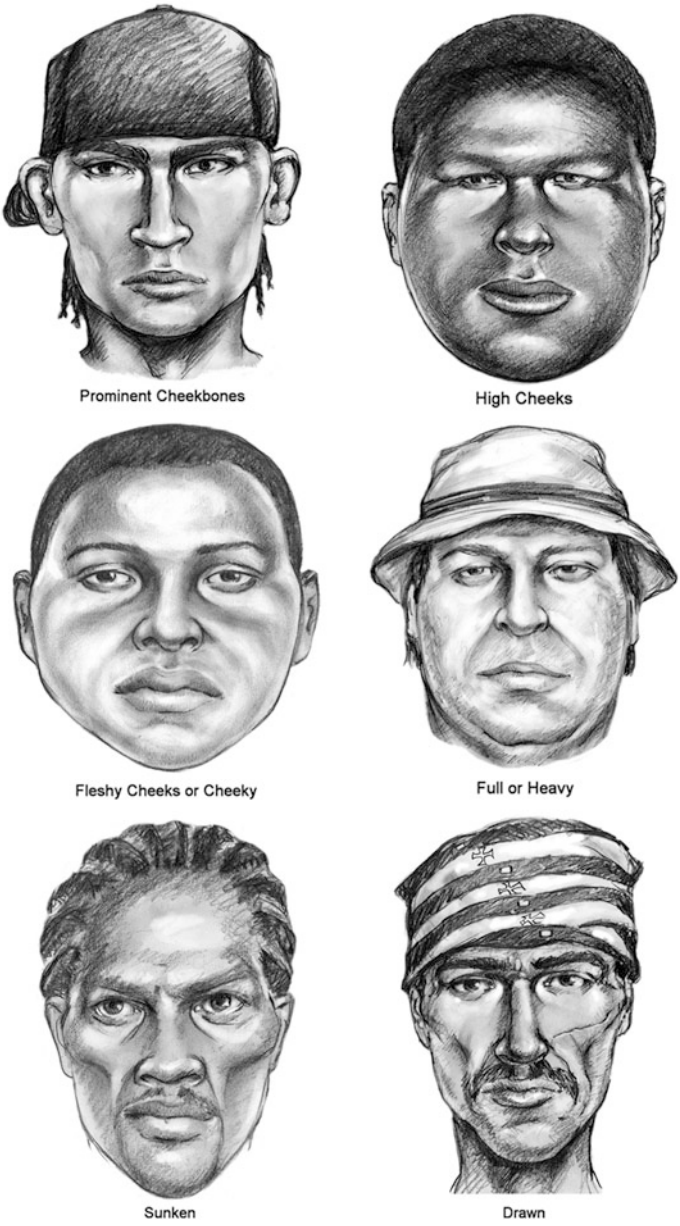

Fig. 5.38 Some cheek solutions

Chin and Jaw Words

The chin and jaw are parts of the lower mandible. It is noted that witnesses will recall the chin but fail to recall the full width of the suspect's jaw. They commonly insist that the overall lower half of the head shape was only as wide as the chin. Though there are some individuals who exhibit this narrow head structure, the overwhelming majority of suspects will have a complete jawline. The full width of the jaw is included on every sketch. This is a frequently recurring theme. The failure to illustrate an anatomically correct jaw will result in an individual who resembles an alien (Fig. 3.3). The solution to a narrow head structure, so as not to appear as a missing jawline, is related to proper proportional relationships of the facial features and the head shape.

The jaw and chin work in unison with each other. In some cases, to fully define the chin and jaw, the neck will need to be included on the sketch. The appearance of the chin and jawline are affected by the weight, girth, and age of the suspect. The actual location and anatomy of the chin and jaw on the skull do not change. Only their appearance will be affected by these properties; this should be kept in mind when applying the witness's or victim's description of these features. If it is one of those unusual circumstances where the mouth of the suspect needs to be sketch open, the lower mandible along with the chin and jaw will drop downward (Fig. 7.5).

There are terms that apply to the totality of the chin and jaw. Some common terminologies for both are "square," "oval," "round," "wide," "full," and "narrow." You will encounter these often. They generally relate to the overall shape of the chin and jaw and how they appear on the face. The solutions for "square," "round," and "oval" are pretty obvious and are sketched as such. "Square" is often associated with a defined jawline. "Oval" and "round" can sometimes be associated with a less defined jawline. The defined jaw is illustrated with a more angular and pronounced line. Notwithstanding jowls and double chins, less pronounced jawlines are sketched with a softer shadowed line. "Full" and "wide" are represented by a wider jaw (Fig. 5.39). The widest point is in the back by the masseter muscle. The narrow jaw is related to the width of the chin and could appear only a little wider.

"Longer" and "shorter" are offered about the length of the chin from the lower lip to the bottom of the chin. The solution to a receding chin is a shorter-drawn chin. The receding chin falls slightly into shadow. A "jutting" chin is a longer chin. This chin catches more light and is rendered as such (Fig. 5.39). The jawline can reflect these lengths for specific characteristics. However, the rear of the mandible generally stays put as the chin gets longer. This offers a solution for another term: the "pointy" chin. The pointy chin can be a long jutting chin with a slightly egg-shaped curve at the bottom. It also could be a well-defined chin. The defined chin is delineated with an intuitively drawn jawline. The line at the rear of the jaw is hard where the bone angles forward. The line softens before edging to the box of the chin. The line defining the jawline can break before continuing to define the chin for a greater effect. The chin line will turn up onto the face as it follows the contour of the mandible. This occurs where the front plane of the chin gives way to the back

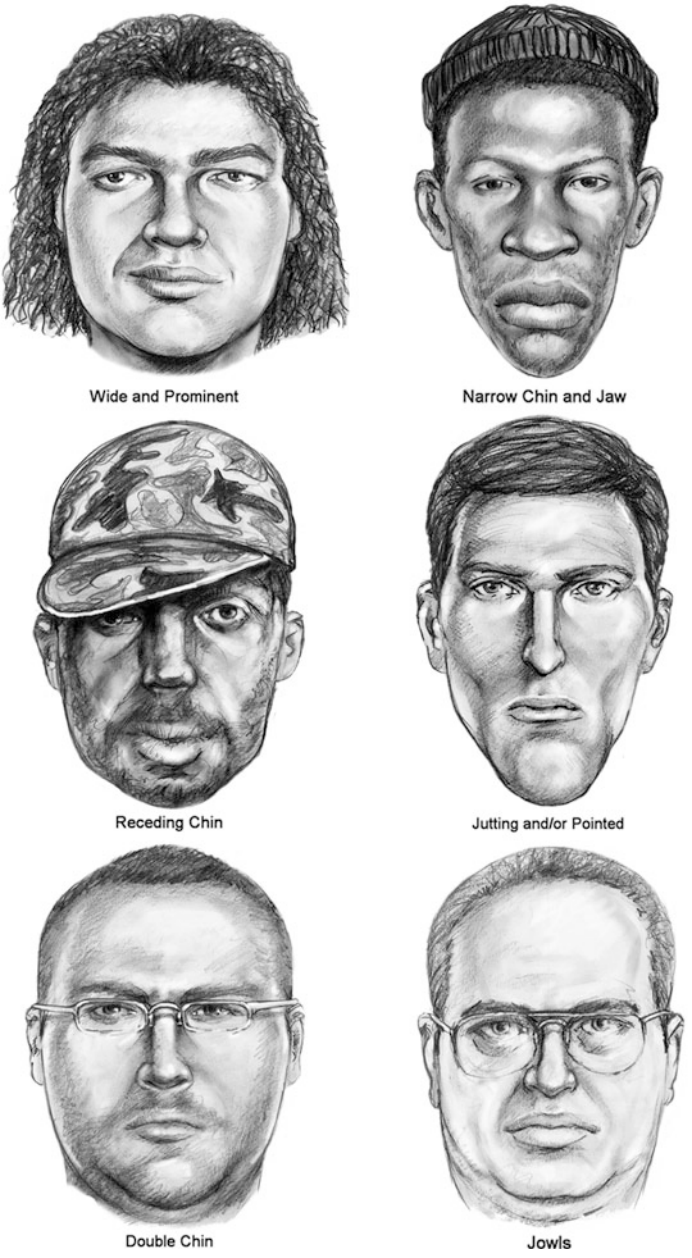

Fig. 5.39 Chin and jaw solutions

angling jaw (Fig. 5.22). This slight line gradually softens on both sides of the chin, strongly illustrating a box-shaped chin. This chin characteristic can be suggested as a square chin as well. Furthermore, this solution helps in defining a narrow jaw description mentioned earlier.

The solutions for double chins and jowls of a heavy-set suspect are connected. The fatty mass of the jowls will grow around the chin and cover the jaw. This mass originates from the secondary cheek mass. The jowls will cover the jawline, but will never eliminate the shape of the chin. The bottom of the chin is delineated as a shadowed line. As the suspect gets heavier, the jowls will extend over the jawline and flow into the fatty mass of the double chin (Fig. 5.37). The mass of the double chin is shaded as a lighter-toned shape. The thicker the mass, the fatter the individual will appear. Also, the lower chin will be defined with an increasingly distinct and darker line as the suspect becomes heavier. A variety of chin configurations will be associated with heavy suspects. For these heavy suspects, the connection between the jowls and the double chin will be wider and more prevalent. Additionally, the secondary cheek mass will extend outward and down, covering the whole jawline all the way to the outside edge of the head. It now defines the heftier outer line of the head and neck for a very heavy suspect (Fig. 5.39).

There are many degrees of jowls. A thinner, older suspect may not be directly described as having jowls. Yet as the artist sketches the girth and age of the suspect, it may become necessary to include a slight indication of this structure. In these cases, the rear of the jawline will be visible, but a thin connection between the jowls and the early stages of a double chin will be visible (Fig. 5.51, marked fedora).

Strong jaws are related to the suspect's general character, as suggested earlier. It is illustrated as a wider, defined, and square jawline. When the jaw is associated with the words "angular" and "prominent," the artist will use a robust quality when sketching the line. The strong jaw can be sketched with and without the neck. If the neck is included, a dark shadow is visible directly under the chin and jaw (Fig. 5.14).

Neck Words

As a rule of thumb, the neck is not automatically included on a composite sketch. A victim or witness will rarely describe it. There are a few specific circumstances to include the neck. First, the neck will be needed to support the weight of a fat face, which causes the face and neck to seem as one continuous structure. Second, it may be needed to strengthen a particular jaw and chin feature, such as a suspect having a muscular build. The third usage is to add specific or unusual features, including long hair, the collar of unique clothing, and a scar or tattoo (Fig. 5.40). The last is for the individual who has a very long, thin neck. A question asked often is, *why wouldn't the artist always include the neck?* Many artists feel it is a necessity and thus always include it as part of a composite sketch. This is fine. If this is the artist's preference, it is paramount that the anatomy be correct. In some cases on composite sketches, it

Fig. 5.40 Some neck solutions

seems the neck was an afterthought and improperly drawn. This reveals the answer to the above question. Arbitrarily adding a neck that is not supporting a specific characteristic may distract from a properly drawn composite sketch. The common mistake some artists make is the location of where the neck starts. The neck does not originate from the jaw, but rather from the behind the ears. If not rendered properly, it will appear as if the head is sitting on a post. The additional effort to render the composite sketch with a neck could add unnecessary time to the overall composite session—time spent on a feature not supplying any supplementary information. However, the artist's personal preference may be to include the neck as a standard operating procedure, but it should be included for the reasons previously stated.

Witnesses or victims may describe the neck with the following phrases: "The suspect had a pencil neck," or "He was a no-neck type of guy." The "pencil-neck" individual will have a thinner and longer neck that is well defined. The structures of the Adam's apple, the shadow directly under the chin and the jaw, will be clearly discernible (Fig. 5.40). The "no-neck" individual is the product of a heavy-set suspect or a muscular suspect. For the former, the neck appears to become part of the overall head shape and is hidden by excessive fatty mass. In the muscular suspect, the jaw and related muscle groups, including the upper area of the trapezoid muscle, will be clearly developed. A shorter and/or wider neck could enhance this solution (Fig. 5.14).

There is an interesting fact about facial muscles. The neck muscles and most other muscle groups of the body will respond and develop during exercise or extreme usage. This will result in them becoming larger and more defined. The facial muscles generally don't change by extreme usage. They are barely visible, if at all. These facial muscle groups are thin and embedded as part of the dermis and subcutaneous tissue. Simply stated, they are part of the skin and fatty masses of the

face. So rarely will they affect the overall facial appearance of the subject by being overly used. The most visible facial muscle would be the masseter (or chewing) muscle, which was discussed during the "Chin and Jaw Words" section.

Special Facial Feature Words

Frequently, a victim or witness will recall specific and unusual features, which include scars, skin conditions (Fig. 5.41), discolorations, and character or facial lines. Except for facial lines, which are relative to the anatomy of the face, the other groups are mainly facets of texture and value. The most common are scars, pimples, and pockmarks. They are rendered as bumps or indentations. Pimples are bumps and pockmarks are indentations (Fig. 5.42). Scars can be either. A bump on the skin is rendered with the highlight on the top and the shadow on the bottom. Indentations or pockmarks are rendered with the shadow on the top and the highlight on the bottom. "Razor bumps," a terminology mostly used to describe African-American males, are sketched as bumps with the texture of very short, sparse, and coarse hairs on and around them. Scars and pimples can be represented as discolorations as well. Freckles are discolorations on the skin. Discolorations are rendered as varying halftones, shapes, or marks on the face (Fig. 5.43).

Fig. 5.41 Unusual mug shot "strange skin condition"

These textures are added to the composite sketch at the very end. Once all the facial features have been fully sketched and a likeness has been achieved, a careful inquiry of the witness or victim as to the location, amount, and magnitude of these elements should be explored. You can achieve proper placement by relating the length and location of scars to the other features of the face. It is helpful to have the victim point directly on the sketch as to the location and length of the described feature. It has been noted that the indication of the right or left side of a face can be misinterpreted when only spoken. This possible inaccuracy is easily solved by asking the witness or victim to look at the sketch and point to the side on which

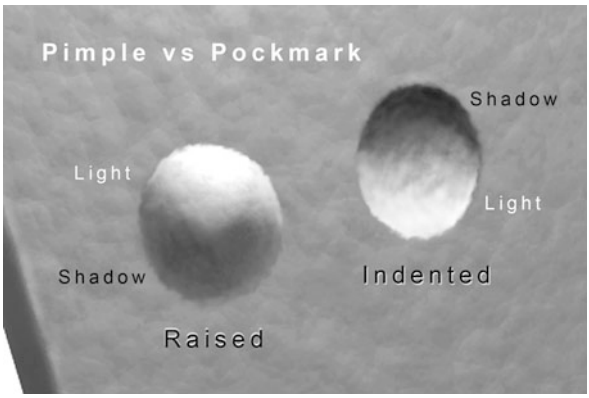

Fig. 5.42 Bump and indentation diagram

the unusual feature appeared. The artist should be wary that these special elements follow the contour of the face and do not appear contrived or merely stuck on the face (Fig. 5.43). These features are generally understated by individuals. Yet the artist should render them rather clearly even if not declared as such. The logic is for an independent observer of the completed composite sketch to know something is awry with the complexion of the suspect. In reality, a witness or victim will not truly possess a detailed account of these types of features. The individual will have only a vague recollection that there was something on the face.

Character and facial lines can appear at many locations on the face. These components are fun to draw and great for achieving a likeness. Unfortunately, it is the exception rather than the rule for the witness or victim to actually recall the specifics of these elements. It is up to the artist to speculate when facial lines should be present. This will be determined by the suspect being described. The extent that they are delineated will be determined by the witness or victim. Nevertheless, there will be times when some indications of ever-so-slight facial lines will be necessary based on the suspect's character and age. These character components include smile lines, crow's feet, bags, and an assortment of brow and forehead lines. Additionally, lines and distortions around the nose, mouth, and eyes may also be required. These elements can exist as deep groves, raised masses, or just faint hints of shadowy lines and shapes. When illustrated, these features follow the contour and anatomy of the structure of the head. Properly delineated, they will appear natural and not look contrived. These characteristics can be present on any individual despite age. However, the addition of character elements can have the effect of aging a suspect, which may not be desired (Fig. 5.43).

"Weathered," "worn," "through the mill," and "a hard character appearance" are phrases that suggest similar solutions. To solve these kinds of requests, add a combination of the before-mentioned qualities of special features, facial hair, a variety of character distinctions, and/or sunken cheeks (Figs. 5.9–5.11). Often, irregular skin complexions and tones will be part of the solution. Clefts and dimples are only included on a sketch when the witness or victim recalls them.

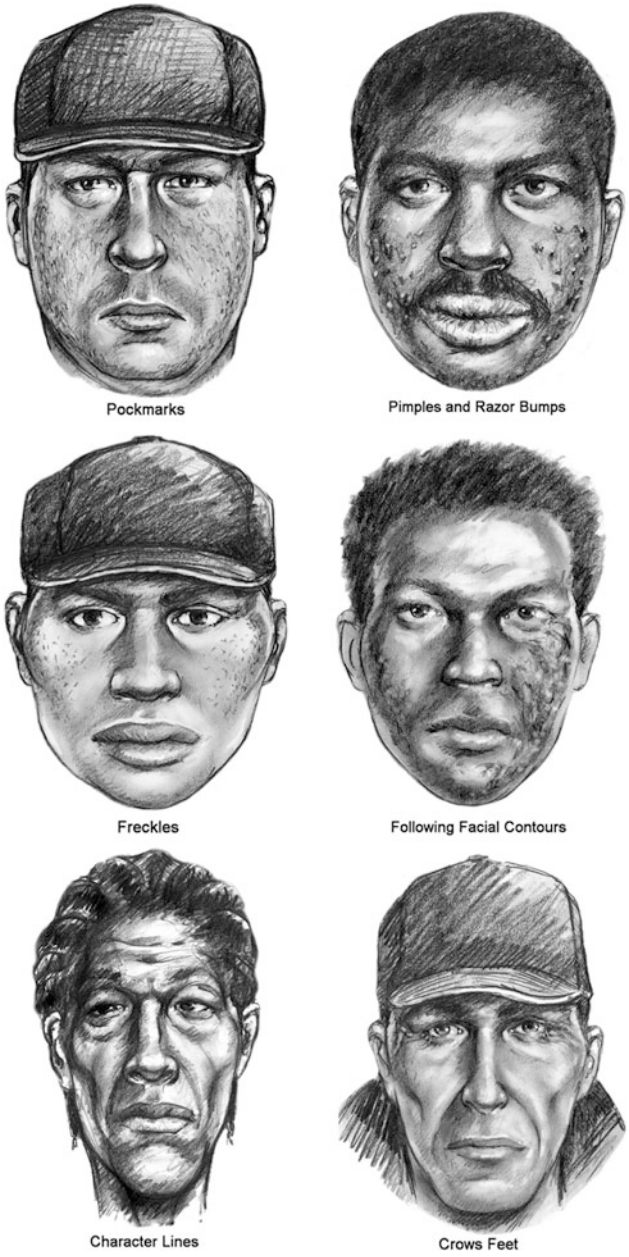

Fig. 5.43 Special facial feature solutions

Race Terminology

Human racial connotations are one of the mainstays of any description of a suspect. We are all members of the human race and inherently display similar and consistent human facial anatomy. Notwithstanding, it is still necessary for the forensic artist to accept stereotypical racial feature assumptions and recognize the possibility of mixed racial types. In doing so, the artist will have a better chance of achieving a successful composite sketch. On occasion, it may become necessary to explain to a witness or victim that the main concern of the composite session is achieving the strongest possible likeness to the suspect, rather than being politically correct.

The artist's geographical area of operation will greatly affect the variety of races the composite artist will be required to render. There are countries and even specific areas of the United States that are majorly populated with particular racial types and even unique character features to specific races as well. The experienced forensic artist working within these kinds of environments may possess a greater understanding of his or her particular local inhabitants, resulting in composite sketches that reflect a unique local character. This artist insight is clearly demonstrated in Norman Rockwell's paintings, though vastly different in implementation. His command and understanding of the local character of New England were unprecedented.

In contrast, the experienced forensic artist working within a metropolitan area or a very large geographical area has a greater opportunity to sketch a variety of races. By the nature of these conditions, the artist is forced to accept these racial differences and must carefully exhibit them in the character of the suspect being described. The following insights are not meant to be a complete exploration of all the racial diversity on this planet, but just some noted themes and solutions for a few. The use of photographic references categorized by racial groups is an extremely important tool for achieving proper racial appearances.

African-American Terms

African American as a racial type is described with many terminologies. It is as diverse in facial features as are all the prominent racial types. Yet, for this race in particular, these terminologies are not only related to specific characteristics, but also to racial insensitivities. The word "black" is the most common reference. The phrases "African American" or "person of color" could be considered the most benign. Others have pure negative overtones and are almost never verbalized during composite sessions in recent years, at least in New York. The word "black" is used by individuals for almost all aspects of this race. A distinction of "American Black" is also frequently encountered. It generally signifies the average look of the African-American population of a given area. Render the features of the face accordingly. A very rare reference is a "southern Black." This might be unique to the northeast. It is represented as an African American with full, light-toned lips, wide nose, and

nappy hair. Occasionally, "European Black" is also verbalized. You can try drawing this suspect as a cleaner-cut individual with slightly Caucasian-leaning features. The phrase "African Black" signifies a very dark suspect. The skin tone is sometimes described as "blue-black" by others. For this description, shade the skin very dark with medium highlights. The whites of the eyes will be very prominent. A rounder head and slightly fuller cheeks can be part of the solution. A Haitian black is rendered dark as well, with wider cheekbones. The jawline will taper toward a pointier chin, which will cause the overall shape of the head to appear triangular. A frequent question is, *is it necessary to render an African- American suspect very dark in value if described as such?* The short answer is yes. The tone and value of the skin are identifying characteristics and will affect the appearance of other features of the face. As an example, the eyebrows will not be as visible on a darker skin tone (Fig. 5.44).

African Americans will occasionally have sheen to their skin complexion, which is represented by strong dark and light contrasts. Along the top edge of the upper lips is a faint white line. Additionally, a lighter-toned area can be visible at the outside

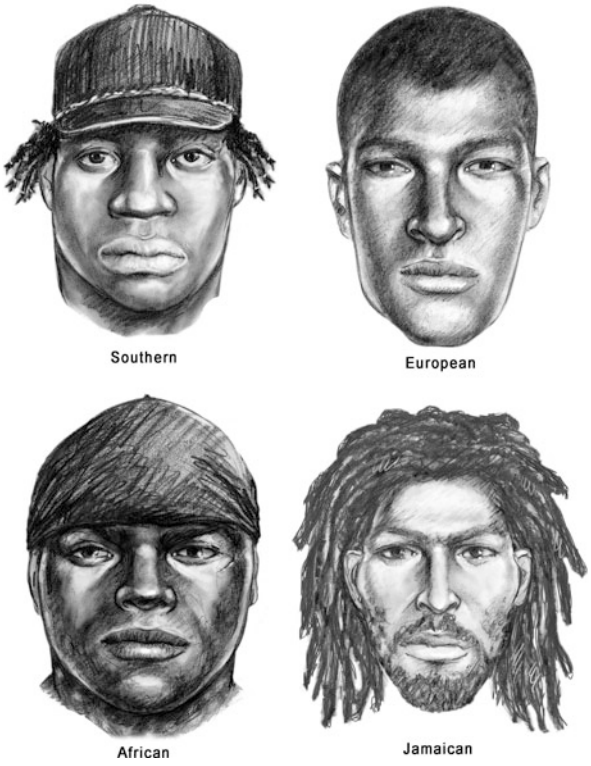

Fig. 5.44 Racial solutions 1: African American

corner of the mouth. Relative to their particular skin color, their lips can appear a few shades lighter, but not always.

At one time, the description "Jamaican" was illustrated as black individual with a caramel or light coffee hue. This male suspect would have had a longer, thinner face with a sparse mustache, a slightly longer goatee, and, of course, dreadlocks or braids. Today, parts of this solution may still help in some cases, but not always. The completed composite sketch of a suspect being described as a black Hispanic could appear as a black man or Hispanic man. The black Hispanic suspect will have African-American features with lighter skin. The contrast between the tone of the skin and the darker hair will be evident (Fig. 5.45).

