

Accepted Manuscript

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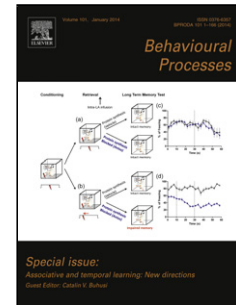
PII: S0376-6357(14)00321-0
DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.beproc.2014.12.010>
Reference: BEPROC 2979

To appear in: *Behavioural Processes*

Received date: 7-8-2014
Revised date: 17-12-2014
Accepted date: 31-12-2014

Please cite this article as: Ostojić, Ljerka, Tkalčić, Mladenka, Clayton, Nicola S., Are owners' reports of their dogs' 'guilty look' influenced by the dogs' action and evidence of the misdeed?. *Behavioural Processes* <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.beproc.2014.12.010>

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Are owners' reports of their dogs' 'guilty look' influenced by the dogs' action and evidence of the misdeed?

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Highlights

- We test cues that trigger dogs' 'guilty look' behaviours
- The dogs' action and evidence of the misdeed have no effect on the 'guilty look'
- Dogs might not show the 'guilty look' in the absence of concurrent scolding by their owners

Abstract

While dog owners claim that their dogs' greeting behaviour after having performed a misdeed indicates the dogs' 'guilt', current experimental evidence suggests that dogs show these 'guilty look' behaviours as a response to being scolded by their owners. Given reports that 'guilty look' behaviours are shown also in the absence of being scolded, we investigated whether the dogs' own actions or the evidence of a misdeed might serve as triggering cues. We manipulated whether or not dogs ate a 'forbidden' food item and whether or not the food was visible upon the owners' return. Based on their dogs' greeting behaviour, owners stated that their dog had eaten the food no

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