

PERCEPTIONS OF JUVENILE INTERROGATIONS

NOT GUILTY BY REASON OF YOUTH?

PERCEPTIONS OF COERCION IN JUVENILE INTERROGATIONS

By

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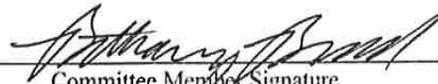
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## PERCEPTIONS OF JUVENILE INTERROGATIONS

### **Abstract**

Adolescents are at an increased risk for false confession compared to adults (e.g., Redlich & Goodman, 2003), yet police interrogate adolescents no differently (e.g., Cleary & Warner, 2016). While confession evidence tends to be highly persuasive to jurors (e.g., Kassin & Sukel, 1997), less is known about how jurors evaluate juvenile interrogations and confessions. In Study 1, undergraduate students read a lengthy or abridged (i.e., confession-only) transcript of a real-world interrogation in which a suspect (described as either a juvenile or adult) falsely confessed to murder. Although age did not affect perceptions, participants who read the lengthier transcript perceived greater coercion—but also remained confident in the suspect’s guilt. In Study 2, jury-eligible adults read the same lengthy or abridged interrogation transcript, either with or without expert testimony on age as a risk factor for false confession. Those who read the lengthier transcript again rated the interrogation as more coercive. Importantly, those who read both the lengthy transcript and expert testimony were least likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty (and vice versa), suggesting that expert testimony, in conjunction with a comprehensive video recording of the suspect’s interrogation, may improve jurors’ fact-finding accuracy. Implications for interrogation practices and trial procedure are discussed.

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## Introduction

To date, 354 wrongly-convicted individuals have been exonerated (i.e., absolved of guilt) by DNA evidence in the United States. In 28% of these cases, an innocent person confessed to a crime that they did not commit ([www.innocenceproject.org](http://www.innocenceproject.org)). Although it is difficult to estimate the overall incidence of false confessions, these cases likely represent only a small portion of wrongful convictions caused by false confessions (Kassin et al., 2010; Leo, 2009).

False confessions are a counter-intuitive phenomenon. Most people believe that they would never personally confess to a crime they did not commit (Costanza, Shaked-Schroer, & Vinson, 2010), and accordingly, they believe that false confessions in the justice system are rare (Chojnacki, Cicchini, & White, 2008). However, Kassin and Wrightsman (1985) described three types of false confessions that have been observed in real-world cases. First, a *voluntary* false confession occurs when an innocent person confesses not because of coercion, but because of psychopathology, a desire for notoriety, or a desire to protect the actual perpetrator. Second, a *compliant* false confession occurs when a suspect knowingly gives a false confession in order to escape a stressful police interrogation. Third, an *internalized* false confession occurs when a suspect confesses after coming to believe that they are truly guilty of the crime in question.

Empirical research on false confessions has focused primarily on factors that increase the risk of compliant and internalized false confessions (see Kassin et al., 2010, for a review). Two major factors have now been identified—namely, the situational pressures of police interrogation, and personal characteristics that create individual differences in vulnerability.

**Situational Risk Factors**

Modern police interrogations are designed to be psychologically stressful for the suspect, thereby creating feelings of anxiety and hopelessness that are likely to elicit a confession (Kassin et al., 2010). To be exact, the Reid Technique (Inbau, Reid, Buckley, & Jayne, 2013), which is the most widely-used training program for interrogators in the United States, consists of three types of tactics—namely, isolation and confrontation, minimization, and maximization.

*Isolation and confrontation* tactics induce anxiety, hopelessness, and a desire to escape. A lengthy, isolated, and confrontational interrogation increases the likelihood that a suspect will confess in order to escape the stressful environment (Kassin et al., 2010). For example, Drizin and Leo (2004) reviewed 125 proven false confession cases and found that the average interrogation lasted 16.3 hours, which is much longer than interrogators' self-reported average of 1.6 hours for a typical interrogation (Kassin et al., 2007). Lengthy interrogations can also cause sleep deprivation, which impairs decision-making and cognition, and has been shown to increase false confession rates (Frenda, Berkowitz, Loftus, & Fenn, 2016).