Fig. 5.45 Racial solutions 2: Hispanic and Native American

Hispanic Terms

The report of Hispanic or Latino by a victim or witness can result in sketches of many kinds of individuals. The completed composite sketches may appear white, black, and everything in between. On some rare occasions, they have a slight tinge of Native American or Asian qualities. "Hispanic" is a very common description

and will include suspects of Puerto Rican, Dominican, Columbian, Mexican, South American, and some Caribbean island ancestry. However, in New York, a witness or victim is almost never offering the word "Hispanic" as a suggestion for European Spanish or Middle Eastern.

Frequently, the description of Columbian will result in a very Caucasian-looking suspect sketch. "Mexican" is often conveyed as a Hispanic distinction. A partial solution to "Mexican" is to render the hair thick, straight, and black, rather similar to an Asian suspect. Thicker eyebrows, but not a uni-brow, and the face a little rounder with fleshy cheeks will also help as part of the solution. A fuller nose with a darker defined groove behind the nostril flare can be experimented with as part of this racial type. On occasion, a prominent brow ridge can also help. Puerto Rican and Mexican Hispanics may exhibit some American Indian qualities such as jet-black straight hair and higher cheekbones (Fig. 5.45).

Caucasian Terms

Caucasian suspects are almost always described as "white." There are a multitude of nationalities that are included in this common reference. The obvious are the Italian, Irish, German, Polish, Russian, and most other people of European ancestry. The list can go on and on. Isolating a particular nationality can be helpful in acquiring the specific character of the suspect. For most forensic artists, this is the race most easily rendered. All races have equally diverse facial characteristics. Many participants of composite sessions will have had the greatest exposure to white individuals. This affords them a greater ability to recall a white suspect's features. It is expected that most composite artists possess a large working mental library of victim terminology, facial features, and drawing solutions for white suspects.

There are some uncommon nationalities that fall into the category of Caucasian. They include Slavic, Gypsy, and Middle Eastern suspects. "Slavic" is a word rarely heard and a very challenging character. Slavic includes nationalities such as Albanian and Croatian, which, on occasion, are descriptive words used by witnesses and victims. Other similar connotations are terms like "foreign" or "European." These are tricky facial distinctions. The solution to these kinds of individuals will require some experimentation during the session. Some noted solutions include deep-set eyes, distinct brow ridges, and longer noses with a slight hook downward. The hair color is dark with a shorter hairstyle that falls onto the forehead as short bangs. Thicker eyebrows, a rough five o'clock shadow, and a general hard, weathered look are possible solutions (Fig. 5.46).

Middle Eastern suspects have some recurring characteristics as well. Middle Eastern includes the Arab and Indian-from-India suspects. Acknowledging the fact that the terms "Islamic" and "Muslim" are not races or nationalities, but religions, there are still witnesses and victims who will use these words to describe Middle Eastern suspects. Rest assured that, as with all races, these individuals can have overlapping facial characteristics with other nationalities and races, which will result

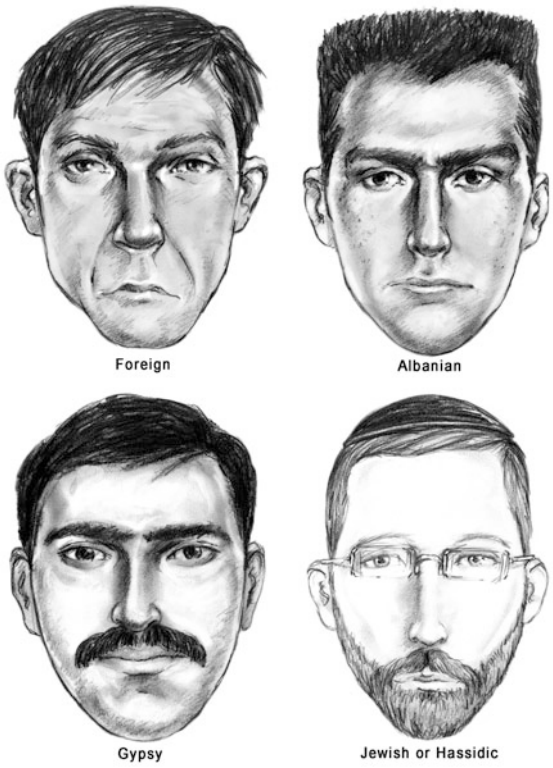

Fig. 5.46 Racial solutions 3: Unusual Caucasian types

in a variety of appearances. The recurring themes and solutions for Middle Eastern Arabs include thick, dark, and wavy hairstyles (Fig. 5.47). A thick upper eyelid and a darker lower eyelid are often present. Additionally, the irises of the eyes are partially covered by the upper eyelid a little more than average. More often than not, the white of the eyes is clearly visible under the iris. Longer faces, a longer nose, and full lips for a Caucasian are possible solutions. Mustaches could have a distinct white line separating the left side from the right, and the mustache hair will not overlap the upper lip. Full beards or tightly trimmed beards are additional feature solutions.

The word "Indian," when referring to a suspect from India, will have very distinct dark areas under deep-set eyes. These darker patches of skin will extend on the upper sides of the cheeks around the cheekbones. Their skin complexion will be darker and less contrasted than a suspect described as Middle Eastern or Arab. Their hair may appear straighter and flatter on the head (Fig. 5.47). As with other solutions for the races, not all of these characteristics are needed, but a combination of them could solve suspects described this way.

In New York City, occasionally the religious orientation of Jewish or Hassidic is used to describe a white suspect. The solution is a very pale individual with

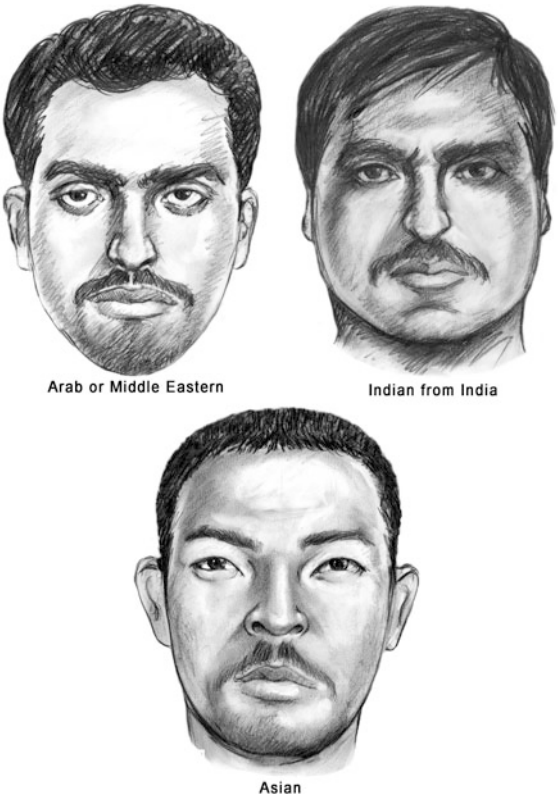

Fig. 5.47 Racial solutions 4: Others

a thin build and a longer, sharp nose. Such males may or may not have a beard and/or a yarmulke, which is a small round skull cap that sits on the top of the head (Fig. 5.46).

Asian Terms

A suggestion of Asian could be the hardest race the artist is required to sketch. Facial variety is not easy to achieve. This could be the least common race the artist encounters. Asian references include "Chinese" and "Oriental." These words will be used by individuals to describe all the Asian nationalities, even Japanese and Filipino.

The Asian race is very diverse. The most significant solution is undoubtedly associated with the eyes. The Asian eye structure is unique (Fig. 5.47). This structure

is solved in part with the upper eyelid and the eyelash line. The upper eyelid fold and lash line almost always appear as one line at a barely visible tear duct. The line starts at the tear duct in a lower vertical position than the bottom of the iris. Its appearance is distinctly pointed. It continues as a very clean, sharp line angling up and over the eyeball. For most cases, the two lines remain as one and define the upper eyelash. The lashes are sketched slightly thicker toward the outside of the eye. Generally, the lash line angles upward toward the outside of the face. This lash and lid line ends in a higher vertical location than its starting point at the tear duct. Occasionally, this combined line diverges slightly and becomes two lines. One is the lashes and the other is the fold of the lid. In this case, the lash line exhibits the same properties described above. If an imaginary horizontal axis were drawn from the inside point of the eye to the outside point of the eye, it would angle upward to the outside (see "Characteristic Drawing Tips" in Chapter 7). The upper eyelid casts a definite shadow over the upper eyeball. The lower lash line is barely visible, but will further enhance the pointed aspect of the eye character around the tear duct. On occasion as part of the Asian eye solution, the eyes may be associated with a puffy lower lid. The overall eye opening appears squinty, and the iris is mostly covered on the top and bottom by the subject's eyelids. These eyes are not deep-set, but square with the front plane of the face. The area between the eyebrows and the eyelashes is not in shadow, but represented as lighter tones. This area will end abruptly at the lash line and be defined on the outside with a curved shadow extending from the edge of the eyebrows to the corner of the eye. Other helpful Asian solutions will include straight straight hair and fuller lips. Sometimes the lips are the same or slightly wider than the nostril flare. The nostril flare is wide and nostrils are often visible. These solutions will achieve an Asian character. All the other facial features are illustrated as the witness or victim describes them.

Native American

Generally, New York City does not have a large population of Native American. There have been some rare instances where composite sketches were required for an Native American suspect. Cross referencing other racial reference photographs has helped find solutions. Experimentation is always a technique the artist can employ to overcome difficult racial suspect descriptions. A couple of minor solutions presented themselves for Native American. One of these solutions is straight black hair. Well-defined high cheekbones and fuller jawline are others (Fig. 5.45). It has also been noted that the bottom half of the overall head and face was greater in length than the upper half, with the eyeline as the halfway point. Trial and error is the solution to unique suspects. The ability to illustrate a specific racial request is necessary for all composite artists.

Mixed and Unknown Races

The majority of witnesses and victims will denote the basic race of suspects with a certain degree of confidence and accuracy. However, making nationality distinctions will be less common. Witnesses or victims may be unsure of the suspect's race in certain circumstances. Hispanic and black have a large overlap. This will be one reason an individual cannot distinguish the race of the suspect. Additionally, preconceived notions and beliefs can influence a person's perception of race as well. The composite artist needs to be aware of these possibilities and recognize them when questioning the individual. Finding the solution to these problems can be solved with specific questions from the artist. Questions ascertaining the location of the event, type of crime, and other circumstances surrounding the incident will help make these determinations. In New York City, certain neighborhoods are populated by particular groups although, of course, the suspect could have easily entered an area from a different location. It still is an avenue of questioning the artist can use to try to ascertain a race or nationality. The type of crime could add insight to the suspect's origins, too. For example, there are particular groups of foreign-born gypsies that commit home repair fraud and cons on elderly victims throughout the eastern part of the United States. There are many examples of particular groups and gangs committing specific crimes. This could possibly yield additional insights into race or nationality.

Other difficulties will arise with mixed racial suspects. Individuals rarely will declare the suspect was a mixture of one race and another. However, the possibility is real and must be recognized. Solutions are found in the application of some of the concepts already explored. Without changing the descriptive information the witness or victim is offering, it may be required to experiment with some of the previously mentioned solutions about race and character to achieve a likeness. Acknowledging the fact that these solutions may not be verbalized directly by the participant, the artist may still need to incorporate certain racial characteristics into the completed sketch. The "average and normal" rule will still apply. With this in mind, the artist should be careful not to overstate these solutions and keep the sketch in the realm of possibility.

Color Indications

Many descriptive phrases will be coupled with words of color. Composite sketches for the most part are always grayscale images. For many reasons, color media are not conducive for composite sketches (see "Composite Sketching Tips" in Chapter 7). All color connotations are represented on a composite sketch as tones of gray from the halftone value scale. This scale is a representation of all the grays between black and white, including black and white as opposite ends of the spectrum (Fig. 7.7). As discussed earlier during hair and eye terminologies, the proper shades for particular terms of color are related to this halftone value scale and the contrast to

other shaded areas of the sketch. In addition to color descriptions of hair and eyes, individuals will commonly speak of a suspect's complexion with words of color as well. Considering this halftone value scale, the following words are used to describe complexion: "Blue-black," "ebony," and "black" are the darkest. "Brown," "red," "coffee," "caramel," "olive," "tan," and "beige" are middle tones. "Pink," "pale," "albino," and "white" are the lighter tones.

Fig. 5.48 Imaginative phrases solutions

The halftone value scale is very important in rendering proper tone for these descriptive color words. However, terms like "shiny" are represented with much darker- and lighter-toned areas displayed next to each other. This results in a greater degree of contrast. Opposite "shiny" are words like "dull" or "matte," which are rendered with less contrasting tones. These texture elements must be considered when determining the proper graytone for a particular described color.

Imaginative Phrases

Occasionally, the witness or victim will make comparisons to known persons, such as a celebrity or athlete. The solution is simply to get a picture of the referenced person. The Internet is the best vehicle to acquire one. Sometimes, the witness or victim may use more imaginative phrases. The solutions are generally straightforward and obvious. "Horse" and "camel" faces are long faces. Camel faces have flat and wide nose bridges (Fig. 5.48). The "bull" face is a large head with big and bulbous facial features. This term is often associated with a muscular character. "Mousy" is the opposite: The head shape is small and round. The features are sharp. The eyes can be a little too big for the head. The ears could stick out (Fig. 5.20). Similar terms are related to insect terminologies, such as, "The suspect looked like a bug or ant." The solutions will include large, far-set eyes and unusual, strange features. "Wolf-men" indications are hairy with unkempt facial hair, hairlines protruding onto the forehead, and deep-set eyes. Words like "crazy," "weird," "strange," "wild," and "funny-looking" are related to the "ugly" or "sketchy" terms discussed earlier. Overexaggerated features and peculiarities will be part of the solutions. "Clown" and "dopey" descriptions may result in sketches with large faces and less forehead. Large, dark- or light-toned lips delineated with a strong line may help with these rare terms (Fig. 5.48).

Unfortunately, as much fun as this imaginative verbiage is to illustrate, these resulting colorful characters may need to be slightly understated. The artist will incorporate some of these solutions, which can be very helpful in getting a likeness in the vein of a caricature. Yet, much to the artist's dismay, these characteristics will almost always have to be kept to a minimum.

Accessory Terminology

Witnesses and victims will recall facial accessories and for the most part will not add them if something was not there. Unfortunately, accessories can be forgotten. Accessories will include many kinds of headgear and jewelry. The descriptive information offered about these objects for the most part is pretty straightforward. Extensive reference materials and access to the Internet will help greatly in solving these issues. The common items are hats, glasses, bandanas, jewelry, hoods, masks,

hairnets, scarves, and bandages, to name a few. If head accessories are going to be part of the composite sketch, the artist must be careful to draw the whole shape of the head prior to the placement of the accessory object. Otherwise, the artist runs the risk of an anatomically incorrect composite. Simply stated, draw through the object. Nevertheless, with the exception of jewelry, which can be added at the end of a sketch, most accessories must be treated as a facial characteristic. They are added at the beginning stage of any composite sketch. The following are some of the more common accessories.

Hats

Hats are very common. People typically have a pretty good recollection of these items. A few basic premises are worth noting. Most hats have a relatively large appearance on the head. Determining how the hat sits on the head is important. Ask some basic questions, such as, "Did the hat lie toward the back or front of the head?" and "Did it slant one way or another?" and "Was it loose or tightly fit to the head?" These will aid in getting the character of the hat. Additionally, inquiries about the fabric, logos, patterns, and/or printed words will aid in making the hat more identifiable. It is normal for an individual not to remember exactly what was printed on a hat. Witnesses will likely recall that something was displayed. When confronted with insufficient information, try to render the essence of the character of the writing or logo, such as box lettering vs. a script font or the basic shape of a logo or patch. Inquiring if it was a dark shape on a lighter background, or the opposite effect, will achieve the proper appearance (Fig. 5.49). Some indication is better than nothing. The same holds true for unique fabric patterns.

Baseball caps follow a basic shape format but still have some variations. Most individuals will be describing the garden variety with a medium-length brim. They come in a multitude of colors, patterns, and logos printed on them. Occasionally, the phrases "Gap cap" or "fisherman's cap" are used to describe a rounder, tighter-fitting baseball cap with a slightly longer brim and composed of a cloth fabric. New-style baseball caps are big with expressive sports team patches and patterns. The brims are large and long in length. When these kinds of baseball caps are sketched, the brim should be straight and flat and appear much wider than the top of the cap (Fig. 5.49). Unless the cap is positioned upward on the head, the brim will cast a distinct shadow across the top of the face. Sometimes the brim will hide the eyes completely. If the witness is having trouble remembering the eyes, this could be the reason. In this case, do not try to force the eye description, but draw the composite with the eyes covered by the brim and its cast shadow.

No matter the color of any baseball cap, the front edge of the brim is highlighted. If the brim of the cap is slanted to one side, it is represented as a distorted "U" shape protruding accordingly to the left or right. However, if the cap is on backward, the brim is not visible from the front. In this instance, a similar solution can be applied as in a rear ponytail. The artist can draw a distorted perspective of the brim sticking

Fig. 5.49 Hat solutions 1

out slightly on one side of the head behind the ear (Fig. 5.38, first sketch). This is not always necessary.

Another very common hat is the ski cap, knit cap, and woolly cap. These caps are tight- or loose-fitting with many distinct shapes on the top. They can be positioned in a variety of locations on the head. They occasionally cover part of the ear, if not the entire ear, or push the top of the ears outward. The knit cap has a thickness, which is delineated at the bottom edge of the hat (Fig. 5.49). This is rendered in shadow where the hat edge turns back to meet the forehead. It is typically rendered with a ribbed texture. The ribbing will follow the contour of the hat's shape.

"Skull caps" could be another phrase for these types of caps, but often it is a reference to a thinner material. The doo-rag, which is a type of skull cap, is drawn tight-fitting and composed of a thin material. It may or may not have a flap hanging down in the back, which would be visible from the front behind the ears. If the subject has cornrows or braids under the doo-rag, a suggestion of them should be visible through the thin material. It is always a good idea to ascertain if the suspect's hair is affecting the overall shape or protruding out of a described hat (Fig. 5.50).

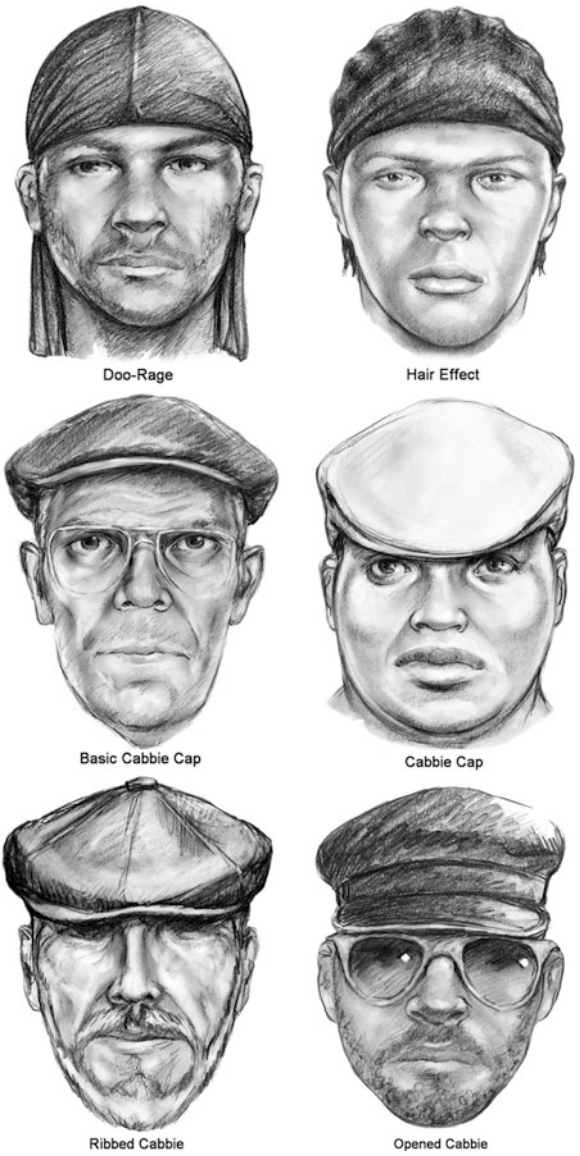

Fig. 5.50 Hat solutions 2

The “cabbie cab” will be referred to by many names, such as “duckbill,” “Irish,” “pub,” “driving,” and “ivy” caps. The newest reference is the “Kangol” cap, which can also signify other types of hats as well. These cap styles have unique shapes. They are wider than the overall width of the head. They smoothly slope downward onto the brim, where often there is a hidden snap that connects the top to the brim. The most visible part of these hats is the top portion. The brims are barely seen and are only present on the outer edges (Fig. 5.50). When the cabbie cap is worn backward, it appears as a smooth half-oval shape on the top of the head. These terms also describe similar hats that have seams running down the length of the hat, radiating from a button on the top. Other words used to describe this kind of cabbie cap are “newsboy” and “Gatsby” caps. They are larger and puffier on top. A good visual reference is the hats that the Jackson Five wore in the 1970s. They are quite rare today. Yet all these types of caps come in an assortment of textures, fabrics, and wearing positions. These textures are rendered accordingly. When they are worn unsnapped in the front and open, they appear quite different in shape. Witnesses have trouble identifying them. In this case, the cap will have a visible brim followed by the band of the hat and the top section will appear puffed up (Fig. 5.50).

Hoodies are oversized hoods. Frequently, they are part of a bulky coat or sweatshirt. If the hood is worn open, it appears large, covering only the top of the head. The full shape of the head and most of the ears will be visible, but in shadow. Unfortunately, when a hood is pulled tight around the head, it changes the overall shape of the head to a basic oblong oval (Fig. 5.51). Regularly, hoods are worn in conjunction with other headgear such as a baseball cap or woolly cap. The artist is required to draw these combinations. The solution is easy. As before, the artist will fully delineate each item, starting with the shape of the head, and then the cap, followed by the hood. Laying one element on top of the other, the artist draws through each object to get the placement and anatomy correct.

Fishing hats and rain hats are hats that have brims around the whole of the hat. The hat and brim are floppy and loose, not stiff. The brim encircles the head. The fedora, traditional men’s hat, old man’s hat, and the 1940s-type hat that James Cagney wore in all those gangster movies are rare today (Fig. 5.51). They still pop up in a description now and then. They are great to draw if you get a chance. They have a pretty big appearance on the head. Cowboy hats are common in some parts of the country. However, in New York, there aren’t many chances to render a cowboy hat. As a matter of fact, I think I only had a couple of cases with cowboy hats in 25 years. They surely have a large appearance on the head and are fun to draw. Additionally, more often than one would think, a police-type hat has been part of a description as well. These police hats are a little difficult to draw, especially the eight-point type. Note that they stick up high in the front, chiefly for the placement of a cap shield, device, or patch (Fig. 5.51). (Tip: The top of its front peak is the location of the first point.)

