



*James Q. Murdoch:  
How to Pass a Polygraph,  
San Bernardino 2018, 23 pp.*

The author is a retired policeman and veteran. In *How to pass a polygraph*, he discusses how to deceive the polygraph. A question that immediately bears an explanation: a polygraph is only a machine, a thing that at polygraph examiner (polygraphist) makes use of. Can a thing be deceived? You can possibly cheat or trick the human who uses the thing, that is the polygraph.

Since the polygraph began to be applied in the 1920s, some subjects have tried to cheat the examiner running the examination. Some tried to suppress reactions to critical questions, others to induce it artificially after the irrelevant and/or control ones. Identification of interferences in the recorded curves, when present with certain regularity and intensity, was a proof that the subject has something to hide, and wants to render the process of examination difficult. Countermeasures were devised against interfering with the reactions and their recording, as special sensors were construed to measure the examinee's intentional muscular tension, observe the behaviour with cameras, etc.

James Q. Murdoch is certainly experienced as a policeman and veteran. As far as I know, he is not a polygrapher, at least not an author of any major publication in the field. The methods of “cheating the polygraph” he describes are perhaps the ones that are most often endeavoured. Usually, by the way, with no result. The work is valuable not as much for those who would like to “cheat a polygraph examination” but the people who run them. It is to them that the author presents the most frequent ways of attempted “cheating the polygraph”. And this is where I perceive the value of his work.

J.W.