*Maximization* tactics increase anxiety by conveying that denial is futile and will produce an unfavorable outcome (Kassin et al., 2014). Examples of maximization tactics include making confident accusations of guilt, presenting false evidence, threatening the suspect, and interrupting the suspect's denials (Kassin & McNall, 1991). In the first-ever laboratory study of false confessions, Kassin and Kiechel (1996) demonstrated that presenting false evidence increases the risk of internalized false confessions. During a computerized task, the researcher accused participants of causing a computer to crash by

pressing a key that they were told not to press. For some participants, a confederate also claimed that they saw the participant hit the forbidden key. Although no participants actually hit the forbidden key, 69% of them confessed to having done so. Moreover, participants were more likely to confess—and more likely to believe in their own guilt—when the confederate provided false evidence of their guilt.

Finally, *minimization* tactics evoke a false sense of security by implying that a confession is the most expedient option for the suspect. Examples of minimization tactics include offering moral justification for the crime, sympathizing with the suspect, downplaying the seriousness of the crime, and implying leniency in exchange for a confession (Kassin, 1997; Kassin & McNall, 1991). In one study, Klaver, Lee and Rose (2008) used Kassin and Kiechel's "computer crash" paradigm to assess the effect of minimization on false confessions. For some participants, researchers normalized the act of pressing the forbidden key by blaming the computer and telling the participants that it must have been an accident. When these tactics were used, participants became over four times more likely to falsely confess to hitting the forbidden key.

### **Age as a Risk Factor**

Although situational pressures universally increase the likelihood of false confession, some individuals also possess characteristics that render them more vulnerable to coercive interrogation tactics. Specifically, individuals who are mentally ill, intellectually disabled, and younger tend to be more *suggestible* (i.e., vulnerable to outside pressure and influence) than cognitively normal adults (Gudjonsson, 2003). For example, Gross, Jacoby, Matheson, and Montgomery (2005) found that 55% of exonerees who had

falsely confessed were either intellectually disabled, under the age of 18 at the time of their conviction, or both.

Other studies likewise suggest that adolescents are at higher risk for false confession compared to adults. In their analysis of 125 proven false confessions, Drizin and Leo (2004) found that a disproportionately high number of false confessors (32%) were adolescents. Additionally, Redlich and Goodman (2003) replicated Kassin and Kiechel's "computer crash" study with a sample of adolescents and found that age influenced confession rates, such that 78% of 12-13 year-olds and 72% of 15-16 year-olds falsely confessed to hitting the forbidden key, compared to only 59% of young adults. Moreover, adolescents appear more vulnerable to false evidence ploys: When presented with false evidence of their guilt, 88% of 15-16 year-olds falsely confessed, compared to only 50% of young adults (Redlich & Goodman, 2003).

Decades of developmental psychology research have established that adolescents are biologically, cognitively, and psychosocially different from adults (see Steinberg, 2008, for a review), which may explain their higher false confession rate. On a biological level, the prefrontal cortex—which plays a critical role in impulse control and judgment—is not fully developed until early adulthood (Steinberg et al., 2008; Steinberg, 2010). In turn, adolescents' underdeveloped brains may affect their judgment and decision-making during police interrogations (Cleary, 2017; Kassin et al., 2010). For example, adolescents tend to show an inadequate understanding of their *Miranda* rights, and they are consequently more likely to waive these rights compared to adults (Grisso et al., 2003; Owen-Kostelnik, Reppucci, & Meyer, 2006).

In their decision-making, adolescents tend to weigh short-term rewards more heavily than long-term consequences (Steinberg & Scott, 2003). This tendency is known to produce false confessions in adults (Madon, Gyuill, Scherr, Greathouse, & Wells, 2012), and may have an even stronger impact on adolescents insofar as their primary goal is to escape the high-stress interrogation environment (Cleary, 2017). As such, adolescents may be more susceptible to minimization tactics that imply leniency in exchange for a confession (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006). Consistent with this idea, Drizin and Leo (2004) found that many adolescent false confessors self-reported that they thought they would be allowed to go home after they confessed. In another study, 51% of incarcerated adolescents who falsely pleaded guilty to a crime did so because they felt it would lead to a reduced sentence (Malloy, Shulman, & Cauffman, 2013).