Once in a while, construction and bicycle helmets are described. Unless the suspect has a fat and big head, these helmets also appear very large on the head. They have a hard edge and shiny texture. Winter hats with ear flaps are large hats

Fig. 5.51 Hat solutions 3

as well. These winter hats are not just defined by shape, but consist of two textures. They are leather and wool. Certain hats are defined by their texture, such as a fur hat. Two unique hat references are the engineer's hat, which is closely related to

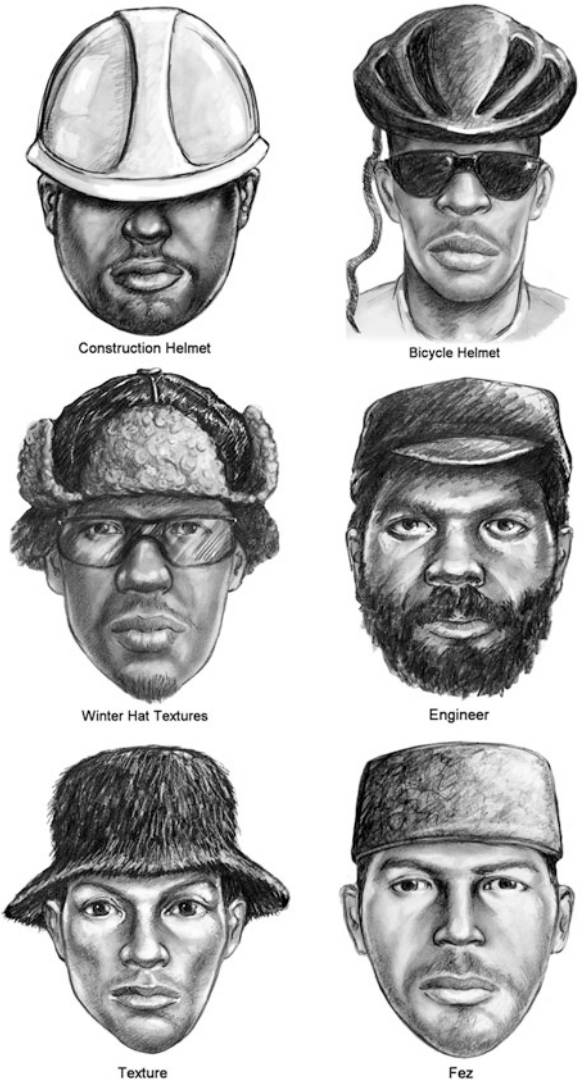

Fig. 5.52 Hat solutions 4

the shape of a baseball cap, and the small Muslim hat, or fez, which has a simple rectangular shape (Fig. 5.52).

There will be references to an assortment of hair scarves, nets, bandanas, kerchiefs, and stocking caps. There are all affected by the hair underneath. Many will have specific patterns and designs printed on them. Once in a while, the description of the hat will defy all categories, like the last hat illustrated in Fig. 5.53.

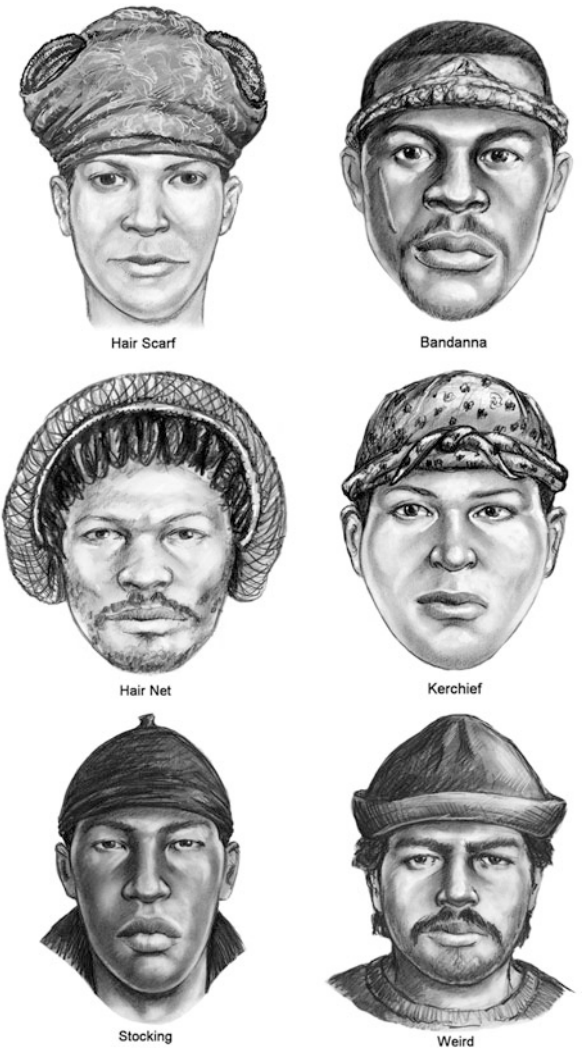

Fig. 5.53 Hat solutions 5

Jewelry

Jewelry and facial ornamentation are very common today. This is another element that a witness or victim will articulate with a degree of certainty and generally will not add it if it was not there. Yet jewelry can be completely overlooked by a person. Earrings, nose rings, lip rings, and an assortment of facial piercings will be part of many suspect descriptions. Inquiring about the size, shape, and location of these items is the main part of the solution. Most individuals will not possess a detailed recollection of these objects. Distinguishing among a loop, stud, or dangling-type

object is all you need. Gold and silver pieces are rendered the same, with sharp contrasts of black and white. Stones or gems appear as round or oval shapes. Most of the time, adding a geometric octagon shape inside of them will do the job. These elements are all added at the final stage of the composite sketch. An electric eraser is a very handy tool for pulling out and rendering facial jewelry. Unless the sketch is a composite of a specific object of jewelry and detail is important, do not spend much time rendering facial ornamentation. The essence of facial jewelry will suffice.

Eyeglasses

Another common facial accessory is eyeglasses. Individuals are pretty good at recalling them. The artist should have access to an extensive reference file for different types of frames. They are easy to obtain. Requesting an old eyeglass catalog from your local eye doctor is a good place to start. Have the witness browse the catalog for a similarly shaped frame. It doesn't matter if the frames in the catalog have clear or shaded lens. The shape and type of the frames are pertinent.

There a few things the artist should consider when confronted with a suspect with glasses. If the victim only saw the suspect with glasses, the composite sketch must include the glasses. When eyeglasses are present, they are considered a facial characteristic and delineated during the first stage of the sketch. If the suspect was seen with and without glasses, then the composite sketch could result in two versions. Prior to digital technology, this was done with a sheet of clear acetate. It was effective for adding dark or wire-framed glasses on the completed sketch. For light-colored frames, cutouts from a sheet of paper were used. However, today it is done after the sketch has been completed and scanned. All kinds of additional facial accessories can be digitally drawn onto a composite sketch. This preserves the original sketch and allows for variations to the appearance of the suspect if required.

The most important eyeglass aspects are their position and overall size as they relate to the head. It is imperative that the shape of both sides of the frames be drawn symmetrical. They ought to appear as if they are sitting on the bridge of the nose, not painted on the face. The former is achieved with the use of a piece of tracing paper. After properly drawing one side of the frames directly on the sketch, trace that half on a piece of tracing paper. Then flip the tracing paper over. Position it properly on the face of the subject. If you copy the image on the reverse side of the tracing paper, the previously traced half of the frames will leave a faint impression on the composite. You can now draw the other half of the frames using this faint image as a guide and attain proper symmetry. The latter is achieved by positioning the nose pads of the frames on the correct spot of the nose bridge. The bridge of the frames sits off the nose (Fig. 5.54). Once the frame is fully rendered, the addition of white highlights on the frames and lens will add to this effect. Cast shadows will appear under the bridge portion of the frames as well as the arms of the frames.

Fig. 5.54 Some glasses solutions

These shadows are not always necessary. When the frames are thicker, dark, and plastic, the proper placement is sufficient. In either case, always shade through the frame when rendering the face. Then enhance the lines of the glasses after the facial shading has been completed.

Another consideration is the lens of the eyeglasses. The variations are the shaded sunglasses, prescription, or plain clear lenses. If the sunglasses are dark and the witness did not see the eyes, the resulting sketch will not show the eyes. You shouldn't put some arbitrary image of eyes under the glasses if there isn't any corroborating information from the victim or witness. The eyes can be visible under certain sunglasses (Fig. 5.54). In this case, ascertain the eye description from the individual and draw the eyes prior to shading the lens of the sunglasses. Shade the lens with the proper value, and allow the eyes to be partially blocked by the tone lens. It results in an effective visual outcome.

When the lens are said to be "clear," "prescription," or "just for show," the overwhelming majority of these lenses will not affect the overall eye structure. You can draw the frames accordingly and the lenses are basically nonexistent. This will be the case for most clear-lens glasses. Nevertheless, there are two types of clear-lens glasses that will change the appearance of the eyes. One is the lens that will have a large appearance on the face. They convex outward and cause the eyes to appear larger than they really are. Though this will be a rare occurrence, it may explain a person's strange description of the suspect's eyes. These are glasses the suspect will need to wear to see. So the eyes will be fittingly drawn large. The other extreme, which is equally rare, is the proverbial "coke bottle" lens. These frames are generally smaller than the convex type, but the glass is thick. It has the effect of making the eyes appear small. The lens causes a distortion around the eyes that can be rendered as circular lines or a thin circular shadowing. As before, the suspect needs to wear these glasses to see, so most likely the suspect will always have them on. The artist will need to include this distortion on the completed sketch for such rare descriptions (Fig. 5.54).

A last note about eyeglasses is a reference to Gazelle glasses. Gazelle is an eyeglass company. Frequently, when the witness uses this terminology, he or she is referring to large, bold-colored plastic frames, generally the type worn by today's rap music performers.

Disguises

Disguises come in many forms. Some perpetrators have worn fake mustaches, rubber noses, or wigs to hide their appearance. These are uncommon and most of the time only the product of movies. Occasionally, individuals will describe these kinds of distractive facial cover, particularly related to bank robberies. Considering this is still a possibility, the artist should be aware of it. When a face-altering disguise is described, it is illustrated in an obvious fashion due to the fact that a person recognized it as an oddity. Otherwise, the victim or witness would not have known the suspect was wearing an extreme disguise (Fig. 5.55).

The more common disguises are hats, glasses, and hoods, which we have already discussed. In addition to these, there are bandanas, a full ski mask, a stocking mask, cutout t-shirts, scarves, and an assortment of bandages. Individuals could introduce

Fig. 5.55 Some disguise solutions

all aspects of these elements during a composite session. The rule on disguises is that any object covering a portion of the face must be included on the composite sketch. The more area of the face the disguise covers, the earlier it is introduced onto the sketch. Hence, the ski mask is a composite drawing unto itself. In contrast, the Band-Aid is added to a composite drawing at the final stage of the sketch (Fig. 5.55). Nevertheless, these described disguises must be included as part of the completed composite sketch, no matter how insignificant. The artist doesn't possess special

intuition as to what might be hidden. The suspect could be concealing an identifying mark with the smallest of bandages. The intentional exclusion of these elements will foster the assumption that nothing is there. This is misleading. Do not let anyone involved in the investigation pressure you to remove a disguise or facial covering without additional information. It could come back to haunt the investigation.

Case Study 8: "Disguise"

This was a robbery that occurred in the confines of the Bronx. It happened as the victim was on her way to work one morning. She was robbed in her elevator. The female in this case only saw the suspect with a mask. The mask was a t-shirt that the perpetrator had cut holes into. The rest of the shirt effectively covered his identity. The suspect approached the victim wearing the mask and left with it on. At the time of the composite session, the detective requested that I complete the sketch without the mask. Hold on! This was not the detective's idea. He quickly informed me that his squad commander had insisted on this request. Before completing his caveat, he was handing me the phone number to his squad. He had worked with me before. I was on the phone to his command within minutes. The obvious question was posed: "Where is the descriptive facial information hidden by the t-shirt mask going to come from?" In defense of the person who made this request, he thought the composite artist had magical powers. I should have been flattered. Unfortunately, artists do not. Once the illogic of the request was understood, I offered a wonderful sketch of the t-shirt mask (Fig. 5.56). Months later, the assigned detective informed

Fig. 5.56 Case study 8: Composite sketch with disguise

me that when they caught this perpetrator, he was in possession of a similar cutout t-shirt. At least it helped a little.

Responses of Uncertainty, Positives, and/or Negatives

Throughout the course of a composite session, the witness or victim will express not only words of description, but also terms that are vague. These will include responses and gestures of uncertainty, negative/positive assertions, emotions, suggestions, criticism, and queries, or even no response at all. In many ways, these are the phrases and gestures that artists can have the most difficulty with. On the other hand, these expressions can encourage the artist as well. Session awareness is the best way to deal with such expressions; the artist can interpret the meaning of these types of responses. The artist will consider the following questions: At what point are we in the composite session? What kind of information is trying to be acquired? How well has the witness or victim been doing overall? These evaluations of the composite session will afford a constructive use of these kinds of responses.

For example, the simple statement, "The nose looks wrong" from the witness early in the session might only be related to the completion level of the sketch. The artist has not started to render the form of the face, but the witness wants to see facial volume. It takes a little explanation by the artist that these factors are dealt with later in the drawing process. The artist shouldn't overreact and attempt to make changes that can't be effectively implemented at a certain junction of the session. Professionalism, confidence, and control are the keys.

Uncertainty Responses

The artist needs to recognize a participant's uncertainty. A repetitive response like, "Can we try a particular feature this way or that way?" are words of uncertainty. The artist will entertain these requests to a point as long as they seem to be going in a new, consistent direction and are not coming from left field. A person will occasionally attempt to try every perceivable combination of feature shapes and characteristics when his or her recollection is failing. Be wary. It is a slippery slope of never-ending attempts at ineffective variations that can ultimately ruin what may already be successful. If the witness or victim continuously reverts back to previously drawn facial characteristics after a flurry of ineffective changes, it is a sign of this situation. The artist should recognize and accept the fact that the person is uncertain and quietly move on. The artist will determine by a careful assessment that the changes made to the sketch during this episode have not drastically altered the appearance of the composite. If any adjustments are needed to return the sketch back to an earlier, more successful condition, you should quietly do so. An individual's uncertainty is more the norm than the exception. Even if the victim isn't aware of it,

the artist should be. A similar statement from an uncertain victim would be a query such as, "How do you [the artist] think a feature would look this or that way?" If the person is asking the artist, common sense dictates that the person doesn't know and the change would be inconsequential. Uncertainty is not a bad thing and, as already noted, is the expected standard. It is an average response of a fragile memory. The person is not looking at a photograph of the suspect in her mind. He is relying on a vague impression that is floating around in his head. It is an image that cannot be nailed down.

On many occasions, a person will not offer any response to the artist's inquiry or question on a specific feature. This is not a negative or positive statement. It is a statement of uncertainty. When confronted with a nonresponse, you can try to restate the question. However, do not force an answer. You will note it, but move on to other issues. Sometimes this will help trigger an answer by the way of a backdoor route. On the other hand, it may be necessary to let a hanging issue go, since a nonresponse could also mean it's fine the way it is for now. Still, if it is an inquiry you feel needs a response, you can apply the rules of the "realm of possibility" and/or the "average and normal" for a particular race and age. These are always viable solutions when phrasing your interview questions.

A further solution is redirecting the inquiry back to a successful or positive element of the sketch. This will aid in hurdling this sticking point. After a pause, you can revisit the uncertain issue if necessary. It is imperative the artist does not let one problem issue dominate the processes, or else you run the risk of a failed session. It is a technique of juggling your questioning and carefully applying solutions to the sketch that will keep the session moving in a positive direction. Ultimately, this is what you want to do.

Other similar terms of uncertainty may include statements like, "I'm not sure," "maybe," "kind of," or "I wish I could remember more." The desire by the participant for someone else to comment on the sketch is also common. This is a yearning to have his or her recollection verified by another. Furthermore, individuals will rationalize their responses when their memory is failing. They will make statements like, "It was dark," "It happened so quickly," "It was hard to see," or "I couldn't tell." These are statements of uncertainty. The solutions are the same.

Positive Responses

By far, the easiest responses to manage are the positive ones. For the sketch to be successful, positive responses are a must. It is really the only way to have some degree of assurance that the appearance of the suspect in the sketch is moving in the right direction. Positive assertions will be offered by individuals at differing levels of confidence. At one end are the hesitant affirmations that offer lower degrees of similarity and resemblance. Phrases suggesting these degrees include "close," "almost," "pretty good," "It looks fine," and "kind of." These positive-leaning terms are frequently encountered. Notwithstanding the more decisive affirmative phrases

such as “very good” and “much better,” “really close” and “That looks right” are quite common phrases as well. These decisive assertions are the kinds of responses the artist strives for. The extreme positive expressions like “That’s him” or “The sketch looks exactly like the suspect” or an emotional reaction to the sketch are slightly rarer. Yet they offer the best indication of the mindset of the witness or victim that the sketch is succeeding or has succeeded. On some level, an emotional reaction to the sketch by a victim is considered a good indication of an optimistic result. Unfortunately, an expression of extreme certainty doesn’t necessarily indicate the actual reality of the suspect’s appearance. It is an emotional response to the completed image that the victim now perceives as the bad guy. Since the person’s memory and perception of the perpetrator are all the artist has to rely on, a strong positive reaction is the best that can be hoped for. If you are achieving successful solutions, keep doing what you are doing because something must be going in the right direction.

Negative Responses

“The sketch does not look like the suspect.” These are the most dreaded words the artist will encounter, especially if stated toward the end of the session. How does the artist manage this kind of unfavorable certainty? As with the necessity of positive terminology for the development of the sketch, the negative ones are equally important. When the witness or victim says something is wrong or not correct, it is the mechanism to attain the information for modifying the composite sketch. This will further the attempt to clarify the likeness to the person’s perception of the suspect. The artist must emanate confidence and control of the process to maintain the forward development of the sketch. Constructively investigate the possible solutions to the negative response and apply them to the composite.

The varieties of disapproving terminology will hold some answers. The most common types are comments related to incorrectly appearing features, proportions, shapes, and tones. It is a welcoming situation if the witness or victim can make a definite distinction that something looks wrong. This way, the composite sketch can be improved. The solution is basic. The artist will make inquiries as to why a certain facial element seems incorrect. Then the artist can apply the newly acquired information, which will hopefully move the sketch in a successful direction. Once the solution has been applied, you will ask if the change is better or worse. This allows the individual an opportunity to return the sketch to the previous state without feeling uncomfortable. It also informs the artist if the adjustment was a viable solution and he or she can move on to other issues. Many times if the result of the change seems worse, returning back to the previous state will be enough to put the issue to rest. If it is better, ask if the element in question needs further modifying or if it is fine the way it is now. The answer to this question will govern the next move. If the feature needs to be further modified, you will do so.

A witness or victim is not always going to have a definitive solution to a response of dissimilarity. A frequently encountered statement is, "Something isn't right, but I'm not sure what it is." Finding the solution to these kinds of statements is a process of elimination. Covering portions of the drawing and narrowing down the areas of similarity and dissimilarity could offer an answer. Another possible trick is to hold the sketch up at a different angle or height toward the victim or witness. This new visual perspective may trigger a new insight from the individual. The artist's assessment of how the composite session has been progressing will govern the extent of this process and determine when to quietly move on.

Negative or positive comments about the overall appearance of the suspect or the sketch can be verbalized by the witness or victim at any time during the session. When it is said that the sketch looks like the suspect in the early stage of the sketch, it should cause some concern by the artist. Why? Well, the sketch at this early stage has not been fully developed. It is the simplicity of the image that allows the memory of the witness or victim to project the missing information onto the sketch. Hence, it is applying the old artistic rule that "less is more." This by itself is not a bad thing. The artist will still need to extract the missing descriptive information from the person to complete the sketch. This is easier said than done. After developing the sketch further, it is possible to lose this "less is more" phenomenon, which results in the person expressing that the sketch doesn't look similar to the suspect anymore. This is an unusual circumstance that an early positive reaction could be a negative in the long run. The solution is to proceed with caution. The artist must make a concerted effort to keep the person involved in the further development of the composite sketch. Do this with the most insignificant inquiries if necessary. Pay special attention not to lose the essence of what may be working on the premature sketch. The resulting completed composite will likely be simplified with less detail than normally illustrated. This is not a problem, since the "less is more" rule can actually help when the sketch is released to the public during the investigation. If it is said in the early stages of the sketch that it doesn't look like the suspect, this is less problematic. It is likely related to the fact that the sketch has not fully developed and all the descriptive information has not been retrieved. Continuing the session in a normal fashion should solve this initial hurdle.

This all alludes to that bigger problem of the dreaded declaration, "The sketch does not look like the suspect," toward the end of the session. When a blanket negative pronouncement is stated by the participant, a common reaction by the inexperienced composite artist is one of panic. Don't panic. Up to this point, it is assumed that the session has been proceeding normally. Otherwise, the artist should have formulated the reasons for the recollection difficulties the person is experiencing. This will be related to the conditions in which the memory was formed and the factors that have affected the person's perceptions of the suspect. The artist should have already been applying some of the memory-enhancing techniques discussed in earlier. However, new solutions may have to be implemented. In the best-case scenario, the problem may simply be a product of one overlooked faulty feature or characteristic. Frequently, it might be the result of one feature

that can be easily modified. Examples of this are related to facial hair, hairstyle, the overall character, expression, and/or the general age the suspect appears (see Chapter 7, "General Drawing Tips"). These elements can be easily manipulated even at the late stages of the session. Upon discovering this, the artist should make these simple modifications. Then have the person reevaluate the overall appearance of the sketch. Often, this solves the problem. Basically, if you have completed the sketch this far, there must have been positive responses and a certain degree of success already achieved. The artist will attempt to build upon this previously attained success.

Another solution for a negative assessment of resemblance is related to the rendering of the sketch. The fully developed facial elements are now visually translating incorrectly. Investigating this obvious solution could reveal an effective avenue to improve the sketch. This is done by simplifying the details or downplaying the contrast of particular facial components (Fig. 5.57). An example of this solution is the rendering of the mouth. The lips could appear too dark and conspicuous. By softening the rendering of this facial feature, it will become less eye-catching. This kind of adjustment often will solve the problem and hopefully achieve a positive evaluation of the completed sketch. A similar solution can be applied to any feature of the face.

An additional reason for a late declaration of dissimilarity of the sketch to the suspect is related to concern of the witness or victim not to make a mistake. We are assuming again that the session up to this point has proceeded normally. The overall

Fig. 5.57 Composite with sketchy solution

negative evaluation could be revealing this concern. The solution is communication. The individual is fearful that the sketch may implicate the wrong person, as he or she does not fully understand the utilization of the composite sketch as an investigative tool. The composite sketch is meant to be a likeness or similarity to the perception of the witness or victim of the suspect. It is used to develop leads in the investigation. Nobody gets arrested solely on a sketch. An expanded explanation of this fact will help this situation. The artist is letting the person off the hook and relieving some of these concerns. In any of these cases, it is a good practice to inform the detective assigned that the individual is hesitant about the likeness of the sketch to the suspect at the end of the session.

Responses of Criticism

It is extremely rare that a witness or victim will too critically comment about the artist's drawing technique, but it can happen. Once more, this is a circumstance where the artist must emanate professionalism and confidence in his or her skills. Nonetheless, it never hurts to listen to the critical statement. The notion is that something visually looks wrong to the participant and is diverting the person's attention from the appearance of the suspect in the sketch. There might be a component of the drawing that needs adjustment. Be it right or wrong, the artist quietly and objectively should examine the sketch for inconsistencies and mistakes. One trick is to view the drawing upside down. Another is to view the sketch through a mirror, but this technique can be a little disruptive. Many times it will just be a matter of correcting the sketch's symmetry, rendering, or facial anatomy.

Body Language

Often, overt body language is utilized by an individual to express the person's connection, or lack of it, to a composite sketch and session. Nonverbal clues and body language are strategies used by the artist to obtain insights about the victim or witness. In many ways, body language is used by individuals to convey a response. The artist's interpersonal nonverbal communication radar, if there is such a thing, has to be fully operational during all composite sessions. The recognition of this body language in others is paramount. A participant's comfortable body posture, direct eye contact, affirmative head shakes, and enthusiastic participation are all good signs. Hand gestures like a reassuring touch by a person on the artist's arm or pad is encouraging body language. These kinds of responses can be acceptable answers to your questions and applied appropriately. The greater the ease with which a person physically approaches the drawing table or sketch signifies a positive connection to the process. These positive actions are often in conjunction with positive verbal responses. The use of these gestures holds true for the artist as well. The artist

should always portray an open and approachable body language toward the witness or victim. A comfortable posture, good eye contact, and encouraging gestures are all elements employed by the composite artist.