Finally, adolescents tend to be more vulnerable to social influence than adults (Steinberg et al., 2008; Steinberg & Scott, 2003), such that they are more suggestible (Gudjonsson, 2003) and more likely to comply with authority figures (Koocher, 1991)—including police interrogators (Owen-Kostelnik et. al. 2006). For example, Richardson, Gudjonsson, and Kelly (1995) found that adolescents were more likely than adults to change their original answers to interview questions after receiving negative feedback from an interviewer. In an interrogation, adolescents may therefore be more likely to accept false evidence as true (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006) and more likely to comply with the interrogator's request for a confession (Grisso et al., 2003).

The real-world case of 14 year-old Michael Crowe is a striking example of how coercive interrogation tactics can lead adolescents to falsely confess. After his sister was found murdered in their family home, police identified Michael as a suspect and

interrogated him for 27 hours over the course of three days without an attorney or parent present. The interrogators ignored Michael's repeated denials of the crime, and instead convinced Michael that he had two distinct personalities—one that was loving and another that was violent—which led him to doubt his memory for the night in question. The interrogators used maximization tactics, claiming that they found his sister's blood in his room and had DNA evidence that implicated him, although neither was true. They also used minimization tactics, assuring Michael that his sister would forgive him for what he did, and implying that he would receive a lesser punishment if he confessed. Michael eventually confessed to the crime and came to believe in his own guilt. Michael spent several months in jail awaiting his trial until DNA evidence identified the actual perpetrator, and the charges against Michael were dropped (Drizin & Leo, 2004).

The unique vulnerabilities of adolescents suggest that police should interrogate adolescents differently than adults, but in practice, this rarely happens. The Reid Technique (Inbau et al., 2013) does not provide special guidelines for interrogating adolescents; rather, interrogators are taught to use the same tactics regardless of the suspect's age (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006). In a survey of 340 experienced American police officers, Cleary and Warner (2016) found that officers tended to use the same interrogation tactics (e.g., false evidence ploys, minimization, discouraging denials) with adolescents as they did with adults. Along the same lines, Owen-Kostelnik and Reppucci (2009) found that Reid-trained officers were more likely than non-Reid-trained officers to use false evidence ploys and minimization tactics with adolescents, indicating a lack of sensitivity to their developmental immaturity (see also Meyer & Reppucci, 2007). Instead, interrogators tend

to view adolescent suspects as autonomous individuals capable of withstanding the same treatment as adults (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006).

### **Confessions and Juror Decision-Making**

Confession evidence is uniquely persuasive to jurors compared to other forms of incriminating evidence (Kassin & Neumann, 1997). Indeed, jurors are more likely to convict if a confession is present, even if they recognize that the confession was coerced (Kassin & Sukel, 1997). In real-world cases, Drizin and Leo (2004) found that 81% of false confessors who went to trial were convicted, often despite other evidence that contradicted their confession.

While many studies have found that confessions are highly persuasive to jurors, fewer studies have compared jurors' perceptions of adolescent and adult confessions. In a survey of jury-eligible adults, 43% believed that adolescents are at a greater risk for false confessions (Chojnacki et al., 2008), suggesting that jurors may give less weight to an adolescent's confession. However, an experiment by Najdowski, Bottoms, and Vargas (2009) found that mock jurors only discounted a juvenile's confession if the juvenile was intellectually disabled.

In another study, Redlich, Quas, and Gheiti (2008) gave mock jurors the transcript of a police interview of a juvenile, who was described as either a victim or a suspect in a criminal investigation. When the juvenile contradicted his own story (i.e., both denied and admitted involvement), jurors rated his account as less credible if he was a victim, but not if he was a suspect. Moreover, juveniles who contradicted their own story were seen as more likely to have been involved in the crime, compared to those who never admitted involvement.

In contrast, Najdowski and Bottoms (2012) found that jurors discounted a juvenile's confession only if they perceived the interrogation as coercive. In this study, participants read about a juvenile who confessed to murder either voluntarily or under coercion (i.e., during a seven-hour interrogation in which interrogators used minimization tactics and presented false evidence). Across both conditions, participants who perceived the interrogation as coercive believed less strongly in the suspect's guilt, regardless of how coercive the interrogation actually was. In sum, the scant existing research on juror perceptions of adolescent confessions is somewhat mixed as to whether jurors understand age as a risk factor for false confession.