As with most of these issues, they can swing both ways. A closed body posture, head shakes, lack of eye contact, apathy, or a general physical disinterest could be signifying a negative standpoint or deception (see "*How does the artist identify deception?"* in Chapter 6). A person who constantly leaves the session environment is indicating disinterest. The solution is in the session's energy and dynamics and the artist's interviewing techniques. Alas, there are people you just will not be able to win over. You will have to do the best you can under the existing conditions. Unfortunately, there will be times when the verbal response is positive and the body language is not. What does this mean? It is a quandary. The circumstances will govern your approach to this very rare situation.

An individual's personal space is an additional consideration when evaluating a person's body language. The artist should not violate the victim's or witness's personal space if possible. This can occur during the initial stage of the session when an artist first questions the participant. It is advantageous not to let this happen and to respect this invisible boundary. If the artist has some uneasiness about his or her own space, he or she should set up the session environment in a comfortable arrangement. Special care should be made to move the sketch out of the artist's personal space and into a neutral area when inquiries are made of the witness or victim. This allows the participant's reaction to be more natural. Plus, it makes it easy for the artist to recognize the participant's body gestures.

One last point related to this topic: The quickness or effortlessness with which a person responds to an inquiry offers insights too. It is noted that a quick, confident answer by an individual suggests a stronger conviction about the point at hand.

Unusual Case 2: "Body Gestures"

This incident illustrates body language a bit on the strange side. The composite session was for a robbery in Central Park, located in the center of Manhattan. I was present to observe the body language of the victims. The victims were a couple, apparently husband and wife. They said they were in New York City on vacation and were from Europe. They had jewelry stolen while walking in the park the night before. They were both in their 30s. A standard session was conducted. From the start, the female was very attentive. Her body language suggested great interest. She made good eye contact with the artist and freely approached the sketch. Her body posture was comfortable. Throughout the session, the husband sat off to the side. His body language was extremely closed, and he barely participated in the session. He mostly kept himself distracted with his cell phone. He never made direct eye contact, even when the artist attempted to engage him in conversation. His wife was running the show. She basically described an average young African-American male.

As the session progressed, she was not only freely approaching the drawing table, but she would enter the artist's personal space. This in itself is not unusual. Often victims will become very comfortable and spend much of the session standing very close to the artist as the drawing develops. This is fine. However, in this case, it seemed a little extreme. In some countries, personal space is much smaller than here in the States. At first, this was an acceptable explanation, though she appeared quite American.

The sketch was eventually completed and the artist moved to the computer to create the wanted poster. She did not hesitate a moment but pulled up a chair and slid right up against him. Her body posture was fully open. At one point, she stood and leaned onto his shoulder several times. The artist said later that anytime he would turn to look at her, she would wink. Well, the session ended and the detective left with an unremarkable sketch.

It didn't take too long for us to be wary of this case. It was obvious the wife had another interest than a suspect sketch. The husband was having no part. At least, that is what it seemed. It was pretty clear that something about this case was not adding up. The next day the detective informed us that the case was dropped. Apparently, the squad discovered the wife had picked up the suspect in the park that evening. She had brought him back to the hotel room. The couple insinuated they were all going to innocently watch television. It was apparent there wasn't any robbery. It was all an insurance fraud.

Miscellaneous Responses

There are a few possible miscellaneous responses worth noting. Sometimes the individual will state that the person in the sketch looks too nice, too mean, too young, or too old. For the reference of "too nice," applying some of the elements discussed in the suspect's character section will offer solutions. The artist should be careful not to overstate these character elements. However, it is worth explaining to the person that the nature of a sketch will be less intensive than the actual perpetrator due to the obvious factor that the composite is only a drawing. If the suspect is said to appear too young or old, the artist can simply apply some basic aging trends to a sketch if necessary. These would be the same concepts one would apply during an age progression or age regression.

Once in a while, a person's response will refer to the photograph references previously selected. Photograph references can help solve many issues on the sketch. Revisiting them during the session is paramount, and applying the information suggested by the photograph is useful. Yet don't let the photograph become the total focus of the witness or victim. These mug shots are only meant for reference. Remove the references from the process toward the later stage of the session and allow the person to independently view and evaluate the composite sketch. The sketch must be an autonomous image.

Practical Study: Jack the Ripper

The following sketch demonstrates a solution to a set of words. By no means would this be considered an actual composite session, nor would this experiment be recommended as an alternative procedure for a composite session. It does, however, demonstrate the illustrated word and applied solutions. Below is an account of a witness to one of the infamous Jack the Ripper murders.

Witness account:

He had a soft felt hat on, and this was drawn down somewhat over his eyes. I put down my head to look him in the face, and he turned and looked at me very sternly, and then walked across the road. The man was about 5 ft. 6 in. in height, and 34 or 35 years of age, with dark complexion and dark moustache turned up at the ends. He was wearing a long dark coat trimmed with astrakhan, a white collar with black necktie, in which was affixed a horse-shoe pin. He had a heavy moustache curled up, and dark eyes and bushy eyebrows. He had no side whiskers, and his chin was clean shaven. He looked like a foreigner.

First, we are confronted with the fact that this took place in the late 1800s. So a certain fashion style from that era was incorporated into the sketch. Because of the location of the crime, we will need to assume the suspect is a white male. However, it did say he looked like a foreigner. He was in his mid-30s and not a tall man. His general build is not included. The clothing description is distinct. The overcoat described had a full, thick woolly collar. This would give the appearance of a little girth. The neck and part of the shoulders will be required. The suspect was wearing a hat and it was pulled down. This will cast a shadow over the eyes. Nevertheless,

Fig. 5.58 "Jack the Ripper" practical composite study

the witness still gave a good description of the eyes. They were stern and dark, with bushy eyebrows. These are all good descriptive lingo. He was clean-shaven except for that great mustache. The witness did mention the chin. Good chance it was noticeable. Let's not forget the dark complexion; the incident took place at night. The lighting wasn't very good on the streets of London at that time. My guess is that everyone looked dark. It is now just a matter of drawing an illustration from this description. It may be a little mechanical in applying some of the solutions explored earlier. This is a lot easier when you don't have a witness or victim with you. Bang Jack the Ripper (Fig. 5.58)!

Terminology Conclusion

We have examined many idioms a witness or victim may use throughout the course of a composite session. As revealed, the individual will struggle with words while trying to describe his or her perception of the perpetrator. Many characteristic terminologies are not directly stated. Equally, the solutions are somewhat elusive as well. The composite artist needs not only to develop excellent questioning techniques, but also to be a good listener. An understanding of these terminologies will help the artist phrase questions and improve his or her method of inquiries. A good guideline is to keep the questions simple. We are aware that the composite sketch lives in the gray realm of possibilities and "almost." The whole composite sketch session is subjected to the vague manifestation of human memory and communication. The available solutions will be directly connected to the artist's experience. A system of trial and error is the path to discover successful strategies for the descriptive words offered. Occasionally, the insightful execution of some of these revealed solutions, even when not directly expressed by the victim, may be necessary to achieve a resemblance to the suspect. The witness or victim will always have the final say as to the success of the completed composite sketch. As rewarding as it is to draw a great sketch, figuring out these perplexing descriptive pieces of vocabulary is an equally rewarding aspect of the composite session. It is akin to a challenging puzzle that demands a solution.

Chapter 6
Managing Difficult Composite Sessions

Difficult Composite Sessions

There is a degree of difficulty with all composite sessions, though most are conducted within the standard procedure. As a general rule, the artist should make every attempt to execute his or her standard composite session procedure and make minor adjustments only when needed. Some of these minor procedure modifications have already been covered. The following is an exploration of challenging exceptions and circumstances that will require procedure adjustments and increased artist concentration. These will include field sketches, difficult witnesses and victims, witness deception, the press, high-profile cases, multiple witnesses, language barriers, department rules, and intrusions. If these conditions are not properly handled, it will swing the pendulum of success in the wrong direction.

Five Artist's Attributes

There are five recurring artist's attributes throughout this book. They are *experience, professionalism, confidence, control, and compassion*. These five attributes are not in priority order. It is the balance of these qualities that the artist will implement to achieve success when things get tough. As a rule, all five attributes must come into play in varying degrees during every composite session. It is the balance of these human qualities that will easily help manage any difficult situation. It has been asked, *should the artist concentrate on making the victim laugh to achieve success?* The answer is sometimes, but not always. Every interaction is different and requires all five attributes.

The following is a simple review of these attributes. Experience clearly means the years the artist has been a forensic artist in conjunction with how many composite sessions the artist has conducted. Professionalism is having the knowledge and competence expected from the skills of a specific discipline. Confidence is projecting that professionalism. Control is managing the session and environment without everyone's awareness. Compassion is the awareness of the needs and physical and mental condition of the victim or witness, including responding with a sensitivity

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and comfort to those needs. It is not personally feeling his or her pain. This tilts the balance too far to one side. The composite artist is an amalgam of all five attributes.

Field Sketches

Any composite session that takes place outside the office or studio of the composite artist is considered a field sketch. Many artists conduct the majority of their sessions in the field. Field sketches do not necessarily present problems. If the artist can maintain the proper session environment and control and has access to all the necessary equipment, a field composite session will proceed without a hitch. As a rule, the majority of composite sessions of the NYPD's Artist Unit are conducted in the unit's office. Field sketches are set up for certain circumstances. The main exception would be for a hospitalized victim. Additionally, certain high-priority cases, investigative logistics, and victims that cannot travel are all considerations for field sketches within the NYPD.

Field composite session problems arise when all the essential elements of a session cannot be attained. No doubt once the artist sets out for the session, it is impossible to have complete control and a contingency plan for every possible obstacle that may arise. Preparation is the key to the solution. A careful inquiry of the requesting detective or agency to attain the required presession information about the case and suspect is paramount. Furthermore, packing all the equipment and reference materials required for a particular case is obviously a necessity (see "Story 2" in Chapter 1). The artist should never go on a field sketch without the proper equipment. There have been many occasions where the requesting agency is demanding an immediate response. Do not be intimated by these requests. The artist needs all of his or her equipment to do the job properly, even it means additional response time. Yet a detailed preparation could have pitfalls. There have been many instances where the information supplied by the detective at the artist's initial request turns out to be incorrect. This is a discovery that often happens at the onsite location. The erroneous information many times is related to the suspect's description, such as age, race, or the presence of headgear. The circumstances surrounding the crime will frequently be incorrectly described. A simple solution is to overlap any reference materials needed for the session. As demonstrated with the following case, some problems are impossible to anticipate.

Case Study 9: "Hospitalized Victim"

This was a request for a composite sketch with a victim of a shooting. The victim was a male Hispanic in his late 30s. He was assaulted during a street fight and was shot in the face, but I was told the injury was minor. The victim was hospitalized and not expected to be released for quite some time. A field sketch would be required. The presession information for a composite sketch was obtained from the requesting detective. Additionally, there are other factors to address for a hospital field sketch.

The physical condition of the victim is one. Another is the schedule of treatment the doctors may implement on the victim, such as surgery, physical therapy, and drugs that might be administered. In this case, there was a clear inquiry of these factors. The detective confidently claimed that the victim was in relatively good condition and was not expected to receive any medical attention on this particular afternoon. He said he had just talked to the man on the phone. Everything was a go for this field sketch. It's good practice to have the detective meet you prior to entering the hospital. Some hospitals have very strict rules on visitation even when it is connected to an ongoing investigation. You should always visit the hospital's security office and inform them of your intentions. This courtesy will generally make the situation proceed with fewer problems. We were escorted by the security officer to the head nurse on duty for the victim. She informed us that she had just given the victim a painkiller, a very common occurrence with hospital field sketches. Some of these drugs are not as strong as others, and on occasion an interview may still be possible. The nurse did seem somewhat taken aback by our request to conduct a composite session with the victim. "Will you be asking him questions?" she asked. I told her yes, but we would try to be as unintrusive as possible. She brought us to the room. The person was comfortably lying in bed. As I approached him, he appeared conscious and aware. It didn't take long before I turned to the detective. "You talked to this guy earlier today?" I asked. The victim was missing a portion of his jaw and the part that was there was wired shut. He had a metal contraption attached to his head that restricted his movements. The nurse let out a little giggle. The detective was red-faced and quickly blamed the whole thing on his partner. His partner was conveniently not with us. As we came to grips with this predicament, our victim fell off to sleep. A sketch was not going to happen that day.

For the most part, a hospital room is a viable location for a field sketch. If the victim is able to participate in the session, the curtain will offer some privacy. (Tip: The table that slips under the bed for the patient's meals is good for viewing the photograph references and drawing on. If you position it against a wall or furniture, it will be stable enough for sketching.) Lighting can be problematic in a hospital room, but this is an unavoidable factor. Some artists will bring a small light with them. I never found it to be necessary.

As with every session, the proper environment is important. Field sketches conducted in department facilities other than the artist's studio are the next-best place to set up a composite session. In most cases, a department office or interview room will be available. This affords a location where the artist can set up and conduct his or her interview without distractions. When possible, insist on this. Frequently, this request will be accommodated. It can be said that the majority of field sketches will occur in one of these two locations: a hospital or department facility. On the rare occasions that a field sketch is required at a residence or place of business, the artist will encounter additional hurdles. One would think that a witness or victim would be more comfortable in his or her own home, resulting in a better recollection of the suspect. This could be the case in some circumstances. However, there are many distractions at a person's home, such as phone calls, family members, cooking, cleaning, and a variety of other unforeseen factors that will arise. It is also difficult to properly arrange the environment at an individual's home. These

elements will negate any perceived memory enhancement advantage. The field sketch conducted at a place of business will exaggerate these disadvantages as well. An attempt should be made to avoid these situations. Yet there will be times that a field sketch is required at one of these locations. This drawback will be a hindrance and will swing the pendulum of success slightly in the other direction. It is still a reality the artist must perform in. Furthermore, as a rule, there are two locations a composite session should not take place. They are the back seat of a patrol car or outdoors in the midst of the aftermath of an incident.

Case Study 10: "Pet Store"

One summer day, a request was made by the Staten Island Crimes Against Persons Squad for a field sketch on a burglary of a pet store. I was hoping to get the victim to the precinct for the session. Every attempt was going to be made. Once arriving at the squad, I was informed that the victim could not leave his store. This was the one of the most difficult locations where I ever conducted a session. It took place in the back room of the pet store. There wasn't any ventilation or air conditioning. It was the hottest day of the year, maybe 95°, and humid. The "real-feel temperature," as far as I was concerned, was 200°. The stench was horrendous. How this guy worked in this was a mystery to me. He must have been accustomed to it. My fellow detectives waited outside. You really couldn't blame them. The store and back room were so cluttered there was barely enough room to move. The drawing board was propped up on a cat scratch podium. The victim was continuously unpacking boxes throughout the session. The attributes of experience, professionalism, and confidence were heavily in play. A lack of control would certainly swing the pendulum of success slightly in the wrong direction. Even with all the standards and rules, sometime you just have to bite to bullet. I did the best I could under the existing conditions. The sketch was completed and everyone was happy.

Unidentified Dead on Arrival (D.O.A.) Sketches

A related situation is a field sketch that occurs at the morgue. This sounds funny if it is meant the artist will conduct a composite session with a dead person. No. What this refers to is a D.O.A. drawing. "D.O.A." stands for "dead on arrival," and in most cases the subject is unidentified. This type of drawing overlaps two disciplines of forensic art: skull reconstruction and composite sketching. Postmortem drawings in cases where the deceased is relatively intact can be approached as a composite drawing endeavor. Most of the facial tissue is still present, and often the subject is only slightly decayed. This is frequently the case in New York City. Bodies are discovered shortly after death because of the city's large population in a relatively small geographical area. The better the condition of the body, the closer it is related to a composite-type sketch. The norm is to work from photographs of the subject. The investigative detective will bring a variety of images of the deceased to the artist

for examination. The best images will reflect a similar camera angle and lighting conditions of a mug shot. If the face is fairly clean, the photographs of the subject taken at the scene of the crime offer the closest likeness to the living person. Yet due to the environmental surroundings where the body was found, the crime-scene images may not have the required detail. The morgue photographs taken after the body has been cleaned up and before the autopsy may be better images. However, once the autopsy has been performed, the face can appear distorted, like molded clay. These post-autopsy images aren't as good. Many D.O.A. photographs have come across my desk. These reconstructive composite images are drawn or done as digital enhancements. Nonetheless, for most of these circumstances, a strong composite likeness is often achieved and results in identification. One set of images comes to mind.

Unusual Case 3

A detective brought a stack of photographs of a recently discovered homicide victim. The subject was a black male who had been dismembered. The detective handed the images to me and asked if I saw anything peculiar. I looked through the stack of images several times and didn't pick up on anything. The detective was smiling and laughing. He exclaimed, "Look closer." There were images of a head and torso, arms, and a pair of legs tied up like pieces of roast beef. I still didn't see anything. Finally, unable to hold it in any longer, the detective declared, "Look at the feet. The guy has a blue sock and a brown sock." He thought it was hysterical that the victim hadn't listened to his mother and checked his underwear before leaving the house.

These kinds of drawing are not difficult. In fact, they are rather a ground ball unless you are required to immediately go the morgue to do the sketch. Morgues are not fun places. If you have been to one, you know they pretty much resemble every horror movie you ever saw. For the most part, you can do a preliminary drawing on location and take a few photographs. The sketch can be completed back in the artist's office.

Case Study 11

A human head washed up on a beach in New York City. If you didn't know, New York City has a few nice ocean beaches. It was a head of a white male and, upon discovery, was sent directly to the city morgue. The call came in and I was off to the morgue. In the NYPD, these kinds of cases are handled by the Missing Persons Squad. This unit has a group of detectives permanently assigned to the morgue. These guys are a special breed. I truly believe they like this stuff. Anyway, they are always happy to escort you to a recently discovered body. They will pick up and poke these bodies without batting an eye. I think they do it to mess around with visitors a little. I informed the fellow that I was there to view the head that washed up along the shore. He led me in and down a few dark corridors until we reached a

metal gurney sitting outside the door of a large walk-in refrigerator. I stood outside as the detective went to retrieve the head. He came out with a black plastic bag and reached in, pulling out the head. He placed it on the gurney. It looked like a rubber mask that you would buy at a Halloween store. He set it upright on the gurney. I started to make a preliminary sketch and the head flopped over. The morgue detective picked it up again and reset it. A second or two later, it flopped over again. This continued several times. Sensing my frustration, he turned to me and said, "Don't worry. I have just the thing." He reentered the refrigerator. I figured he was going to get an official head-holding stand. He retuned with another black garbage bag; reaching in, he pulled out a foot. He shoved it under the head. It stayed up nice and straight. I guess it wouldn't have been so bad, but the foot belonged to someone else (Fig. 6.1).

Fig. 6.1 Unidentified D.O.A. photograph

Difficult Witnesses and Victims

The most common of difficult situations can be attributed to the witness or victim. It is not always the participant's fault—or is it a person acting badly? Grouping these types of human difficulties into two categories aids in finding solutions; they are the unintentional and intentional behaviors. The unintentional difficult behaviors are a product of the circumstances surrounding the incident. Faulty memories, awful criminal acts, individual personality, and stress thrust upon a person by an ongoing investigation will understandably cause the witness or victim problems. These problems will manifest themselves during the session and appear to the artist or investigator as a difficult situation. The intentional difficult behaviors are a product of the participant who is being deceptive, uncooperative, or distrustful for various reasons. These two categories are situations in which the five attributes previously discussed must be properly balanced. It is the job of the artist to break down a perceived barrier or obstacle as tactfully as possible.

Unintentional Difficult Behaviors

There will be many kinds of unintentional behavior manifestations that will unsettle the session. Incidents where the victim has been personally and severely violated, as in sexual crimes and serious physical assaults, are examples. The artist will encounter victims with disturbing visual wounds and serious emotional scars related to the criminal act. For these cases, the artist's attributes will undoubtedly lean toward compassion. Common human decency and people skills dictate this empathy. Yet the artist must be careful not to exacerbate the situation. This could have the effect of extreme emotions dominating the session. The best we can hope for in this brief time with a victim is to temporarily relieve the pressures he or she is feeling. It may take a doctor years to heal these scars. Keeping a professional distance and your own personal emotions in check is paramount. How you relieve your stress after the completion of the session is a matter of personal preference. Nonetheless, these encounters require additional time, patience, and sensitivity while still maintaining all five attributes. In doing so, you will create avenues of communication with this troubled individual, which is an obvious necessity. Sadly, there isn't a formula that will always succeed. Though I have never encountered a victim I could not inspire to participate, it has not always been easy. There could be occasions where a detective, in a desire to solve a case, pushes a victim to participate in the investigation before he or she is ready. Often victims are dragged through the initial investigation for many hours before they are free to go home. This situation could result in a victim who is unable to participate immediately. The simple solution is to question the detective prior to this kind of session. You should inquire about the condition of the victim. Simply ask, "Does the victim have the strength and desire to do a sketch at this time?" The answer is not always yes. If this is case, the individual will need some downtime at home before a session can be conducted. You must be very specific with this inquiry. It will avoid unnecessary problems. Unfortunately, this decision is not always ours to make, and a composite session may still be required.

Witnesses' and victims' frustration and fear are common unintentional difficulties. They are products of faulty memories and a lack of knowledge. When the individual is fearful, she will resist supplying descriptive information. She is afraid in doing so: The criminal will come back to get her. This is a very common belief. Most of the time the solution is to educate the person of the unlikeliness that this would happen and the importance of getting the perpetrator off the street. For the former, frustration causes many difficulties. Frustration is certainly a condition of limited recollection and the desire to achieve a greater similarity to the suspect than may be possible—very common difficulties and very easily solved.

As the memory falters, you will apply memory-enhancing techniques during the session. Relaxation, cognitive interviewing, and interview redirection are all good methods. Redirection is a powerful tool. Redirecting the conversation or question offers the participant the opportunity to refocus. This will often result in new information that may not have already been revealed. This information could elicit new insights. A further solution to witness frustration is the use of a short break for coffee or water. This enables the individual an avenue to return to the session with

a fresh eye. As discussed in other sections of this book, more solutions lie in the artist's understanding of the circumstances surrounding the formation of the person's memory and the expected strength of that recollection. If memory is weak because of the circumstances, the artist will instruct the person about the purpose of a composite sketch and how it will be used as an investigative tool. This will lower the expectation and relieve some of the pressure the participant may be feeling. Last but not least, don't forget the "realm of possibility" and the "average and normal rule for a particular race and age."

Individual personalities can often be an unintentional difficult behavior as well. There will be occasions where the witness's or victim's personality will become a hindrance to a composite session. The solution is always the same. The artist puts his or her best foot forward and sharpens his or her people skills.

Case Study 12: "Dentist Shooting"

A few years back a murder occurred in broad daylight near a Queens park. On an October afternoon, a father had brought his four-year-old daughter to visit his estranged wife. He had recently won custody of his daughter during a bitter divorce. As he crossed the street between two parked cars, a man walked up and shot him twice in the chest in front of his daughter. He died at the scene. This quickly became a high-profile case. The victim was a respected dentist, and suspicions pointed to his ex-wife. The squad needed leads. They wanted to have a sketch prepared, but they had determined the child had not seen the perpetrator. There was one other possible witness. A woman had been walking her dog very close to the incident. She heard a noise and turned to see the shooting. A composite sketch appointment was made for this witness. To the detectives' dismay, they informed me that the witness stated she did not see the suspect. However, they needed something and asked if I could at least try an interview.

At the start of the session, the witness continued to insist she didn't see the suspect. During the initial interview, the circumstances surrounding her involvement crystallized. It was the middle of the day. She was only 10 or 15 feet away, with an unobstructed line of sight. Her viewing angle was good and she knew a crime had occurred. She should have gotten a pretty good look at the suspect. However, she maintained she had not seen the suspect. At the start, the composite session interview was not revealing any new information. It looked as if a sketch could not be completed. I redirected the conversation to other matters. The witness mentioned something that had happened a few days after the incident. As she was walking her dog on another afternoon, an unknown male approached her. He asked about her dog. He told her she should take care of him, so nothing will happen to him. She thought this was a little odd. A red flag popped up in my mind.

At that time, there was a lot of fanfare about this shooting. Much of the speculation was directed at the estranged wife and her family. There were stories of connections to organized crime and foreign hitmen. The incident was getting very sordid. This was a fearful witness. The interview quickly took a new track to defuse

this obstacle. It didn't take long before she divulged her concerns. She was afraid someone would harm her. The assigned investigator in this case was a seasoned detective; between the two of us, we were able to put her concerns to rest.

She was now eager to help. As expected, she did get a very good look at the suspect. It was a profile view, but a good look just the same. The session proceeded; the sketch was completed and released to the press. It was only a couple of days later that the case broke due to a key fingerprint identification of the suspect. He was an acquaintance of the estranged wife's family. He bore a remarkable resemblance in profile to the witness's composite sketch. The detective later told me the police had already been zeroing in on this guy because of it (Fig. 6.2).

Fig. 6.2 Case study 12: Profile sketch and *N.Y. Post* article photograph (2007)

Intentional Difficult Behaviors

The most difficult intentional behavior is a witness or victim who is lying. Although as investigators we want to expose this conduct, the artist still interviews and does not interrogate. We maintain the stance that the individual wants to help, and we proceed with the session. Only after the completion of the session do we tell the assigned detective of our suspicions. The most accomplished interrogator can be

deceived. Humans are great at it. It is very hard to detect. Actually, it is even easier for a witness to deceive the artist. All it takes is for the person to have a subject in mind to describe and stick to it. Fortunately, the deceptive witness is not always aware of this. *How does the artist identify deception?* Some noted clues have revealed themselves. A general shifty demeanor, lack of eye contact, and evasive body language can be signs of deception, but they are very unreliable.

The following has been noted to be somewhat more reliable. This concept is based on the artist's experience and knowledge of people's reactions and responses to his or her standard composite session. The artist who has conducted scores of interviews will observe recurring trends. It is the nature of this specific and detailed composite session procedure that reveals a guideline for perceiving deception. Many individuals react similarly to a composite session. The more the interaction deviates from the norm, the greater the chance something is amiss. Additionally, the artist makes a determination of the person's expected recall during the assessment of the circumstances surrounding the formation of the witness's memory. A similar guideline of perceiving deception can also apply. The more the descriptive information offered by a witness deviates from the expected facial feature detail suggested by the circumstances of the case, the greater the chance of deception. This guideline is effective when insufficient information is offered for a high-recall expectation or for extraordinary detail when the recall expectation is low. Another helpful sign of deception is the witness who glances at others present in the room for suspect feature information. However, this could just be a product of a weak memory. These concepts only offer a level of suspicion and not a definitive conclusion.

Case Study 13: "Baby Abduction"

A baby was abducted from the arms of his mother. It occurred on a Brooklyn street in the middle of the day. She stated a white male rushed up to her and wrestled the child from her arms. This immediately became a high-profile case. The victim was all the detectives had. A composite session was conducted that evening with the woman. Upon arrival, it was clearly apparent she was terribly distraught. This was a sensitive matter that shifted my demeanor heavily toward compassion. The tone and dynamics of the session reflected this. At the start of the session, the victim was extremely withdrawn. It was difficult to engage her. She would fade in and out of attentiveness. Her stare was vacant. All these are expected behaviors from a victim of this kind of crime.

I continued to console her, but also coached her to participate in the session process. When I did get some response, I was pleased to accept any information she offered. This aided in directing the session interview to new avenues of inquiry. She hesitantly conveyed some minor details about the incident. What emerged was a quick face-to-face confrontation. She said she struggled as hard as she could, but the unknown perpetrator was too strong. He succeeded in pulling the baby from her and fled. "Would you recognize him if you saw him again?" I asked. The answer was not immediate, but she said yes. As we tackled the description of the suspect, her

attentiveness would constantly wane. She did eventually and casually describe him as a white male who was 20 to 30 years of age. However, something was missing. I have interviewed many persons in similarly distraught frames of mind. At this point in the interview, as the victim recalls the image of the suspect, tears will often flow. There were no tears. Everyone is different, and though this could have meant nothing, it still raised my suspicions.

The initial interview was completed and the minimal required information was attained. The session continued and she was instructed to look for similar features in the reference photographs. The assessment of the conditions surrounding the formation of her memory was high. Her initial inability to verbalize the descriptive detail of the suspect can be normal. The bulk of the descriptive information often will not be revealed until the sketch is developing. Having said this, the victim viewed quite a few mug shots without selecting any similarities. Under past similar circumstances, even very distraught victims were able to select helpful reference images. Only after further coaching did she choose two generic white male photographs. Determining why she had made these selections was difficult. Generally, she verbalized nothing more than an average description. The sketch finally began. As with all sessions, the sketch developed through the three stages. At every stage, I would make my inquiries of the victim. Her answers were slow and vague. She rarely suggested a change or committed to a corrected facial element. I was relying more and more on the average and normal rule for the composite sketch (Fig. 6.3).

It was clear that for a person only hours after experiencing such a terrible crime, she was having unusual difficulty supplying any significant descriptive information.

Fig. 6.3 Case study 13: Composite sketch

The session proceeded marginally. Previously noted common responses and behaviors were not materializing. This caused additional red flags of concern to rise. In hindsight, it is easy to denote the points that lead to suspicions of deception. It would be misleading to suggest that at the time my beliefs of deception were definitive. They were not. One is never really sure, since the artist interviews and does not interrogate. The session continued with the assumption that the victim wanted to participate. Her participation was minimal at best. She only responded on the shallowest levels. The resulting sketch was an extremely basic white male. The session was completed and the victim was asked to wait in the outer office.

I was now able to voice my concerns to the investigative detective. This caused a degree of alarm. Both of us knew the commanders of the Detective Bureau were waiting to release this sketch to the media. Consequently, it was now being suggested that this should not be done. Phone calls were immediately made, and my suspicions were conveyed to the commanders. If I had been directly asked if the victim was lying, I could not have said yes. A composite session is still a discipline of forensic art and not science. We are technicians of possibilities and almost. I did make my suspicions clear, but decisions like this are left to others.

Our female victim was not a victim at all, but a murderer. Her story unraveled early the next morning during the detective's interrogation. She confessed to killing her baby and dumping him in a trash bin across town. Everyone's judgment was clouded, including me. We were all guilty of overconcern for the woman, which is a proper and justified reaction. As in most cases, all the detectives involved had their normal suspicions from the start. Acting on them is easier said than done. Yet investigations are a group effort, many individuals supplying pieces of the puzzle. It was the knowledge of the composite session and the deviation from common behaviors that helped point to this conclusion. This concept of deception recognition has played out many times, if not always as conclusively. As artists, we can only offer our insight. Hopefully, it will strengthen the assigned detective's own suspicions and point to new avenues for the investigation.

Other intentional difficult behaviors are the witnesses and victims who are uncooperative or distrustful. Solutions for these issues were mentioned earlier as exemplified in some of the case studies and witness types who mistrust the police department. Discovering the reasons for these behavioral issues can lead to solutions. A proper composite session environment and conducting a friendly interview will help remove certain barriers. Additionally, asking the investigating detective or uniformed police offices to leave the session environment could result in easing some of the tension a witness or victim may be feeling.

Children

Children are generally good composite session participants. They can result in entertaining sessions as well. If you review the material about children in the section entitled "Witness and Victim Types" in Chapter 4, you will find some additional

insights. It is noted that children four years or older are effective witnesses. When they are victims of crimes, there is a swing toward compassion during these sessions. The tendency of most artists is to feel saddened and angry. It takes extra focus not to let these emotions get in the way. Children are incredibly resilient. The artist should use this to their advantage. Careful attention is made not to project adult knowledge and concern about a particular circumstance onto the child. An artist who is overreacting runs the risk of losing control of the session. Children are easily led, which is something one must be watchful of. Conversely, children require instruction as well. They will respond accordingly to proper direction. This will necessitate the progress of the session and help with their limited attention span. Keep it simple and remain focused on the goal of the session. Except for tone of voice and questioning structure, the artist should maintain his or her standard procedure.

The Press

The press and other media for the most part are an excellent vehicle for the composite sketch. The more media coverage a composite sketch gets, the greater the likelihood the sketch will generate leads. In New York City, the media has always treated forensic images appropriately. The sketch is the visual representation of a suspect, which drives the public's curiosity. When a sketch is given a prominent position in a particular news story, the periodical or newspaper most likely sells more issues. The public's awareness of an ongoing criminal investigation is energized from the composite sketch, which will ultimately generate leads. For this reason, the press has proven time and time again to be an ally for tough investigations.

Unfortunately, difficulties can arise. In an attempt to obtain information, the press can become intrusive at times. This will put additional pressure on an investigation and affect all of its aspects, including the composite session. This pressure can push a department to release premature information or lean on an investigator for the purpose of expediency.

It is possible that the media will contact the artist directly in an attempt to circumnavigate a department's public information office. This has occurred occasionally during some composite sessions for high-profile cases. The Artist Unit of the NYPD never releases any information about a particular case unless told to do so by the Chief of Detectives' office. The artist must be governed by the rules of the department with which he or she is affiliated. Many years ago, I was asked by the "Oprah" show to appear as an NYPD artist to discuss certain composite sketch cases. One of the cases was related to a prominent actress at the time. Needless to say, it would have been fun to participate. Unfortunately, the producer mentioned she had been previously turned down by the department for this television segment. So I had to decline. The rules are clear. Bending the rules can come back to haunt you in the long run and may jeopardize an ongoing investigation.

Case Study 14: "Central Park Assault"

The following is an account of the one of the toughest high-profile cases I worked on. It demonstrates all the good and bad aspects of a these kinds of jobs and the pressures of the media. As I write, there are still some intense emotions about this case.

On June 4, 1996, I called the office looking to get a day off. Sergeant Kenny Calvey was on duty. He was a friend of mine but told me it would not be possible, that something big had just happened. Upon arriving to work late in the afternoon, I was summoned to report to a hospital to produce a sketch of an unidentified female assault victim likely to die. It was lights and sirens all the way to the hospital. This was very unusual. This sketch clearly had to be done.

Earlier that day, a young white female was found severely beaten in Central Park. Passers-by had reported hearing screams a short time before. The victim had no identification, and her facial injuries left her unrecognizable and unconscious. When we arrived at the hospital, we were told the victim was being prepped for surgery. I inquired if it would be possible see her, if only for a moment. The doctors hesitantly agreed. I put on a surgical gown, mask, and gloves and was led into the operating room. What I saw was heartbreaking. There in the bed was a petite young woman. Her face and head were so bruised that her skin color was only shades of dark blue and purple. Her head was swollen to twice its normal size. I was not allowed to take photographs and did not have the time to draw. The doctors and nurses were waiting to start their procedure. I could only look for a moment. I studied her face and tried to analyze her facial features. One doctor raised her eyelid and revealed they were light in color. I noted the hair, proportions, general build, and any other features I could discern. Upon leaving the room, I was uncertain if I had enough information committed to memory to complete a composite sketch of this victim.

There wasn't any time to go back to the Artist Unit. The department needed the sketch immediately. The pressure was mounting from the news media. A temporary command center was set up close by. The sketch was done in a waiting room of the hospital. I treated the development of the sketch as a composite. Talking myself through the three stages, I sketched my recollection of what I had just determined about the victim's appearance. What emerged was a likeness to a pretty young woman's face that was behind this mask of torture (Fig. 6.4).

The next day the sketch of the woman was plastered all over the city and newspapers. We all wanted to desperately identify this victim. Everyone desired to know who the victim was. It became the focus of much of the public's attention. This woman had set out one afternoon to go jogging in a public park and was attacked by a vicious assailant. Central Park is a major destination for many New Yorkers and tourists. People felt vulnerable. Yet any forensic artist who has experienced this kind of exposure knows the pressure that comes from wondering if the sketch look like the subject and help in the identification. The woman was going to be identified at some point. I hoped I had achieved a suitable likeness.

Fig. 6.4 Case study 14: Victim composite sketch

In the days that followed, the magnitude of the Central Park assailant's intentions became all too clear. He was on a crime spree. It was as if a wild animal had been let loose on the streets of Manhattan. On Tuesday, June 4, he attached the woman in Central Park. Wednesday, at a heliport on the east side of Manhattan, he assaulted a 50-year-old woman and struck her in the head. On Friday, he badly beat a 26-year-old woman and raped her in Yonkers. On the following Tuesday, he fatally assaulted a woman on Park Avenue. From day one, the police department knew this guy had to be apprehended. Some of the department's best detectives were on the case. However, at the time, the Detective Bureau wasn't sure if it was the same person committing these crimes, but the "MO" was very similar. This began an intensive investigation to catch this guy before he struck again.

Leads came in from the first day the sketch of the Central Park victim was released. One very distraught couple from another state thought it was their missing daughter, but it was not. The pressure by reporters to release more information about the woman grew. The department didn't have much information to tell them. The police department even had to have two officers guard her room from unwanted visitors. Sadly, her prognosis was poor, and the woman seemed as if she might not recover.

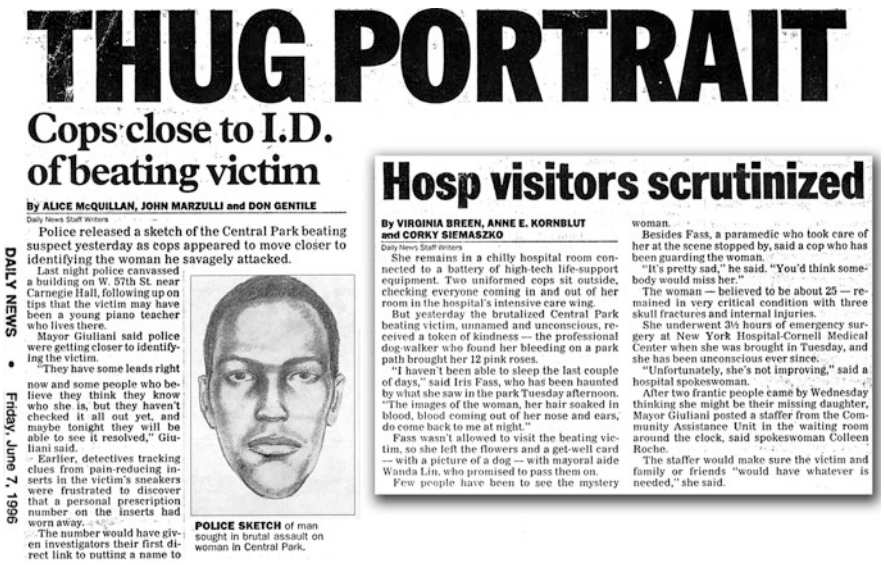
Finally, on the second day, there was a news story about several people recognizing the woman from the sketch. They believed it was a 32-year-old piano teacher who lived in their building. The article stated that one by one each person was brought into the woman's room for identification. They felt it was her, but found it very hard to make a positive identification due to her physical condition. I read this account in the paper and hoped the department had succeeded in giving this woman a name. Then the flow of information went silent. I was unable to get any additional

details about the circumstances surrounding this identification. At first it wasn't clear if the woman had actually been identified. Was she the pianist? I just didn't know. In retrospect, it was learned the woman's family reasonably requested complete anonymity for her. They did not want to release the woman's information or photograph to the press. To the department's credit, the police were extremely tight-lipped. The victim's particulars or photograph were not being released to anyone (Fig. 6.5).


NEW YORK POST
DAILY & SUNDAY 25¢
LATE CITY FINAL
FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 1996 / Sunny today. 85; partly cloudy tonight, 78 / Details, Page 28
PARK VICTIM I.D.
Dramatic coverage starts on Page 2
Police are focusing on an aspiring concert pianist in their investigation into the savage Central Park attack.
Cops think she may be brilliant pianist
But mayor & cops stress that I.D. still isn't positive

Fig. 6.5 Case study 14: *N.Y. Post* front page and headline

As the flurry of activity about the victim's identity continued, the suspect continued his rampage. A couple of suspect sketches were attempted, but none of the witnesses in the Central Park case had gotten a good look. The suspect was being described as a male black or Hispanic, 18 to 25 years of age, clean-shaven, and medium build. This was an average description at best. One of these sketches did emerge as the leading image. I conducted this session a couple of days after the Central Park assault during a 2 a.m. field sketch in a back room of the midtown police precinct. It was a difficult session, to say the least. The witness's memory was weak. He did his best to recall any distinct descriptive detail. We struggled. There wasn't much. The composite was completed. It resembled an average-looking



THUG PORTRAIT

Cops close to I.D. of beating victim

By ALICE McQUILLAN, JOHN MARZULLI and DON GENTILE
Daily News Staff Writers

Police released a sketch of the Central Park beating suspect yesterday as cops appeared to move closer to identifying the woman he savagely attacked.

Last night police canvassed a building on W. 57th St. near Carnegie Hall, following up on tips that the victim may have been a young piano teacher who lives there.

Mayor Giuliani said police were getting closer to identifying the victim.

"They have some leads right now and some people who believe they think they know who she is, but they haven't checked it all out yet, and maybe tonight they will be able to see it resolved," Giuliani said.

Earlier, detectives tracking clues from pain-reducing inserts in the victim's sneakers were frustrated to discover that a personal prescription number on the inserts had worn away.

The number would have given investigators their first direct link to putting a name to

POLICE SKETCH of man sought in brutal assault on woman in Central Park.

DAILY NEWS • Friday, June 7, 1996

Hosp visitors scrutinized

By VIRGINIA BREEN, ANNE E. KORNBLUT and CORKY SIEMASZKO
Daily News Staff Writers

She remains in a chilly hospital room connected to a battery of high-tech life-support equipment. Two uniformed cops sit outside, checking everyone coming in and out of her room in the hospital's intensive care wing.

But yesterday the brutalized Central Park beating victim, unnamed and unconscious, received a token of kindness — the professional dog-walker who found her bleeding on a park path brought her 12 pink roses.

"I haven't been able to sleep the last couple of days," said Iris Fass, who has been haunted by what she saw in the park Tuesday afternoon. "The images of the woman, her hair soaked in blood, blood coming out of her nose and ears, do come back to me at night."

Fass wasn't allowed to visit the beating victim, so she left the flowers and a get-well card — with a picture of a dog — with mayoral aide Wanda Lin, who promised to pass them on.

Few people have been to see the mystery woman.

Besides Fass, a paramedic who took care of her at the scene stopped by, said a cop who has been guarding the woman.

"It's pretty sad," he said. "You'd think somebody would miss her."

The woman — believed to be about 25 — remained in very critical condition with three skull fractures and internal injuries.

She underwent 3½ hours of emergency surgery at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center when she was brought in Tuesday, and she has been unconscious ever since.

"Unfortunately, she's not improving," said a hospital spokeswoman.

After two frantic people came by Wednesday thinking she might be their missing daughter, Mayor Giuliani posted a staffer from the Community Assistance Unit in the waiting room around the clock, said spokeswoman Colleen Roche.

The staffer would make sure the victim and family or friends "would have whatever is needed," she said.

Fig. 6.6 Case study 14: *N.Y. Daily News* articles with suspect sketch

male black or Hispanic in his early 20s with a slightly long oval head (Fig. 6.6). On Friday, the sketch was released to the press. This composite sketch understandably received a large amount of exposure. Certainly, it would generate many leads. Hopefully, one would point to the assailant. Detectives were working around the clock following the calls that came in.

It became more and more likely that the perpetrator of these recent assaults was one and the same. The press was demanding information especially about the Central Park victim. Due to the lack of details, the sketch became the woman's image in the media. During every press conference, the reporters would ask, "Does the drawing look like her?" Nobody was releasing any specifics about this matter. Then the following quote surfaced. It was made by one of her family members during a brief encounter with a television reporter. The reporter was hounding the individual for information about the victim. The responses to the reporter's question about the resemblance to the sketch went along these lines: "The sketch doesn't look like her because it didn't capture her inner beauty." It ultimately was generally reported the sketch doesn't look like the victim and it was never printed again. Bear in mind, I was not privy to the personal details about the victim. I still wasn't sure if she was the pianist or not. All I knew at this point was that the sketch may not have looked like her and maybe hadn't helped after all.

This case broke a few days later in the early morning hours of June 12. A latent fingerprint print recovered at one of the crime scenes led to the suspect. The computer system that matches latent fingerprints to fingerprint cards of previous arrested criminals kicked out a possible candidate. The fingerprint detective handling the case was able to make a positive identification of this serial assailant. The

NYPD had its guy. They went out and got him. The next day it was big news. The NYPD Detective Bureau, an incredible crime-fighting machine, succeeded in identifying and removing this individual from the streets. John Royster, a 22-year-old, was arrested on June 13 and confessed in an arrogant demeanor to all four crimes. The New York Daily News *printed the story, including several photographs of Royster, along with the composite sketch that bore a good likeness to him (Fig. 6.7).*


DAILY NEWS

NEW YORK'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

Friday, June 14, 1996

HATE-FILLED DRIFTER CONFESSES TO 4 BRUTAL ATTACKS ON WOMEN

IT WAS ME

HE ADMITS Murder on Park Ave.

HE ADMITS Attack in Central Park

HE ADMITS Rape, beating in Yonkers

HE ADMITS Assault at heliport

FULL REPORT ON ONE MAN'S RAMPAGE BEGINS PAGES 2 & 3

EXCLUSIVE: John Royster poses for friend in eerily moody picture

A SUSPECT EMERGES

TERROR SPREE

Drifter admits to slay, assaults

POLICE SKETCH of Central Park slay suspect

Fig. 6.7 Case study 14: *N.Y. Daily News* front page and suspect hit article

As the weeks passed, the story faded and new cases came and went. I never found out who the victim was. One day a sergeant from the Major Case Squad walked into the office. He asked if I was Mancusi, the department artist. He explained to me how instrumental the sketch of the Central Park victim was in identifying her. People recognized her immediately from the sketch and leads came in the same day it was released. He had the only photograph of her, and he felt compelled to show me. It was the face in the sketch. He said because of the circumstances, the department had to squash this part of the investigation. I understood, and it was nice to know that it helped. As a note, the victim survived her injuries. I believe it took years of physical therapy. Fortunately, she still plays the piano.

Multiple Witnesses

Multiple-witness composite sketches are composite sessions in which more than one person provides input to the completed suspect sketch. It could be two or more witnesses or victims. Multiple-witness situations are broken down into several categories. The first are the cases where the victims and/or witnesses viewed the suspect at the same time during the same incident. There is no doubt; they saw the same suspect. The second are specific pattern cases. These pattern cases are situations were the same individual is committing similar crimes and this individual is linked by other strong evidence such as fingerprints or DNA. The victims and/or witness viewed the suspect at different times, but there is little doubt that it is the same perpetrator. The third are pattern cases where the suspect is merely linked by modus operandi and a basic subject description. This is considered a borderline circumstance for a multiwitness session. For any one of these situations, certain guidelines and modifications to a standard session procedure are suggested.

There are specific rules or guidelines that prohibit or restrict interviews and interrogations by investigating detectives of several persons at the same time. Moreover, suspect lineups and photograph arrays must be conducted on an individual basis. The concern is not to taint a person's identification or information with another. These are all valid points. However, a composite sketch is an investigative tool. There are occasions where it rises to the level of admissible evidence in court. It is still just a sketch developed from the memory and perceptions of an individual. The face represented in the sketch, is not a photograph of a particular person. A photograph depicts a person who has rights. The image in the sketch does not have rights. This imparts greater latitude for the development and use of a composite sketch. If the multiwitness session is conducted properly, the possibility of tainting a person's information is minimal. The advantage of achieving a greater likeness to the suspect far outweighs this negative concern; this will result in a stronger investigative tool. One can concede that this is a gray area. Forensic art figuratively exists in the world of gray. It makes sense to take advantage of it. For the most part, multiwitness sketches are more difficult, and many artists prefer not to conduct them for various reasons. Be assured, they have proven to be very effective when done correctly.

The first multiwitness category is a no-brainer. The suspect was seen at the same time during the same incident. As a rule, one composite sketch should be developed of the suspect. A basic multiwitness guideline is two or three witnesses at the same time. When the incident was seen by four or more persons, it is logistically unwise to have them all present during the session. You can ask the requesting detectives to bring the individuals whom they believe got the best view of the suspect. Most of the time, the victim will be part of this group. If the detective arrives with a large group of witnesses, select the ones who seem to have the best recall. The others are used to view the completed sketch for consensus. The theory is to end up with one strong sketch rather than a few weak ones. People will remember different aspects of a face, and the artist can incorporate all these facial elements into the sketch. Remember, in this category, there is no doubt the participants are describing the same person.