To improve jurors' understanding of interrogations, many scholars have argued that interrogations should be recorded in their entirety, so that those recordings can be shown to jurors (e.g., Sullivan, Vail, & Anderson, 2008; The Justice Project, 2007). Proponents of recording claim that it would discourage the use of coercive tactics. Indeed, a recent study found that experienced police officers were less likely to use maximization and minimization if they knew that their interrogation was being recorded (Kassin, Kukucka, Lawson, & DeCarlo, 2014). Furthermore, recording would provide jurors with a complete and objective account of the interrogation, rather than having to rely on the memory of the interrogator and suspect, which may be inaccurate or incomplete (Kassin, Kukucka, Lawson, & DeCarlo, 2017). In turn, the recording would increase jurors' knowledge of the circumstances under which a confession was obtained, and may thereby help them distinguish true confessions from false ones (Sullivan et al., 2008).

### **The Current Study**

Prior research on jurors' perceptions of adolescent confessions (i.e., Najdowski et al., 2009; Najdowski & Bottoms, 2012; Redlich et al., 2008) has not compared juror perceptions of juvenile and adult suspects. Instead, these studies manipulated characteristics of the juvenile confessor, such as intellectual disability, abuse history, crime type (Najdowski et al., 2009; Najdowski & Bottoms, 2012), and suspect versus victim status (Redlich et al., 2008). Thus, it remains unknown whether jurors recognize age per se as a risk factor for false confession, and how they might evaluate an interrogation and/or confession differently as a function of the suspect's age.

To fill this gap, Study 1 will test whether juror perceptions of the same interrogation differ when the suspect is described as a juvenile rather than an adult. In addition, to test the aforementioned benefit of recording interrogations, Study 1 will explore how providing a fuller account of the interrogation influences jurors' perceptions. Participants will read a lengthy or abridged (i.e., confession-only) transcript of the real-world interrogation of Michael Crowe, who will be described as either a juvenile or an adult. Then, they will provide various judgments of the interrogators and suspect, including a judgment of the suspect's guilt.

**H1:** Participants will rate the interrogation as more coercive—and will be less likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty—if the suspect is described as a juvenile rather than an adult.

**H2:** Participants will rate the interrogation as less coercive—and will be more likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty—if they read only the suspect's confession as opposed to a lengthier account of the interrogation.

**H3:** The effect of the suspect's age will depend on the length of the transcript, such that those who read a lengthier account of the interrogation of a juvenile will rate the interrogation as most coercive, and will be least likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty. Conversely, those who read only the confession of an adult suspect will rate the interrogation as least coercive, and will be most likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty.

### Study 1 Method

#### Participants and Design

Participants were 145 undergraduate students who completed the study in exchange for course credit. Each participant was assigned to one of four cells in a 2 (Age: Juvenile vs. Adult) X 2 (Transcript: Lengthy vs. Confession-Only) between-subjects design.<sup>1</sup> Twenty-nine participants (20.00%) were later excluded after failing a comprehension test. Our final sample thus included 116 participants, with at least  $n = 27$  participants in each cell. No demographic information was collected from these individuals.

#### Procedure

Participants completed the study in groups of six to 12 individuals seated separately in a large room. First, participants received instructions explaining that they would read part of the interrogation of a murder suspect (see Appendix A). By random assignment, these instructions described the suspect as either 14 (*Juvenile* condition) or 32 (*Adult* condition) years old. Then, participants read portions of an actual police interrogation. Some participants read a 43-page transcript of the suspect's interrogation and confession (*Lengthy* condition), while others read only the suspect's confession (i.e., the final eight pages; *Confession-Only* condition). Then, participants completed a 12-item questionnaire in which they provided various judgments of the suspect and interrogators, including a

judgment of the suspect's guilt (see Appendix B). Finally, they completed a comprehension test to ensure that they read and understood the instructions and transcript (see Appendix C).

### **Materials**

**Pre-transcript instructions.** After giving written consent, participants read instructions that they would now read part of the transcript of the actual police interrogation of a murder suspect and would then provide their opinions of the suspect and interrogators (see Appendix A). Although participants would read the real-world interrogation of Michael Crowe, these instructions introduced the suspect as "Michael Wilson," to control for the possibility that participants had prior knowledge of the Michael Crowe case. The instructions explained that Michael Wilson was suspected of having killed his sister, who had been found dead in the home where he, his sister, and their parents were living at the time. By random assignment, the instructions described Michael as either "a 14 year-old adolescent" (*Juvenile* condition) or "a 32 year-old man" (*Adult* condition).

**Interrogation transcript.** Participants read portions of the real-world interrogation of Michael Crowe (whose name had been changed to Michael Wilson for the purposes of the study). To minimize reading time, several portions of the transcript that were deemed unimportant and/or repetitive were removed from all conditions, and were instead summarized in brackets. Any words or phrases that revealed the suspect's true age were edited in the *Adult* condition transcript (e.g., "Our juvenile system is not geared to punish a child. Our system is geared to help" was changed to "Our system is not geared to punish people. Our system is geared to help").

Some participants read a 43-page transcript of the suspect's interrogation and eventual confession (*Lengthy* condition). This 43-page transcript recounts Michael's repeated denials of guilt and the detectives' use of common interrogation tactics (i.e., minimization and maximization), and ultimately, Michael's confession. Other participants read only the final eight pages of the transcript, which recounted only Michael's confession (*Confession-Only* condition).

**Dependent measures.** After reading the transcript, participants completed a 12-item questionnaire (adapted from Kassin et al., 2014) in which they provided various judgments of the suspect and interrogators (see Appendix B). First, participants made a binary judgment of the suspect's guilt (i.e., guilty or not guilty) and rated their confidence in this judgment on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 10 (*very*). Next, participants provided nine judgments of Michael and the interrogators (see Table 1), each on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 10 (*very*). Finally, participants gave an open-ended estimate of the likelihood (0-100%) that Michael had committed the crime.

**Guilt-confidence composite scores.** To obtain a more sensitive measure of participants' belief in Michael's guilt, a guilt-confidence composite score was later created for each participant by multiplying their binary guilt judgment (guilty = 1; not guilty = -1) against their self-reported confidence in this judgment (1-10). These composite scores could thus range from -10 (highly confident not guilty judgment) to +10 (highly confident guilty judgment).

**Comprehension test.** Lastly, participants completed a four-item multiple-choice comprehension test to ensure that they read and understood the study materials (see Appendix C). Each Transcript condition completed a different form of the comprehension

test. Both forms included one critical item which asked for Michael's age, and three items which asked about details of the transcript. Data from 29 participants (20.00%) were later excluded because they answered one or more of these four items incorrectly, leaving a final sample of  $N = 116$  for all analyses.

## Study 1 Results

### Guilt Judgments

Across all conditions, 83.62% of participants believed that Michael was guilty. A full factorial logistic regression using Age (Juvenile vs. Adult) and Transcript (Lengthy vs. Confession-Only) as predictors was performed on participants' binary guilt judgments. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, a marginal effect of Age was found, Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 3.58, p = .059, OR = 4.91$  [95% CI: 0.94, 25.53], such that participants in the Juvenile condition were somewhat less likely to believe that Michael was guilty (75.00%) compared to the Adult condition (92.98%). Contrary to Hypotheses 2 and 3, neither Transcript, Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 0.00, p = .971, OR = 1.04$  [95% CI: 0.14, 7.93], nor the Age X Transcript interaction, Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 0.03, p = .857, OR = 0.81$  [95% CI: 0.08, 8.41], predicted guilt judgments.

### Perceptions of Suspect and Interrogators

A 2 (Age) X 2 (Transcript) MANOVA was performed on participants' 11 continuous judgments of the suspect and interrogators (including guilt-confidence composite scores). Supporting Hypothesis 2, a multivariate effect of Transcript was found,  $F(11,101) = 26.22, p < .001, \eta^2_p = .74$ . As shown in Table 1, participants who read the interrogation and confession judged Michael as more anxious, more stressed, less cooperative, and more strongly denying guilt than those who read only the confession. They also judged the interrogators as more hostile, less friendly, and as having placed more

pressure on Michael. However, transcript length did not affect guilt-confidence composite scores or likelihood of commission estimates. That is to say, participants were equally confident in Michael's guilt regardless of whether they read the lengthier transcript or only his confession.