The second multiwitness sketch category is a pattern case linked by other strong evidence. As above, this involves similar logic. You can work with two or three individuals from different cases attempting to achieve one strong sketch. As in the first category, there is little doubt the suspect in one and the same. The twist is that at the beginning of a crime pattern, it may not be clear the same suspect is responsible for or about to commit a particular set of crimes. Sketches may be developed prior to these cases being deemed a pattern. If this happens, the artist or case detective should show the recent victims or witnesses of this newly deemed pattern the previously developed sketch(es). The laws governing suspect photographs and arrays do not apply to composite sketches. As mentioned earlier, the sketch is a representation of a person's perception and not a particular individual. The sketch doesn't have to be grouped with several similar sketches as in a photograph array. The previously developed sketch can be shown to the recent victim or witness for his or her opinion or input. This could lead to enhancing an existing suspect sketch. When the individual responds to a previously drawn sketch as a likeness to the suspect he or she saw, it will boost the confidence level on the sketch as a resemblance to the unknown perpetrator. If the response is similar with some minor differences, these modifications may or may not be applied to the original sketch. It is governed by the requested change and the source. If any changes are made, it should be clearly noted in the log or case folder. A simple statement such as, "This sketch was modified according to additional information obtained by the statements of [John Doe] on [this date]." This technique of *enhancing a completed sketch* is very effective. It can be applied to any completed image if there is a specific source for the new descriptive information. It is good practice to scan the original sketch before making any significant changes. However, as a hard rule, the sketch should not be modified on a mere impression of a detective or agency. Nor should an existing sketch be enhanced by arbitrarily combining several sketches into one unless an individual is providing input into the modification. The artist wouldn't have any idea which facial elements to include or exclude in the revised sketch. This would be an exercise in futility. There is always the possibility that a previously drawn sketch on a newly deemed pattern will not look like the suspect for the recent victims or witnesses, in which case a new sketch will be required.

All of the above concepts from the first two categories can be applied to the third category of multiwitness sketches, which is the basic pattern case. However, this circumstance has one major difference: It is not certain that the suspect is one and the same. There could be circumstantial evidence that points to one perpetrator, but it is not conclusive. The artist first makes a careful inquiry of the detective or agency as to why this is a pattern. Then the artist must be convinced that the witnesses and/or victims are describing a similar individual. If all these elements fall into place, then one sketch should be attempted. If not, it may be necessary to develop several sketches.

The standard composite session procedure adjustments for a multiwitness sketch are as follows. They can be applied to all three categories. At the preliminary inquiries of the requesting detective, before a session begins, ascertain the circumstances surrounding the multiwitness case or pattern of cases. Also, all the standard required information about each of the possible participants must be attained. Additionally, the artist should determine if any other sketches were previously developed on a newly recognized pattern case. The artist will follow the procedure of enhancing an earlier completed composite sketch if this has happened. It could turn out that an existing suspect sketch only needs to be updated based on newly acquired information.

Otherwise, a multiwitness session begins normally, except that the initial interview of each participant is done separately. All the normal initial interview inquiries, information, and evaluations are made of each person independently. This is a good time to determine which individuals you will use for the session and which you will use to view the completed sketch for consensus. For the third category of multiwitness sketches, you will begin to develop the verification that the participants are describing a similar suspect. Further assessment is made when the individuals are selecting references.

Once the initial interviews have been completed, the artist sets up each participant with his or her own references. They will work independently on selecting similar facial characteristics. The artist will review each group of selected references with the individual, carefully inquiring why he or she has made the selections. This is an integral part of the multiwitness session. It is paramount that the artist recognizes the suggested characteristic qualities of a given photograph and be able to cross reference them. An example would be that witness “A” has selected a specific photograph resembling the suspect’s nose, and witness “B” has selected a different facial photograph that is also similar to the nose of the suspect. On close examination, there may be slight differences. Yet when illustrated on the composite sketch, the feature could appear almost the same. The artist can now confidently use one reference or the other as a starting point. Any adjustments are made once the drawing begins. Since it is certain the suspect being described is the same person for the first two multiwitness session categories, the thrust of this cross referencing is to find similarity. This leads to the next phase of the interview, which will be discussed in a moment. In the third multiwitness category, it is not certain that the suspect being described is the same person. The cross reference’s thrust is to recognize differences in the selected images. As in the previous example, the two selected nose

references may appear slightly similar, but one may be analyzed as a sharp nose and the other as narrow nose. Conversely, the difference may not be easily justified, such as witness "A" selects a square angular head shape and witness "B" a round, fuller head shape. These elements are in direct contrast to each other. As the differences mount, it becomes impossible to do one sketch of the suspect. The artist has now determined that more than one sketch is necessary for this third category of multiwitness case.

At this point, if these concepts have fallen into place, the next phase of the interview begins. The participants are now brought together for the first time. All will offer input into the sketch. The following direction is explained to the group.

It is understandable that everyone will see thing slightly different. It is okay to disagree. Each one of you should answer my inquiries based on your own recollection. It will be my job to justify any differing opinions.

This phase begins with a review of all the selected references as a group. The artist and participants assess all the selected images and determine which best represents the facial components that the participants are describing. The artist will attempt to find a consensus in the suspect's description as best as possible. Consideration is given to the individuals who have a stronger recollection of a particular feature. The artist must straddle a fine line in order not to lead any of the participants. The artist utilizes knowledge of the actual composite sketch goal and the understanding of facial characteristics for proper questioning during this consensus. You will be formulating strategies for the start of the drawing. The artist makes decisions about what might work once the drawing begins. The witnesses do not have to be informed of your strategies. The solutions will play out during the three stages of the sketch and during the session interview.

Once a consensus seems to be achieved, the remainder of the session proceeds normally. Utilizing all the witnesses throughout the session, careful attention is made to direct your inquiries to all present. It is noted that occasionally it becomes impossible to please all the participants equally. Note the reasons certain difficulties cannot be resolved and judge the magnitude of the problems. Many times, it may be inconsequential to the actual resemblance of the completed sketch to the suspect. When a difference in description is attributed to changeable facial elements such as facial hair, eyeglasses, hairstyles, or head accessories, you will be required to develop the sketch with these elements simultaneously. This is done by adding or subtracting the changeable element when questioning a particular participant. (Tip: Overlays, paper cutouts, or lightly drawing and erasing these changeable facial elements are possible techniques.) Once the sketch has been completed, the variations are made permanent. This is done either by scanning the completed drawing after adding each of these changeable elements or by digitally drawing these additions on the completed scanned composite sketch.

When the sketch has been successfully completed, the artist can show it to any witnesses who did not participate in the session for a collaborating witness opinion. If the additional witnesses are not present, then instruct the detective to do so at a later date. The artist can apply the "enhancing a composite sketch" procedure if necessary. Otherwise, the session ends the same as any other session. Multiwitnesses

sketches are more involved and require additional time. It is worth the extra effort, which will yield more effective composite sketches.

Miscellaneous Difficulties

Another difficulty that can arise is a language barrier. It is obvious that if the artist and participant do not speak the same language, problems may arise. Sessions can be conducted with a translator. If a professional translator is not available, the best nonprofessional would be a detective, police officer, or civilian member of the department. These individuals would have knowledge of investigative procedures. The least desirable translator would be a family member. Try to avoid it if possible. Before starting a session with a translator, instruct the translator on the proper technique of asking open-ended questions and tell him or her not to lead the participant. Detectives usually are aware of this. When making your inquiries during the session, direct your questions to the participant. The translator should be positioned off to the side. Hand gestures, facial expressions, and body language are all good indicators of a person's thoughts. The artist can also use these to emphasize an inquiry as well. Nevertheless, the session should proceed according to the artist's standard procedure.

On rare occasions, department rules, regulations, and protocol may present obstacles. Generally, the artist is required to work within any of these minor intrusions or rules. An example comes to mind. There was a particular NYPD Chief of Detectives who liked to visit the Artist Unit during high-profile sessions. A couple of times, he stood right behind me with his hand on my shoulder as I drew. It was a little distracting. However, he was a good boss, and I think he just liked to watch us do our thing. We helped solve a lot of cases for him. Anyway, he was the chief; I wasn't going to ask him to leave.

The bottom line on difficult composite sessions is balancing the five artist's attributes, which are experience, professionalism, confidence, control, and compassion. Additionally, when implementing the rules, guidelines, and noted concepts discussed, they will help lead to solutions for any difficult composite session.

Chapter 7
General Drawing Tips

Composite Sketching Tips

There are tips, techniques, and guidelines that will help create better composite sketches and improve an artist's drawing skills. The implementation of these concepts will assist all composite artists at any level. Most are based on common artistic knowledge and theory. Presenting some of them within the context of a composite session and the three sketching stages will offer a more practical application. The standard three-stage sketching technique has already been explained (see Chapter 3, "Drawing the Composite Sketch"). These tips and guidelines are in conjunction with that procedure.

First, a couple of simple rules should be put forth. Once a sketch has been started, the artist should never start over. A sketch is always drawn continuously, anatomically correct, and at a professional level of completion. It is not the goal of a composite session to create the artist's most beautiful artwork. A sketch should always be reworked and improved as new descriptive information is revealed. It is a building process. Composite sketches can get messy with pencil marks and erasing. If you find yourself needing to restart sketches, something is wrong. The reason could be one of the following: You do not fully understand the composite session procedure; your initial sketching decisions and starting strategies are incorrect or not implemented properly; you are developing the features of the sketch unevenly. When you recognize and solve this problem issue, the reworking of one sketch will be manageable.

Another simple rule is that all composite sketches are done in grayscale. Color media are not conducive to a composite session. Rendering skin color is not simply painting a face pink or shades of orange. Skin hues are complicated combinations of many colors that are affected by light. It takes a skilled portrait artist significant time and knowledge to replicate skin hues on a painting. This is not necessary for a composite sketch when black, white, and shades of gray can easily represent color for the purposes of this investigative tool.

S. Mancusi, *The Police Composite Sketch*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-60761-832-4_7,

Drawing Skill Tips

An accomplished forensic artist once said, "Sometimes I don't like the way my composite sketches turn out." I have felt this way myself and not only for composite sketches, but even for non-forensic-related artwork as well. We are our own worst critics. Self-assessment is an important part of improving one's skills. Nevertheless, as long as the composite drawing is anatomically correct, the composite sketch is still subjected to a witness's or victim's input and may only achieve a certain level of artistic splendor. By the nature of the composite procedure, the artist's rendering skills may suffer. This is not to say a composite sketch shouldn't be well drawn. It should be. But still a slight weakening of one's skill level can be expected. The following are a few tips that will help you assess your drawing skills and provide some other artistic avenues to explore.

The artist aspiring to improve his or her artistic talents will need to pursue other avenues of visual art. Forensic art as an art is not particularly the best venue for this quest. Many of the methods and skills for other drawing, painting, and sculpting endeavors will traverse all media and subjects. The essentials on getting better are to explore other forms of visual art, get quality training, and to draw, draw, and draw some more, especially from life. Art professors are quick to suggest students carry a sketch book and draw the things and people around them. Drawing is a visual skill. It is also the ability to translate three-dimensional objects onto a two-dimensional surface. The understanding of how real objects exist in three dimensions is paramount for the artist. This premise is more difficult to acquire from only coping two-dimensional photographs, which is generally the composite sketch technique. Photograph references can help, but life drawing is better. Life-drawing classes are a great place to hone one's skills. This will make it easier to decipher the facial feature structure suggested by the photograph references.

A good test of your drawing skills is the ability to achieve a likeness to a known subject. Basically, it is the common exercise of painting or drawing a portrait or caricature of someone. The artist can look at the person or copy a photograph of the person. The artist must be able to achieve a refined drawing with a strong resemblance to the subject. If the artist has difficulty with this, then logic dictates that his or her composite sketches may be lacking. The artist may need to apply a little self-assessment because possibly some improvement may be required.

Proportion Drawing Tips

The proportional stage of the sketch begins with the horizontal and vertical guidelines. These lines are drawn the full length and width of the 11-in. × 14-in. paper. The point where these lines intersect is the overall center of the head. (Tip: The vertical line always divides the paper equally. The horizontal line can be positioned slightly higher or lower according to the subject being described. For example, a person who has a big hairstyle will require additional space on the top. The horizontal

line will be positioned lower.) At the start of the proportional stage of the drawing, the artist loosely and lightly sketches in the location and proportions of all the features suggested during the initial interview and selected references. This presketch is done freehand. (Tips: It is good practice to work from the inside to the outside of the head. You should visualize an imaginary inverted triangle that will reflect the proportional relationship of the eyes, nose, and mouth.) Equipped with the knowledge of average head proportions, strong visual skills, and the previously determined starting strategies about the suspect's appearance, the artist should easily freehand this presketch. A facial template or additional guides are not necessary.

The following are average head proportions (Fig. 7.1). The center eyeline is the middle of the head, and each eye is an equal distance from an overall center point of the head. (Tip: The placement of the center of each eye on the horizontal guideline as it relates to the overall center point of the head will have a direct correlation to the ultimate size of the drawing. When you work on an 11-in. × 14-in. piece of paper, the center of each eye will be approximately 1 3/8 in. from the overall center point of the head. This measurement could fluctuate up to a 1/4 in. in either direction from sketch to sketch. This will result in an overall head size of about 7–10 in.) The length of the nose at the base is slightly less than half the distance from the center eyeline to the bottom of the chin. The bottom of the lower lip is positioned half the distance from the base of the nose to the bottom of the chin. (Tip: The center lipline is slightly closer to the nose than the chin.) The distance from the center eyeline to the bottom of the chin is equal to the distance from the eyeline to the top of the head. This does not include a large hair mass. The space between the eyes is equal to one eye length. (Tip: Smaller eyes are closer together, while bigger eyes are farther apart.) The width of the nose base is about the distance between the eyes. The width of the mouth is about the distance between the pupils. The width of the overall head is slightly smaller than five eye lengths at the eyeline (horizontal guideline) and about four eye lengths at the jaw. The widest point of the upper skull is approximately five eye lengths. The ears generally start slightly higher than the eyeline and extend the full length of the nose. These proportions indicate the proper anatomy of the human face. These average proportions must be committed to memory. It should not be necessary to use the additional guidelines at the beginning of the sketch.

Frequently, the suspect's proportions will reflect these basic relationships. However, most people have unique proportions, which are the foundation for their overall appearance. When starting the proportional stage of the drawing, the solution to a suspect's unique proportions can be found by their deviation from these average proportions. Some examples of this divergence have already been discussed in other sections of this book (see Chapter 5, "Descriptive Terminologies, Responses, and Solutions"). Some common deviations include the following. As a subject becomes heavier, the proportion of the lower half of the head will be greater than the upper half. This is also true as people age. The upper half of an older subject's head will appear slightly shorter than the lower half. Very young subjects project an opposite appearance. The lower half will be shorter than the upper half. (Tip: You can use these proportional variations along with other facial elements to age-progress or -regress the subject of the composite sketch if necessary.) Certain solutions for

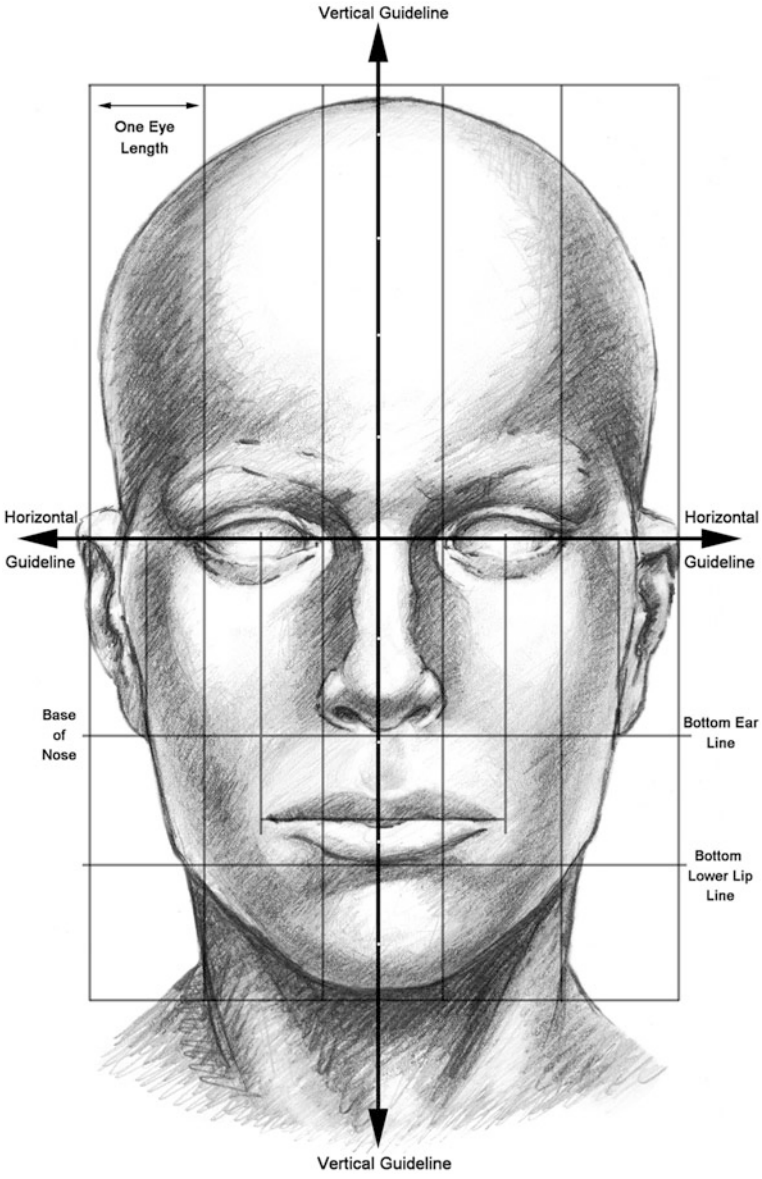


Fig. 7.1 Facial proportions diagram

character descriptions are illustrated as unique proportions as well (see the section "Demeanor, Character, and Build Words" in Chapter 5). Racial differences are also denoted by special proportions. An African American's nose will appear wider at the base than the basic distance between the eyes and often is shorter than average.

The mouth can be wider than the distance between the pupils. The Asian mouth occasionally is shorter than the distance between the pupils. These are a few examples. Nevertheless, the artist should be careful not to overexaggerate proportional deviations, as this will produce sketches of some odd-looking fellows.

Once you have mapped out the presketch, you can use a piece of tracing paper to check the symmetry of the proportions as previously explained and finalize the proportional stage sketch. All sketches are drawn symmetrical unless described otherwise by the witness or victim (see "Proportional Stage of the Sketch" in Chapter 3). This stage is a very simple line drawing with only the most basic shapes suggesting the location and general size of all the facial features.

Characteristic Drawing Tips

During the characteristic stage of the drawing, the shapes of facial feature are developed. They must represent anatomically correct structures. Tone and minimal shading are added to the sketch during this stage. The following are some basic facial feature structural information and tips.

The eye consists of several structural elements (Fig. 7.2). The eyeball is exactly that. It is a perfect sphere about the size of a ping-pong ball. All the lines defining the eye including the lids and folds follow the contour of the eyeball. (Tip: These lines are not straight.) The iris is a perfect circle about one third the width of the eyeball. (Tip: The iris can vary in size very slightly.) The pupil is an inner circle in the iris that will appear about half the iris's width. The opening and shape of the eye are basically determined by three aspects. The first is the eyelids. The upper eyelid always covers the top portion of the iris at varying amounts except in an extreme expression of fright or surprise. The lower lid often touches the bottom of the iris. There are occasions where the lower lid will cover a portion of the iris as well.

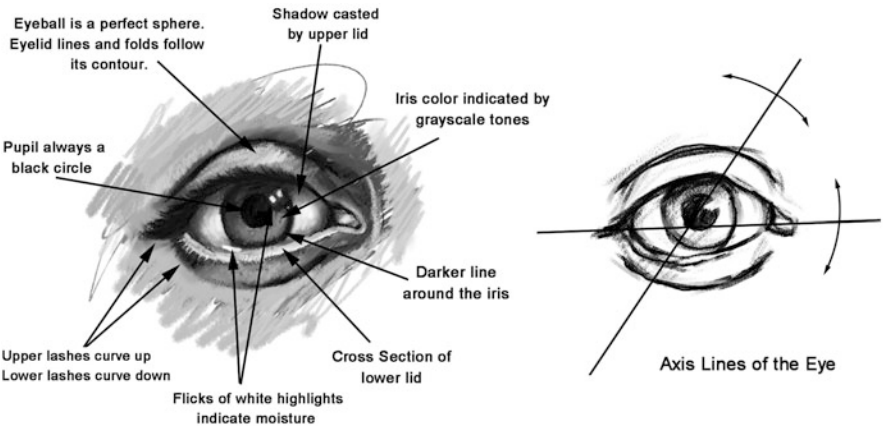


Fig. 7.2 Eye elements diagrams

Additionally, there are times when the white of the eye can be seen between the iris and lower lid. The other two aspects are the axis lines of the eye (Fig. 7.2). These are imaginary lines. One represents the angle of the eye from the inner corner at the tear duct to the outer corner at the intersection of the upper and lower lids. This line can angle downward or upward, or it can be straight. The second axis is the imaginary line that angles from the highest point of the upper eyelid to the lowest point of the lower eyelid as they curve over the eyeball. (Tip: The highest point is generally toward the center of the head and the lowest point is toward the outside of the head.) Another structural element is the thickness of the lower lid. This cross section is often visible as a lighter tone. The upper eyelashes will curve upward and to the outside of the head. The lower eyelashes curve downward to the outside of the head. Remember that the eyeball sits in the eye sockets of the skull, which will define the folds and structures around the eyes. Recognizing all these elements will define the shape of the eyes.

The nose has several elements (Fig. 7.3): the nose bone, bridge, ball, tip, nostrils, septum, and the wings or nostril flare. (Tip: During the early stages of the drawing, do not define the bridge of the nose with lines. You only need to define these two aspects of the nose: the top of the bridge between the eye sockets and the base of the nose. The bridge is defined later in the drawing as shadows.) Visualize the nose as four planes. The top flat plane contains the bridge and ball. There are two side planes and the under plane, which consist of the septum and nostrils (Fig. 7.3). The shape of the nose base is determined by the size and shape of the ball, the visibility of the nostrils, and the fullness of the wings or nostril flares. The more the nostrils are visible, the higher the tip of the nose and the more septum becomes apparent. The wings will angle downward. The lower the tip of the nose, the less visible the nostrils and septum will be. The wings will angle upward. When shading the nostril holes, be careful that they appear as holes that go up into the nose and not as holes through the paper (Fig. 7.3). A nose structure occasionally missed is the deep

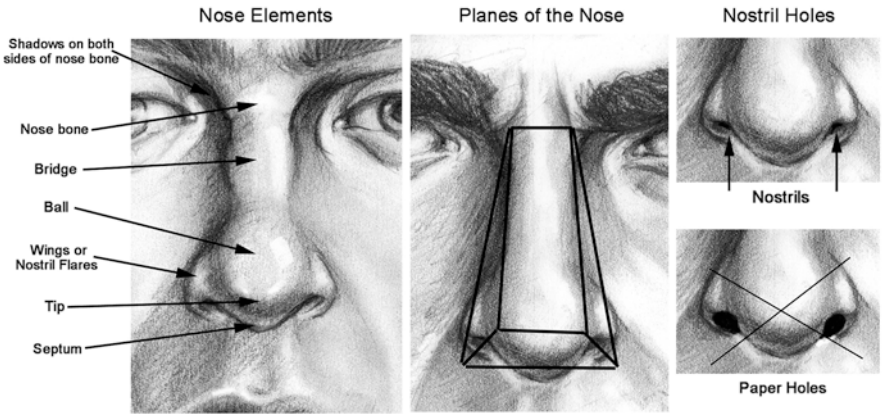


Fig. 7.3 Nose elements diagrams

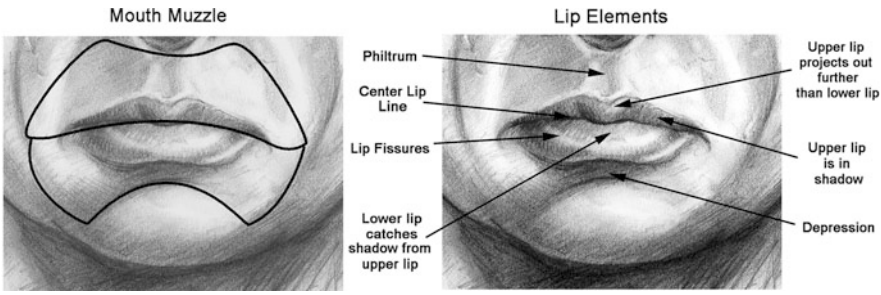


Fig. 7.4 Mouth elements diagrams

shadows defining the sides of the upper bridge of the nose between the eyes. The more pronounced the nose bridge and the deeper the eye sockets, the darker these shadows will appear.