Contrary to Hypothesis 1, no multivariate effect of Age was found,  $F(11,101) = 1.42$ ,  $p = .176$ ,  $\eta^2_p = .13$ . Overall, participants in the Juvenile and Adult conditions rated the interrogators as friendly ( $M_s = 7.80$  and  $7.94$ ,  $SD_s = 2.07$  and  $1.93$ , respectively), unhostile ( $M_s = 3.17$  and  $2.70$ ,  $SD_s = 2.27$  and  $2.01$ ), trying hard to get a confession ( $M_s = 7.46$  and  $7.07$ ,  $SD_s = 2.71$  and  $3.18$ ), and putting some pressure the suspect ( $M_s = 5.98$  and  $5.55$ ,  $SD_s = 2.81$  and  $2.99$ ). Similarly, both groups rated Michael as anxious ( $M_s = 7.14$  and  $7.11$ ,  $SD_s = 2.64$  and  $2.81$ ), somewhat cooperative ( $M_s = 5.86$  and  $6.20$ ,  $SD_s = 2.56$  and  $2.69$ ), and stressed ( $M_s = 7.41$  and  $7.18$ ,  $SD_s = 2.87$  and  $2.68$ ). They also rated Michael as being somewhat knowledgeable about the crime ( $M_s = 4.27$  and  $4.27$ ,  $SD_s = 2.31$  and  $2.30$ ) and as trying moderately hard to deny guilt ( $M_s = 5.27$  and  $4.54$ ,  $SD_s = 3.19$  and  $3.01$ ). Finally, contrary to Hypothesis 3, the Age X Transcript interaction was not significant,  $F(11,101) = 1.06$ ,  $p = .405$ ,  $\eta^2_p = .10$ .

## Study 1 Discussion

### Transcript Length

As predicted, transcript length affected people's judgments of the interrogation, such that those who read a fuller account of the suspect's interrogation perceived greater pressure on the suspect than those who read only the suspect's confession. However, despite this, they were still highly confident in the suspect's guilt. In other words, providing a more comprehensive account of the interrogation made people more sensitive to the

situational pressures of the interrogation room, but it ultimately had no effect on their verdicts. These findings are consistent with prior research showing that confessions are persuasive to jurors even when they are obtained through coercion (Kassin & Sukel, 1997) and survey data showing that people fail to understand that coercive interrogation tactics can produce false confessions (Leo & Liu, 2009).

Although people recognized that coercion was present, they still believed his confession, and thus underappreciated the impact of coercion on the suspect. In social psychology, this phenomenon is known as the *fundamental attribution error* (Ross, 1977) and refers to the tendency to attribute a person's behavior to internal characteristics (e.g., personality) rather than external influences. Attribution theory may explain why participants judged the suspect as guilty even when they perceived pressure during the interrogation: Jurors are likely to attribute a suspect's confession to dispositional factors internal to the individual (i.e., actual guilt) rather than to situational factors (i.e., coercion) present during the interrogation (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004).

One may wonder if the effect of the transcript manipulation was due simply to the added length of the transcript, rather than its actual content. To control for this possibility, Confession-Only participants could have read additional filler material that was comparable in length to the longer interrogation transcript. However, the goal of the transcript manipulation was to simulate what would happen in a real-world criminal trial in which jurors receive information about a defendant's confession, but little or no information about the interrogation that preceded it. The finding that transcript length affected perceptions of coercion suggests that giving jurors more information about the

circumstances under which a confession was obtained will influence their understanding of the situational pressures that were present during the interrogation.

Along these same lines, proponents for the mandatory recording of interrogations suggest that having access to such recordings would increase jurors' knowledge about the circumstances under which a confession was obtained (Kassin et al., 2017). In turn, this recording may help them to distinguish between true and false confessions (Sullivan et al., 2008). However, the current findings suggest that increased awareness of situational pressures may not also translate into more accurate verdicts. To maximize the benefit of recordings, jurors may also need to hear the testimony of an expert who can explain the phenomenon of false confessions, thereby educating jurors in a way that will help them to make sense of the recording.

In general, expert testimony has been shown to affect jurors' evaluation of evidence and decision-making (e.g., Kovera, Levy, Borgida, & Penrod, 1994; Leippe, 1995). Some empirical studies have found that false confession experts influence juror perceptions of guilt and coercion (e.g., Henderson & Levett, 2016; Woody & Forrest, 2009) while others have found no such effects (e.g., Moffa & Platania, 2007). Most applicable to the current study, Blandon-Gitlin et al. (2011) found that 89% of mock jurors incorrectly believed that a suspect was guilty after reading an interrogation transcript, but those who read expert testimony about interrogation and false confessions perceived more coercion and were 13% less likely to produce a guilty verdict. This modest effect suggests that expert testimony can be beneficial in sensitizing jurors to false confessions, but using expert testimony and video recordings together might provide jurors with even better information to make an accurate judgment.

### **Suspect Age**

Unexpectedly, suspect age had no effect on perceptions of pressure: People evaluated the interrogation no differently when Michael was described as a 14-year-old adolescent rather than a 32-year-old man. Although participants were somewhat less likely to believe that Michael was guilty if he was described as an adolescent, this difference was not statistically significant, and Michael was still misjudged as guilty by 75% of participants. Thus, despite developmental research showing that adolescents are particularly vulnerable to coercive interrogation tactics (e.g., Owen-Kostelnik et. al., 2006), our findings suggest that people are not intuitively aware of their vulnerability. One possible explanation for this null effect is that people generally form negative judgments of suspects, regardless of their age. Consistent with Redlich et al. (2008), perhaps merely being accused of a crime automatically creates an expectation that the suspect is untrustworthy and/or guilty, such that people disbelieve his denials and trust his confession.

In any case, it is imperative that jurors understand adolescents' heightened vulnerability in the interrogation room, so as to minimize wrongful convictions of adolescent false confessors. To that end, educating jurors via expert testimony may improve the accuracy of their verdicts. Developmental psychology research is regularly used in the legal system to evaluate the culpability (e.g., competency, responsibility) of adolescent offenders and to determine appropriate sentencing for minors (Steinberg, 2008), and several empirical studies have assessed the effects of developmental expert testimony on juror decision-making in cases involving child *witnesses* (e.g., Buck, London, & Wright, 2011; Khurshid & Jacquin, 2013). As mentioned previously, research has also looked at how confession experts affect jurors' judgments of interrogations involving *adult* suspects

(e.g., Blandon-Gitlin et al., 2011). However, no empirical study has yet tested how developmental expert testimony influences jurors' judgments of *juvenile suspects*. As Cleary (2016) noted, there is currently a significant gap in the literature with respect to how a developmental psychology framework can be applied to adolescent false confessions.

### Study 2

To address this gap, Study 2 will test whether expert testimony influences juror perceptions of an adolescent's interrogation and confession. As in Study 1, participants will read either a lengthy or abridged (i.e., confession-only) transcript of Michael Crowe's interrogation. Some participants will also read expert testimony from a developmental psychologist, which will describe research on adolescents' increased vulnerability to social pressure and false confession. Study 2 will thus utilize a 2 (Transcript: Lengthy vs. Confession-Only) X 2 (Expert: Present vs. Absent) between-subjects design. As in Study 1, all participants will provide judgments of the interrogator and suspect, including a judgment of the suspect's guilt.

**H1:** Participants who read expert testimony will rate the interrogation as more coercive—and will be less likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty—compared to those who do not read expert testimony.

**H2:** As in Study 1, participants who read a lengthier account of the interrogation will rate the interrogation as more coercive, compared to those who read only the suspect's confession.

**H3:** The effect of transcript length will depend on the presence of expert testimony, such that those who read a lengthier interrogation transcript *and* expert testimony will rate the interrogation as most coercive, and will be least likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty.

Conversely, those who read only the suspect's confession without expert testimony will rate the interrogation as least coercive, and will be most likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty.

## Study 2 Method

### Participants and Design

A nationally-representative sample of jury-eligible adults ( $N = 140$ ) was recruited via Amazon Mechanical Turk (mTurk), a service for recruiting individuals to complete online tasks (for more on the use of mTurk in psychological research, see Buhrmester, Kwang & Gosling, 2011; Crump, McDonnell & Gureckis, 2013; Ramsey, McKenzie & Rosenbaum, 2016). Each participant was assigned to one of four cells in a 2 (Transcript: Lengthy vs. Confession-Only) X 2 (Expert: Absent vs. Present) between-subjects design.<sup>2</sup> Any participant who was not eligible to serve on a jury in the United States (i.e., was under age 18, was not a current U.S. citizen, or reported a prior felony conviction) was excluded prior to data analysis ( $n = 3$ ). Four participants were later excluded after failing a comprehension test, and six others were excluded because they completed the study twice.<sup>3</sup> In total, 13 participants (9.29%) were excluded, leaving a final sample of 127 jury-eligible adults, with at least  $n = 29$  participants in each cell.