Here are some helpful points about the mouth. The mouth is in motion most of the time, which causes its shape and appearance to change. The lips are cross sections of the upper and lower muzzle structures of the face (Fig. 7.4). They are generally depicted as shaded shapes and forms with minimal line. The upper lip is in shadow and the lower lip generally appears lighter. Yet in the early stages of the sketch, some line will be required. The quickest method for representing the mouth is to first draw the center line dividing the upper and lower lips. Then define the top of the upper lip with a soft line. (Tip: This line does not connect with the center lipline at the ends.) The bow shape of the upper lip will be determined by the presence of the philtrum. (Tip: It is rare for the upper lipline not to have at least the slightest indentation

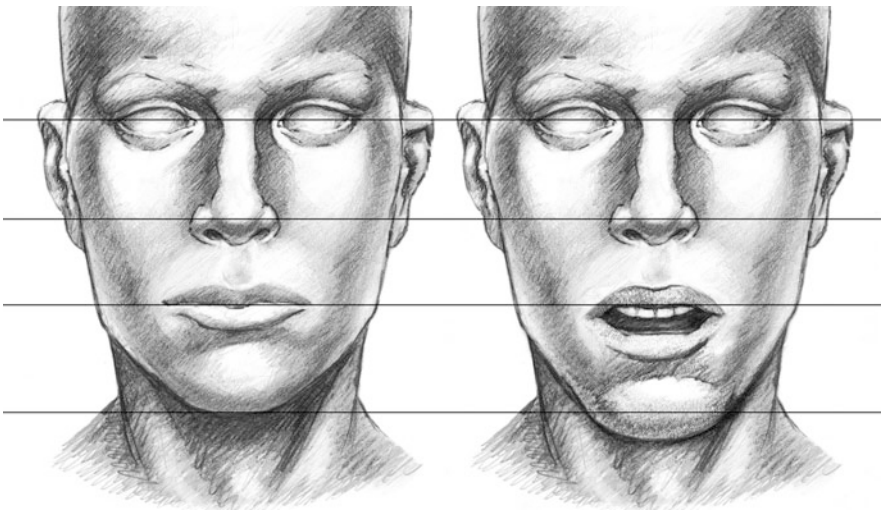


Fig. 7.5 Open mouth illustration

caused by the philtrum.) A soft line is added to delineate the bottom of the lower lip. (Tip: The lower lipline does not extend the full length of the center lipline. It is defined with a partial line at the middle of the bottom of the lower lip and a shadow depression under the lower lip.) These simple indications will define the lip shape with minimal shading, which is perfect for the proportional and early characteristic stages of the sketch. On those rare occasions where the mouth is required to be open, the upper lip is positioned normally. The two ends of the upper lip will bend downward. The lower lip, jaw, and chin drop downward (Fig. 7.5). The placement of the teeth and their connection to the upper and lower mandibles of the skull are crucial for its successful depiction. The teeth originate from the skull, not the lips. The teeth are usually in shadow. The lower teeth are rarely visible. The interior of the mouth is depicted as a dark shadow with a possible hint of the tongue.

The artist can use certain reference points projected by the underlying skull structure to find the overall head shape. These points of reference are located where the skull is closest to the skin (Fig. 7.6). They can be found on the front of both sides of the forehead, the brow ridge, the outside edge of the eye sockets, at the top of the nose bone, and the cheekbones. Additionally, the back of the jawbone and the top of the chin bone are good points. (Tip: When defining the shape of the head, the line is stressed where the bone touches the skin and subtle around the softer and fatty tissues of the face.)

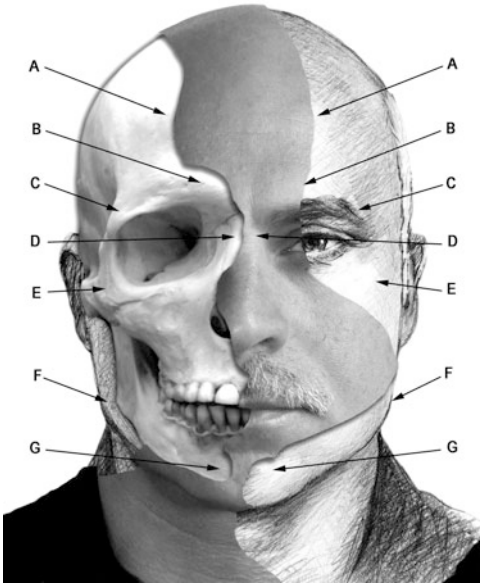


Fig. 7.6 Head shape reference points diagram

For the most part, the ears are simply delineated. Indications of the length, shape, protrusion from the head, and minimal interior structure are generally all that are

needed. A dangling or connected earlobe can also be included. On occasion, the ears can be pinned to the sides of the head and barely visible. Yet, on every sketch, the ears will be visible to some degree unless hidden beneath a hairstyle. (Tip: There is almost always a line or shadow indication between the edge of the head and the start of the ear.)

When sketching the hair, facial hair, and head accessories of a suspect during the characteristic stage of the composite, you should keep this notion in mind: Think overall shape and tone. Do not add texture until the rendering stage. (Tip: The technique of blurring the reference image by squinting at it will in effect obscure the details of the photograph reference. This makes it easier to see the overall shape of these facial elements.) An overall tone is added to the shape according to the value relationship to the other tones of the face. As a rule, do not let the tonal value of these shapes appear too dark. The facial features of the sketch are always developed equally.

Expression is generally not added to the face on the sketch unless it is particularly described as the natural look or character of the suspect (see "Demeanor, Character, and Build Words" in Chapter 5). If expression is required, the angles of the eyebrows and mouth will begin to reflect the desired expression during the characteristic stage of the sketch.

When is the characteristic stage completed? The characteristic stage is effectively finished when the artist can answer yes to the following question: Is there a significant amount of detail drawn on the composite sketch to get a conclusive affirmative answer from the participant about its resemblance to the suspect? (Tip: The sketch will appear almost completed.) Then and only then is it time to transition to the final stage of the drawing.

Rendering Tips

This stage is basically finishing the sketch. The artist will render form and texture during this phase. By applying the basic elements of rendering form, which are contrast, halftone, highlights, cast shadows, and reflected light, an illusion of dimensionality to the drawing is achieved (see "Rendering Stage of the Sketch" in Chapter 3). An additional concept should be mentioned. A little self-assessment is required for the following concept. This is a very important drawing component. It is the value scale (Fig. 7.7). The value scale is the range of gray halftones from white to black. The artist should compare one of his or her completed sketches to this scale. Does your sketch have all the halftones in the value scale, including white and black? If the overall tone of your sketch exists only in a limited range of halftones, an adjustment to your technique is required. A few examples of this would be a sketch where the overall tone is only white to middle grays or the overall tone consists of only flat middle grays. Another problem example is a sketch that has white and black but very few halftones. As a rule, all completed composite sketches must have a full range of halftones, including white and black in varying

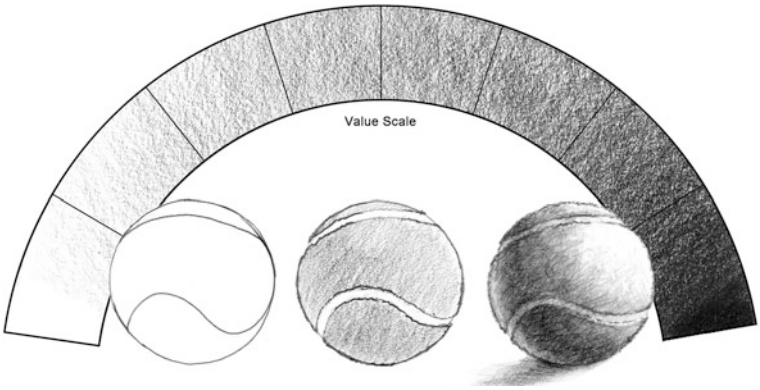


Fig. 7.7 Value scale and shaded ball diagrams

degrees. The degrees are governed by the subject being illustrated. Even if the suspect is considered an albino, there will be areas of darker grays and black, though limited. This also holds true for very dark individuals. Lighter grays and white will be present on these faces as well. Another use of the value scale is representing the color aspects of the suspect's features, like hair, skin, and eyes (see the sections "Eye Words" and "Hair Words" in Chapter 5). All color is represented as different degrees of halftones. (Tip: The appearance of these varying grays is a contrast comparison between the features of the face such as the overall hair tone to the overall skin tone.)

As mentioned, the basic elements of rendering form are contrast, halftone, highlights, cast shadows, and reflected light (Fig. 3.5). A shaded-ball analogy is the best way to demonstrate the basic drawing concepts as they relate to the composite sketch (Fig. 7.7). First, a tennis ball can be represented as a circle drawn with a round line with minimal detail. This can be considered the proportional stage of the composite sketch. Next, the ball is a light green color and has two seams. The circle would be shaded as a light to medium gray with an indication of the seams. The line becomes more specific. This could be considered the characteristic stage. Finally, the rendering elements are added and the ball develops form and texture. This is the rendering stage of a sketch. All these rendering stages are implemented during the execution of the sketch.

The implementation of these rendering elements will be slightly different for each composite subject and artist technique. There are some areas of a face that will consistently display certain rendering elements when applying one of the two basic lighting patterns. They are standard or oblique (see "Rendering Stage of the Sketch" in Chapter 3). The lighter halftones tones are found on the front planes on the face that reflect the light (Fig. 7.8). They would include the front of the forehead, the brow ridge, the area around the tear duct, the bridge of the nose, the front of the cheeks, the upper muzzle, the lower lip, and the top of the chin. Moreover, light-colored features such as blond hair will be part of these paler halftone areas. The

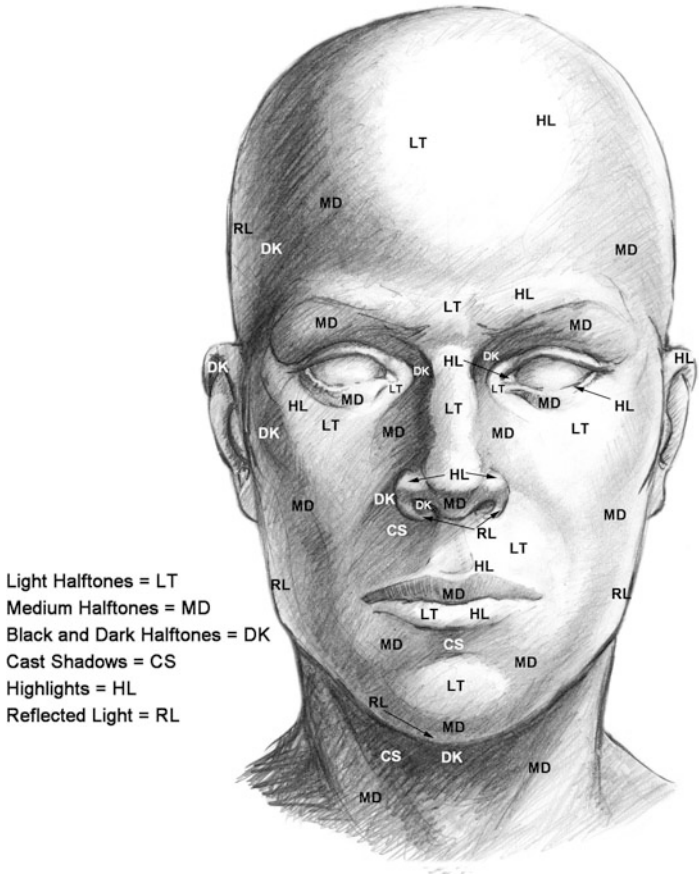


Fig. 7.8 Basic rendering elements facial locations diagram

general locations of the medium-gray halftones are found on the planes of the face that fall into shadow. They include the sides of the head, under the brow ridge, defining the roundness of the eyeball, the lower eyelid, the sides of the nose, under the nose base, the upper lip, the lower muzzle, the lower chin, and the neck. Color features like the hair and irises will be part of this group as well. Black and very dark tones can be found in and around the eyes, under the brow ridge in the inside corners of the eye sockets, in the nostrils, behind the nostril flares, between the lips, along one side of the head, directly under the chin, in the hair, and in the ear structure. The dark-colored facial features will be darker halftone or black areas as well. Cast shadows are found under or alongside certain hairstyles, under the upper eyelid, along one side of the nose, under the lower lip, and under the nose. (Tip: This cast shadow caused by the nose falls onto one side of the upper muzzle area.) Additionally, certain upper lips will cast a shadow on a portion of the lower lip.

Highlights are commonly located on the forehead, brow ridge, nose bone, upper eyelid, eyes, the cross section of the lower eyelid, tear duct, cheekbones, bridge, nostril flares, and the tip of the nose. They can also be found along the top edge of the upper lip, on the lower lip, and inside the ear. (Tip: An electric eraser is a perfect tool to remove desired highlights.) Reflected light can be found along the outside of the head. It is a thin strip of light that is behind the shadows along the sides of the head and forehead. This reflected light is just inside the line defining the head shape. Other possible locations of reflected light are the septum, just under the nostrils, the underside of the nostril flare, and the ball of the nose. Furthermore, it can be found on the underside of the chin and jaw if visible. (Tip: It is easy to pull out the reflected light with a kneaded rubber eraser after the shading has been done.)

The following are a few points about shading the eye (Fig. 7.2). The pupil is always a black circle about half the size of the iris. It is not a black dot. The iris is a shaded halftone that reflects the desired color of the eye (see "Eye Words" in Chapter 5). No matter what color the iris is, it is always framed with a thin darker-shaded line. A very bright small highlight is always positioned tangent to the pupil on the inside edge of the iris. This highlight will be positioned on the same side of each eye in the direction of the light source. A cast shadow caused by the thickness of the upper lid will fall across the top of the eyeball and iris. The thickness of the lower eyelid is occasionally visible as a strip of pale halftone contouring and adjacent to the ball of the eye. The lower lashes originate from the outside edge of this pale-toned strip. Though in reality the upper and lower lids are evenly hinged at the outside corner of the eye, the upper lid and lashes can appear to overlap the lower lid.

Here are a couple of good guidelines to follow related to rendering. First, don't let the darkest values in the lighter halftone areas become darker than the darkest values in the shadowed areas. Conversely, don't let the lightest tones in the shadows be lighter than the lightest tones in the highlighted areas. There are some exceptions for specific textures. Second, at the end of every sketch, reinforce the shadows of the drawing. This is done by darkening them slightly at the point in which the shadow turns the light.

Texture Tips

Texture is added to the sketch toward the very end. Texture is a product of contrast, repetitive marks, unifying shapes, and creative shape edges. What does this mean? Most textures are developed onto previously toned shapes. The overall tone of a particular shape should unify it. For example, if the hair color is dark, the overall appearance of the hair shape will be a dark halftone. (Tip: The technique of blurring the sketch by squinting at it will in effect obscure the details of the sketch. This makes it easier to see the overall shape of a particular toned feature.) Then repetitive lines that reflect the direction and character of the hairs are placed on top of this toned unified shape. Lighter halftones can be removed by erasing to enhance the

desired effect. The edge of the hairstyle is further developed with smudging for softer effects or hard contrasted edges for the opposite effect (see the sections “Hair Words” and “Facial Hair and Eyebrow Words” in Chapter 5).

Contrast is another element used for textures. A general rule is the more contrast applied, the shinier and more dimensional the texture will appear. Conversely, the less contrast applied, the softer and flatter the texture will appear. This concept is often applied for head accessory materials such as leather, cloth, wool, plastics, metals, and glass. Furthermore, it is used during the development of hair textures and skin tones. Most textures can be built up during the development of the sketch from lighter to darker grays. However, some are direct textures such as jerry curls or slick black hairstyles and black leather or shiny metals. Direct textures are textures that require a high contrast of black to white. They are best achieved by directly applying a black repetitive pattern or shapes directly onto the white paper. This will result in the white of the paper peeking through. This is much easier than attempting to erase the white flicks of highlights that are necessary for these high-contrast textures.

The next texture concept is a simple one that has previously been discussed, but it is worth reviewing. It is applied during the rendering of scars, pimples, pockmarks, and freckles. The rule is that a bump on the face has the highlight on the top and the shadow on the bottom (Fig. 5.42). An indentation on the face has the shadow on the top and the highlight on the bottom. Pimples are bumps and pockmarks are indentations. Freckles are flat and are rendered as toned marks and shapes on the face. Scars can be bumps, indentations, or flat shapes.

Forehead lines are rendered as a combination of indentations and bumps. They contour the underlying skull and generally are not continuous across the length of the forehead. Frown lines are located between the eyebrows; they originate from below the brow ridge and radiate up and over the brow. Basically represented as one or two vertical indentations, they can be accompanied across the bottom with a horizontal indentation at the top of the nose bridge just under the brow ridge. Smile lines originate from behind the nostril flare and are basically rendered as long vertical bumps.

Chapter 8
Composite Session Tips

Additional Session Tips

The following are some additional tips for conducting a composite session. They should be implemented in conjunction with the other session concepts, guidelines. and rules already presented. It is also important to have a working understanding of the levels of success a composite sketch and session can achieve.

Photograph References

This topic has been discussed extensively throughout the book (see the sections entitled "Memory" and "The Composite Session Continues" in Chapter 2). Photograph references are used as starting strategies to enhance the recollection of the witness or victim with the use of the recognition process. Most importantly, they will diminish the possibility of the artist's leading the witness or victim. The artist must understand the essence that each selected feature suggests. Furthermore, the artist can inquire about the differences between the selected references and the actual suspect. This is a viable tactic as well. If the victim has selected a lookalike, exploring what is different about the suspect can be very informative.

Transitioning Between Sketching Stages

The three stages of a suspect sketch have been emphasized throughout the explanation of this composite method. They are described as distinct steps that require positive responses of similarity to the suspect by the witness or victim before the artist can continue developing the sketch into the next stage. When an artist first experiments with this technique, he or she should make a concerted effort to keep the stages and transitions distinct. The proportional stage is a basic line drawing, and the artist's inquiries are of feature relationships, location, and size. Once the proportional information has been achieved, the artist will continue to the characteristic stage. The characteristic stage develops from the proportional line drawing.

S. Mancusi, *The Police Composite Sketch*, DOI 10.1007/978-1-60761-832-4_8,

The artist's questions are directed toward facial feature shapes and character. As the composite develops, the sketch becomes more exact and tone is introduced. During the later part of this stage of the drawing, a minimal rendering may be added. The characteristic stage has many intermediate phases. It is important that likeness to the suspect is achieved at the end of the characteristic stage, before continuing to the rendering stage. The rendering stage is the final phase of the sketch. The artist is delineating contrast, form, lighting, value, and texture. As the artist becomes proficient at this three-stage technique, the stages of the sketch will overlap. If the artist can draw anatomically correct facial detail quickly, the early stages of the sketch can illustrate more feature information. As long as the artist is willing to erase a developed feature and can quickly return the modified feature back to the original state, an overlapping method is viable. The stage transitions will be less specific. In any case, positive responses are still necessary for continuing to develop the sketch.

Session Terminations

Ninety-nine percent of composite sessions will result in a suspect sketch. On rare occasions, a session is terminated for various reasons. This could occur at three points during a session. The first would be at the end of the initial interview. The initial interview may reveal that the witness or victim did not see the suspect because of the circumstances surrounding the incident. This may sound odd and should have been clearly evident to the investigating detective. It is possible the suspect approached the victim from behind or at an angle that was not conducive to a front or side view. The lighting conditions could have been poor. These issues and/or any other unforeseen problems may not have been evident until the artist conducted his or her interview. It is unusual for the artist to insist that a sketch not be attempted. However, the artist should be ready to explain why the sketch cannot be done if the evidence points to this conclusion. More likely, at this early stage of the session, the artist will only note a possible problem to the investigative detective and attempt to continue.

The second point in the session is during or after the participant has viewed references. The lack of selected references by the witness or victim is a sign of a weak recollection. This, in conjunction with initial interview suspicions, is a strong indication that the session may need to be terminated. This is why it is good practice to keep the detective abreast of your suspicions from the start. You are preparing him or her for the possibility that a sketch may not be possible. It is paramount that the circumstances surrounding the incident will support this conclusion and the artist can articulate the reasons. Many composite session terminations will occur at this point. The main reasons are related to the formation of the participant's memory, perceptions, and the situations surrounding the incident (see "Memory" in Chapter 2 and Chapter 6, "Managing Difficult Composite Sessions").

When the descriptive detail is vague and it is unclear if a sketch can be completed, a good guideline is to attempt a drawing anyway. Quite often the composite session

process will succeed in extracting additional details. This challenge is assisted with the implementation of the memory-enhancing and session techniques discussed throughout this book. Hopefully, this will elicit enough detail to develop an effective sketch. Nevertheless, there are still those rare occasions when it will not be possible. This is the third point in which a session might be terminated. This revelation should be apparent during the early stage of the sketch. A composite that has reached the later stage of development, by logic, must have achieved a certain degree of success and therefore should be completed. For the former, when termination is apparent and it is coupled with previous suspicions, the reasons will be obvious. If this is the case, the circumstances surrounding the incident are required to support this conclusion. The artist will be obliged to articulate the reasons for termination. The early stage of a sketch is the optimum time to terminate a composite session if necessary. It is at this point that the artist has implemented many of the interviewing techniques available and the possibility of an effective composite sketch may be nil.

If any of these termination scenarios come to volition, the following are some guidelines the artist should follow. Explain to the witness or victim that recalling the appearance of the suspect is far more difficult than recognizing the suspect during an identification process such as a lineup or photograph array. Additionally, instruct the participant that if he or she recalls any new information at a later date, a sketch can be attempted again. This is also information the detective should be made aware of. The artist would have already kept the detective abreast of this possible termination. Privately, the artist should now elaborate to the detective why the sketch cannot be done. A terminated session is noted by the following statement and added to the log entry: "The composite sketch could not be completed at this time."

This statement keeps the door open for any new information that becomes available. It is important that the witness or victim remain a viable part of the investigation. The fact of the matter is that a composite session is unique to the investigation and not a final determination about the worth of a witness or victim.

Ending a Composite Session

There are two related issues the artist has to manage during a composite session: starting a sketch and ending a sketch. *How does the artist start a composite sketch?* This question has been amply answered throughout this book. It is related to the standard composite session and the first stage of a composite sketch. *How does the artist know when a session is completed?* The answer to ending a session is easy. When the artist believes he or she has retrieved all the information a person has to offer, the session should end. This will be different from session to session, as already discussed. *When is the sketch done?* This is a bigger artistic question and a little more abstract. It is directly related to the artist's experience and professionalism. The ability to step back from a drawing and look at it with an objective eye is the solution. Ask yourself the following questions: Have you achieved the level of competency you expect? Does the composite sketch illustrate the information

obtained during the session? By the nature of a composite session, every sketch is not going to be a representation of your best work. It should, however, reach a level of competency that is expected from any profession. There are always a few finishing touches that the artist will apply to the completed sketch. These enrichments should improve the overall appearances of the completed drawing. The finishing touches are governed by the technique of the artist. This finalization should not take an exorbitant amount of time. Most of an artist's finishing touches should be completed within minutes. Keep it simple. Done is done.

Gauging Successful Sessions and Sketches

There are many levels of success for the composite artist. *What constitutes a composite sketch hit?* This question is often discussed. A comparison to another forensic discipline will shed some light onto the question. The fingerprint technician makes identifications from latent prints found at a scene of a crime. The fingerprint expert will compare these latent prints to known inked fingerprints of individuals until a match is found. Fingerprint hits are not only identifications of the perpetrators. A hit can be a match to a victim, a person with legitimate access to a premises, and/or a police officer. Police officers could have accidentally left their fingerprints at the scene during the initial investigation. The point is that a fingerprint hit may not necessarily lead to the identification of a suspect. Since it identified the open latent print, it has closed one aspect of the investigation. An investigation has many aspects. This kind of identification is helpful and considered a fingerprint hit.

A composite sketch, at its most basic success level, needs only to generate possible leads. It is an investigative tool. This is its main purpose. Thus, any forensic image that aids the investigation even a little is considered successful. The composite session can be part of this success for several reasons as well. A session involves a victim in an investigation, a victim who may be feeling powerless. The composite interview can reveal new information that may not be directly connected to the development of the sketch, but is helpful to the investigation. This has happened often. Additionally, it can appease the inquiring public or news media. As one part of an investigative machine, the composite session and sketch have many possible successful objectives.

Case Study 15: "9–11"

I wasn't sure if I was going to include this case. The sketches resulting from the composite sessions did not have a direct effect on the outcome of this incident. It could be considered a difficult field session at the least. It also demonstrates a certain degree of success and accomplishment for the field of forensic art. This incident occurred on September 11, 2001. It started as a beautiful fall day and quickly became the most infamous day in American history.

I had arrived at work at about 06:30 a.m. I was scheduled for a tour of duty between 06:45 and 3:00 p.m. At about 08:40 a.m., I was sitting at my desk talking to my wife on the phone. She was updating me about the kids and the day's schedule. I was looking out the office window as she proclaimed over the phone, "What was that?" She hadn't finished her sentence. I saw the top of the north tower of the World Trade Center explode. The tops of both towers were clearly visible from my office window. They were only a short distance away. She was reacting to the first jet that had flown directly over the top of her building. She worked across the street from the towers. I told her what I had just seen. Very quickly, it was reported that a plane had crashed into the tower. She said she was going to call me back in a few minutes; she had to go to the other side of her building to see.

I yelled out to the outer office that part of the World Trade Center had exploded. I remember hearing someone say, "Steve is just joking." Sadly, it wasn't a joke. Everyone flooded into my office to see the spectacle. It was speculated that a small commuter plane had crashed into the tower, but the explosion was far too big for a small plane. About 15 minutes later, the reality of the situation punched us square in the face. The south tower was hit by a full-size jetliner. Seconds later, the shock wave rushed through the office windows. People retreated to the back of the office.

It was devastating. Pandemonium broke loose. Many of us had experienced the first World Trade Center bombing in 1993, but this was entirely different. Smoke and flames bellowed out of the towers. It was like a movie special effect, but this wasn't a movie. We were all trying to come to grips with what we were witnessing. The pain one felt for the people trapped in the towers was unbearable. Unfortunately, it was going to get worse, much worse. As in '93, helicopters were circling the towers; we waited to see an evacuation sequence similar to the first bombing eight years earlier. We knew that there would be a parade of people making their way to the roof of the towers. It was not going to happen. The smoke and heat were so intense the helicopters could not land or even get close.

The police headquarters building alarm sounded. All personnel were to evacuate the building immediately. It had been learned that there were more hijacked planes in the sky. Police headquarters was clearly a possible target. As I prepared to exit, the office phone rang for the last time. It was my wife. I told her to stay put. I would come to get her. Police headquarters is only a couple of blocks from the WTC complex. By the time we had reached the streets, thousands of people were streaming uptown along every street and sidewalk. It was a sight that is hard to imagine. Most cell phones had gone dead and communication was impossible.

Smoke and flames were bellowing out of both towers. Most of the debris ejected out of the buildings seemed to float upward with the smoke. Any object that didn't go up floated slowly downward. The towers are huge and objects appear extremely small in comparison. There was a stream of very small objects that were falling fast and straight. Horrifyingly, these weren't objects at all. They were people, and they didn't float. When you looked closely, the body shapes were clearly visible. There were scores of innocent people hanging on the edge of the building with no hope left. Many chose jumping over burning. This was not a television event. These were real people, a full cross section of the human race. There aren't any words that can

express the grief and sorrow felt for them and their families' sacrifice. Thousands of innocent lives lost that day for our freedom. We are all indebted to them.

Just before 10 a.m., the top section of the south tower keeled to one side ever so slowly. For a brief moment it seemed as if this upper section would break free of the tower and fall to the ground. As everyone knows, that wasn't the case; the building collapsed into itself. At the moment, there were hundreds of people at the intersection adjacent to the police headquarters. Each one of them stopped and looked up. You didn't hear it collapse. You felt the vibration through the ground. People cried, screamed, and fainted. In an instant, they all became victims. The resulting ash rose above and around the surrounding buildings. It appeared as a giant creature charging in all directions. Its menacing shape was a clear distinct form against the blue sky and buildings. It seemed alive.

Shortly after, I started toward the towers and my wife's building. Hesitantly, I moved against the tide of the rushing crowd. The ash had settled a little. The air was gray and the visibility poor. As I entered the cloud and walked toward the towers, people would appear from out of the haze. Everyone was covered in ash. They looked like gray zombies walking out of hell. I had walked those streets countless times. I knew every store and building along the way. Yet today I could not recognize a single landmark. The area was devoid of color. Every inch was covered in gray ash. I had a goal—to reach my wife's building—and began to walk with purpose. You couldn't see more than 20 feet in front of you. I wrapped my tie around my nose and mouth for protection.

I arrived at a street corner and was unsure of my location. I had gone one block too far and was standing on the edge of the WTC complex. The air was so thick you could not see the remaining tower, though it was only a couple hundred feet away. Fortunately, to my left, there was a faint impression of my destination. I quickly entered the building. I was informed that the building had already been evacuated prior to the tower collapsing. Everyone was heading uptown to safety. This was good news.

Starting back, the streets seemed desolate. I was only a few yards outside the building when a low, deep vibration rose from the ground. I had felt this sensation only a short time earlier. I did not hear a thing. Only a few hundred yards from the remaining tower, I looked over my shoulder. Through the haze emerged another bellowing monster of ash. The second tower was coming down. When the cloud of ash hit me, it felt like a gentle shove from the back. I went down. I lay in the street, my face in my hands. It was pitch black. The ash was hot and felt like small fragments of paper teeming down. It was extremely silent.

Unsure if I was in the middle of the street or on the sidewalk, I crawled until feeling the curb, sidewalk, and then a wall. I crouched against the wall, hoping for some protection. It was hard to breathe. It felt like little shards of glasses were entering my mouth with every breath. In the distance, I could hear cries for help. They sounded muffled and far off. I knew at this moment in the pitch black that help wasn't coming soon. You couldn't see your hand in front of your face. It was time to move again. I slid along the wall and found a door.

It was a deli of sorts. From what I could make out, nobody was there. Not long after catching my breath, I heard a bang and a crash. The store window had broken inward. My first thought was debris from the fallen tower was reaching this building. A man's voice shouted, "Is anyone in here? Is anyone hurt?" I called to him. As he came close, I could tell from his silhouette that he was a cop. I informed him I was a detective. He told me he had shot out the window to get in.

We found our way to the back room. It was small. Five or six people were huddled inside. You could tell they had hidden before the first tower fell. They were clean, without ash. We informed them what had just happened and told them they were safe here. When the first light appeared outside, it looked like a haze of burnt umber. It was a monochromatic world of shades of browns and yellows. You could just make out shapes of building and cars. Walking back to headquarters, the haze turned to shades of gray. As people wandered alongside me, I realized I was now one of those gray zombies walking out of hell.

Back at headquarters, things were moving quickly. Emergency medical services were set up everywhere. As people came from Ground Zero, they were receiving medical attention. I did eventually find out that my wife was on her way home and the kids were safe at the babysitter's house. I decided to go back to the office to clean up and recharge. I was exhausted. At the locked door of my office was a young detective from the Latent Print Section. He quickly asked where I had been. He was instructed to wait there until I returned. As strange as it sounds, the Detective Bureau was looking for an artist. My first reaction was, "The department doesn't need an artist. They need the Marines." We immediately rushed up to the Chief of Detectives' office.

The chief's office was a buzz of activity. When I walked in, the chief did not recognize me at first. Once he did, he turned to a captain on the phone and said, "Forget the helicopter, the artist is here." He told me to clean up quickly. There were witnesses at a temporary headquarters uptown whom I needed to interview for sketches. His driver would take me to the 13th precinct.

Back in my office, I prepared my field equipment. I asked the chief's driver if he knew the human pedigree of the suspects. "Middle Eastern," he said. I was packing my field bag when Sergeant Kenny Calvey arrived. He was the commanding officer of the Latent Print Section at the time. He said they had been calling him all day looking for me. The sergeant expressed it was kind of fitting. One of the biggest incidents in New York City history, and I was sharpening my pencils and grabbing my pad. Just like he had seen me do many times when the proverbial "shit" had hit the fan.

At the temporary headquarters in 13th precinct, Mayor Giuliani, the police commissioner, commanders, detectives, and the press were all there. People were moving in all directions. Civilians were showing up to inquire about missing family members. Everyone was asking questions and talking on the phones. It was a controlled chaos. There wasn't much room to move around. You had to slip between waiting individuals through every corridor. I was led to a small back office. I found a maintenance man from the World Trade Center sitting nervously. It was easy to tell people who had been at the scene when the towers fell. There was a look of despair and

disbelief across their faces. Their eyes were bloodshot. This guy had just made it out with his life.

I began to set up for the sketch. Needless to say, the standard procedure was going to be modified. The guy told me he was kind of sorry he had opened his mouth when asked by some cops if he saw anything suspicious. He just wanted to go home and be with his family. It had been a long day for him. I certainly understood and said, "We'll try to do this as quickly as possible." But I knew that if this guy was considered important to the investigation, he wasn't going anywhere.

He had witnessed a few Middle Eastern individuals a couple of days earlier. They were pointing up at the towers and taking pictures. He thought at the time it was kind of strange. They weren't acting like typical tourists. They would point to the top of the towers and excitedly talk to each other in a foreign language. The maintenance guy said he got a look at one of them. He described him as a younger Middle Eastern male with long black hair. During the session, people would continually poke their head into the office. Some were looking for work space. Others wanted to know if the sketch was completed. Still others would inform me that more witnesses were on the way. It seemed I might be asked to sketch every Arab-looking guy in the city. Nevertheless, I completed the sketch with the maintenance man. After being thanked for his help, he left. I didn't see him again.

The next witness was a young woman. She had been on an early morning job interview in a building across the street from the World Trade Center. She and about 15 others were in a waiting room. They were being called one by one for their interview. The waiting room was located on the 20th floor. Outside the windows were the towers. When the first plane hit, they all rushed to the window. She said everyone was excited and talking to each other. Nobody could believe what they were seeing. "We had no idea what had just happened. For all we knew, it was a generator explosion," she explained. Then she noticed a middle-aged man standing off to the side. He was very calm and talking on a working cell phone. He was talking in a foreign language. But it was evident that he was describing what had happened. She thought she heard him say the word "airplane" or something similar. He noticed her looking and moved away. Security officers had arrived and were instructing them to leave the building. She looked for the man, but he was already gone.

She described the man as medium-build, Middle Eastern or Indian individual with short black hair. He was middle-aged. As the composite session continued, it became late in the evening and things seemed to quiet down a little. I was in the later stage of the sketch when I heard a familiar voice call my name. It was a female detective I knew. Her sister had worked in the World Trade Center. She was going from hospital to hospital and police precinct to police precinct looking for a sign of her. This would be a common occurrence during the next few days. Many family members, armed with pictures and descriptions of their loved ones, would go from place to place hoping to locate them. Makeshift memorials with pictures and captions like, "Have you seen ...?" sprung up all over the city. The female detective was with her husband. He was a detective as well. As I encouraged her to keep looking for her sister, I glanced at her husband. He and I both knew it wouldn't turn out well. It was later sadly learned that her sister was at an early morning breakfast meeting in a restaurant located at the top of the north tower.

Eventually, the sketch was completed with the second witness. It was midnight and I was expecting another witness. I was told that the others had insisted on going home or didn't want to leave their families to come in. It was decided to keep them for another day. Back at my office, I logged the sketches and brought copies to the chief's office. The suspect sketches for 9–11 were done (Fig. 8.1).

Fig. 8.1 Case study 15: Composite sketches

I arrived home about 2 a.m. I had to report early the next morning. Everyone was on 12-hour tours. I tried to sleep a couple of hours, but the day's events played over and over in my head. Sleep was going to be futile. At 5:30 a.m., I began to head back to work. Many of the sights and events that would occur in the following weeks would be astonishing. The most incredible sight was what I first saw as I drove back to work the next morning. It was still dark. I live about 30 miles outside the city line. I was on a major highway into the city and up ahead were the flashing lights of patrol cars. The rode was blocked and the sign read, "New York City is closed."

Even years later, it all still seems unbelievable. At the time, all these events were surreal. It seemed amazing that the department even thought of composite sketches during this horrific incident. You would assume this to be the last thing that is considered. In retrospect, the Detective Bureau was doing what the Detective Bureau does. They were conducting an investigation. Right from the start, they cranked up this investigative machine and put it to work. All gears were spun into action. From the squad detectives, crime scene, ballistics, bomb squad, fingerprint experts, and many others, they are each an important part of the machine. There are a certain pride and feeling of success to know that the forensic artist is also a gear in this remarkable investigative engine. It might be one component of many, but an essential one just the same.

What constitutes a successful composite session is clearly multifaceted, as demonstrated. What constitutes a successful composite sketch? This is commonly related to the visual comparative resemblance of a sketch to the suspect. It is important to explore these levels of likeness and similarity. Witnesses or victims do not have an image of the suspect in front of them when participating in the composite session. There is an inherent limitation to the amount of descriptive information the memory can offer. If the artist was to conduct a session with the perfect witness or victim, this would be an individual who can actually see the subject he or she is describing. The artist should be able to achieve a remarkable likeness to the subject with the implementation of a standard composite session. This is an excellent exercise for the artist to test his or her skills. Unfortunately, this perfect witness is never the case. To determine the success of the sketch's likeness to the suspect, the best method is to view the sketch and the suspect separately, and not as a side-by-side comparison. This method is closer to the process the witness or victim had to use to describe the suspect in the first place. Plus, it is the process used when suspects are recognized by others from the sketch. If the sketch resembles the suspect with this comparison procedure, the sketch is a hit. This is not to say that a side-by-side comparison is not attainable. They are. These kinds of similarities are just higher levels of successful comparisons. Nor do the circumstances under which a perpetrator is apprehended have a bearing on the success of a composite sketch. If the suspect is identified by other means without direct involvement of the sketch and the sketch still resembles the suspect, it is a hit. Following this logic, the highest level of success for a composite sketch hit would be a sketch directly credited with the identification of the suspect.

Case Study 16: "Home Invasion"

This case illustrates an ideal composite sketch hit. It was 3 in the morning when two sisters were awoken in their apartment by an intruder. The perpetrator tied up the victims and proceeded to burglarize their apartment. A composite session was scheduled with the two victims early the next day. During the initial interview, it was revealed that the only light available during the incident was the flashlight the perpetrator was holding. Both sisters felt they were able to discern his appearance from this limited light source. A multiple-witness session was conducted. The circumstances seemed poor, but the description of the suspect was unique. He was described as a male, Hispanic, in his late 20s. His appearance was unusual enough to leave a strong impression on the victims. The sketch was completed and resulted in an appearance of a specific character. Copies of the sketch were given to the investigative detective.

Later that same day, a locale parole officer had been visiting the precinct of occurrence. On a hunch, the investigative detective showed the recently developed sketch to him (Fig. 8.2). He immediately recognized the individual as one of his recent cases. This thug had been released from prison a few weeks before. He had a history of committing burglaries. The parolee bore a remarkable likeness

Fig. 8.2 Case study 16: Successful composite sketch hit

to the sketch. This had to do with his unique appearance. He was later arrested and identified by the victims during a lineup. It was a good composite hit.

The case eventually went to trial. I was summoned to court. The sketch was a key piece of evidence in the case. Generally, a sketch is considered hearsay evidence in New York. It can be admissible under certain circumstances. I was there to testify to the procedure under which it was completed. The defense attorney was trying to ascertain if we had had a photograph of her client while the composite sketch was being developed. Needless to say, this was not the case. She asked many questions related to the technique. The trial had taken place over a year after the composite session was conducted. I remembered some of the particulars, but could certainly testify to the standard procedure. Since the procedure for developing the sketch was basically the method discussed throughout this book, it made it easy to answer any posed questions with this proper standard composite session terminology and concepts. The courtroom was crowded, but at one point there was a momentary lull. I was sitting in the witness stand waiting for the next flurry of questions. It can be a little daunting to testify during a court proceeding. There is a strict formality to the process. This trial did not have a jury, only a judge. He was the one who was going to decide the outcome. The judge was holding the sketch in his hand at this quiet moment. I heard him say under his breath, "Nice sketch." I tried to look up at him in an inconspicuous manner and silently nodded thanks. I figured he thought the sketch was drawn well. He looked at me and mouthed, "Looks just like him." The "bad guy" was convicted and sent back to jail.

There's no doubt that the artist is going the feel the greatest sense of accomplishment with high-resemblance composite sketch successes. The following exercise is a little for fun but may demonstrate the effectiveness of this composite session method. If you examine Fig. 8.3, you will find a series of suspect mug shots. These are photographs of perpetrators who were identified by a composite sketch, or the

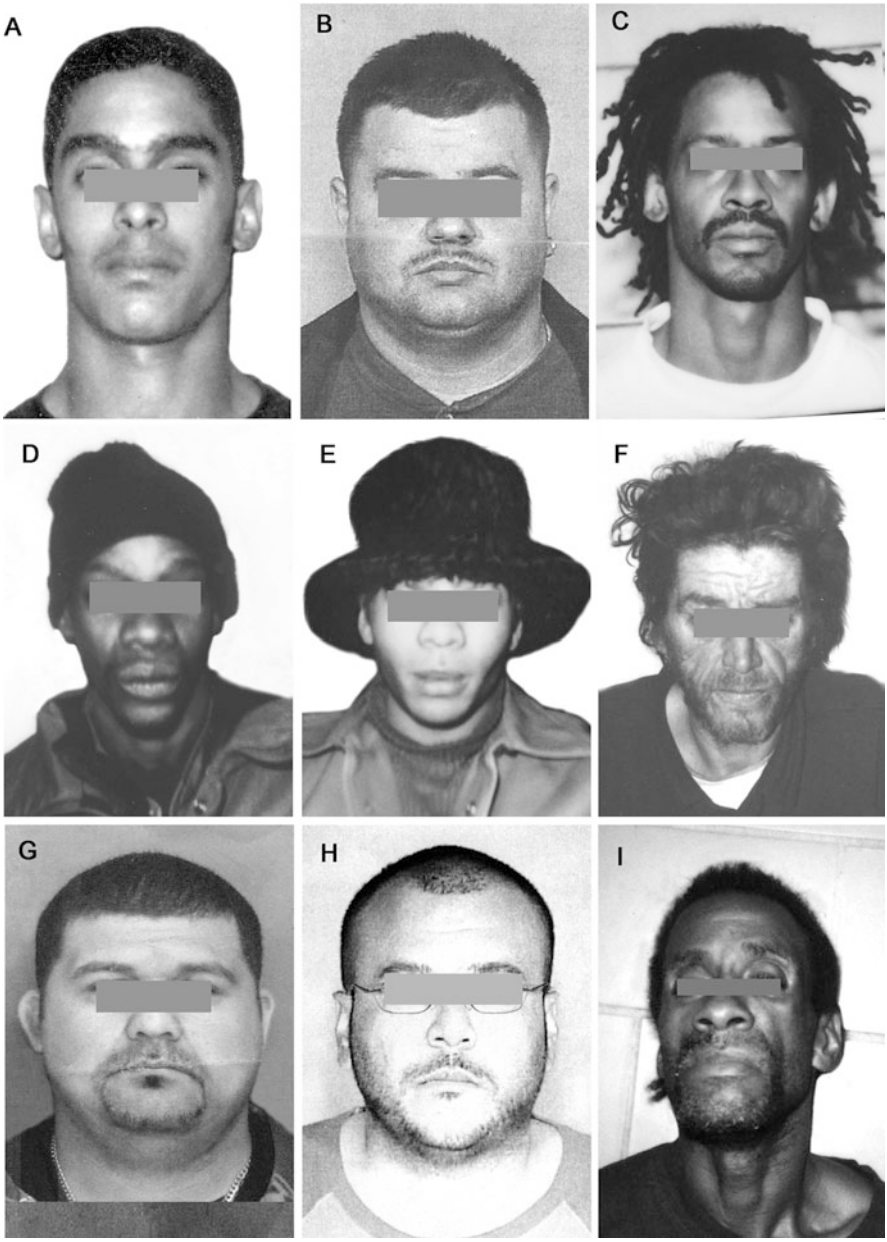


Fig. 8.3 Suspects' mug shots challenge

sketch at least aided in some way. The corresponding successful composite sketches have been used as illustrations throughout the book. These suspects' full identities are required by law to be concealed. There should be enough information visible in these mug shots for you to locate the composite sketch that belongs to the suspect's photograph. The challenge is to find them. The answers can be found in the following case solved.

Case Solved

Many composite session solutions and strategies have been revealed in this book. These rules, guidelines, notable concepts, and tips are most effective if considered as a whole package. It is the implementation of each of them in conjunction with the other that will swing the pendulum of success in a more positive direction. Optimistically, these composite sketches will help an investigator to get the lead that will solve his or her ongoing criminal case. The implementation of the standard composite session procedure and the three-stage drawing method both prove to be effective techniques. The awareness of memory issues, the proper use of photograph references, knowledge of witness/victim types, and the exploration of the lexicon of descriptive terminologies are invaluable in finding successful composite session solutions. This knowledge will certainly assist in crafting stronger composite session interviewing questions as well. Additionally, the balance of the five artist's attributes will aid in resolving most difficult situations. The highlighted cases and stories illustrated many of these points.

I am sure that most forensic artists can attest to the fact that there is a great sense of accomplishment when a composite sketch successfully identifies the "bad guy." As for the specific challenge previously put forth, the reader was asked to find the corresponding composite sketches related to the suspect mug shots in Fig. 8.3. The identifications are as follows. Suspect "A" was Fig. 5.18. Suspects "B" and "G" were, respectively, the second and first sketches in Fig. 5.14. Suspect "C" was the fourth sketch in Fig. 5.44. Suspect "D," maybe the most difficult to identify, was the sketch labeled "narrow chin and jaw" of Fig. 5.39. The hat makes it easy to identify suspect "E" as the fifth sketch of Fig. 5.52. Suspect "F" was apprehended for an attempted child abduction from a school lunchroom. He certainly exudes the unkempt character of Fig. 5.9. Suspect "H" was identified with the help of the sketch labeled "double chin" of Fig. 5.39. The facial character lines of suspect "I" undoubtedly helped identify him from the sketch labeled "character lines" of Fig. 5.43. How did you do? Or should I ask, how did the witness/victim and I do?

The information in this book is not meant to be a set of laws etched in stone. It is a recognized that there are many legitimate ways to accomplish the goals of a composite session. Composite art is an evolving endeavor for any forensic artist. It is understandable that readers may just incorporate what works for them and disregard what doesn't. Hopefully, in any case, this police composite sketching philosophy will point to new avenues of thought and technique for all forensic artists.

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