Participants ranged in age from 21 to 73 ( $M = 36.25$ ,  $SD = 9.89$ ) and showed a slight male majority (56.67%). Most participants were White (76.38%), with fewer self-identifying as Black (15.75%), Hispanic/Latino (3.94%), Asian (3.25), and Native American (0.80%). Most participants had graduated from college (38.58%). All participants were U.S. citizens, and the sample included at least one resident from 39 of the 50 U.S. states.

**Procedure**

**Instructions and transcript.** After providing demographic information (see Appendix D), all participants read the same instructions that were used in the Adolescent condition of Study 1, which explained that they would read part of the real-world interrogation of a 14-year-old murder suspect (see Appendix A). Some participants then read a lengthy transcript of the suspect's interrogation and confession (*Lengthy* condition), while others read only the suspect's confession (*Confession-Only* condition); these transcripts were identical to those used in the corresponding Adolescent conditions of Study 1.

**Expert testimony.** After reading the interrogation transcript, some participants were randomly assigned to also read a five-page transcript of expert testimony from a developmental psychologist (*Expert-Present* condition). The first section of this transcript recounted the expert's direct examination, in which the expert described his credentials and summarized research on the differences between adolescents and adults in terms of their decision-making, susceptibility to social pressure, and propensity to falsely confess during police interrogation. The second part of the transcript recounted the expert's cross-examination, in which the prosecutor questioned the validity of the research that the expert had described (e.g., by noting that participants were college students rather than actual criminal suspects) and reiterated that Michael Wilson had confessed to the murder (see Appendix E). A second group of participants read only the interrogation transcript, but did not read the expert testimony (*Expert-Absent* condition).

**Dependent measures.** After reading the transcripts, participants completed the same 12-item questionnaire from Study 1 in which they were asked to provide various

judgments of the suspect and interrogators including a binary guilt judgment (see Appendix B). As in Study 1, a guilt-confidence composite score was later created for each participant by multiplying their binary guilt judgment against their self-reported confidence rating.

**Comprehension test.** After reading their respective interrogation transcripts, participants in each Transcript condition completed the same four-item multiple-choice comprehension tests that were used in Study 1 (see Appendix C). In addition, participants in the *Lengthy* transcript condition answered four additional multiple-choice comprehension items that were inserted in the middle of their interrogation transcript (see Appendix F).

After reading the expert testimony transcript, participants in the *Expert-Present* condition answered four additional comprehension questions to ensure that they read and understood the content of the expert testimony (see Appendix G). These participants also completed a five-item questionnaire in which they rated the degree to which the expert's testimony influenced their opinions of the suspect, interrogators, and verdict, as well as the degree in which they believed the expert's testimony was based on good scientific principles and was relevant to the case. These ratings were given on a scale from 1 (*not at all*) to 10 (*very*; see Appendix H).

## Study 2 Results

### Guilt Judgments

Across all conditions, 58.58% of participants believed that Michael was guilty. A full factorial logistic regression using Transcript (*Lengthy* vs. *Confession-Only*) and Expert (*Present* vs. *Absent*) as predictors was performed on binary guilt judgments. As in Study 1, the main effect of Transcript was not significant, Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 0.74, p = .389$ .

Contrary to Hypothesis 1, neither Expert, Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 0.56, p = .454$ , nor the Expert X Transcript interaction, Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 0.51, p = .477$ , predicted binary guilt judgments.

To obtain a more direct test of Hypothesis 3 (the prediction that only the combination of these factors would affect guilt judgments), an interaction-only model was fit, which revealed a significant interaction term, Wald  $\chi^2(1) = 4.93, p = .026$  (see Figure 1). As predicted, participants were least likely to misjudge Michael as guilty if they read the longer interrogation transcript with expert testimony (45%) and most likely to misjudge him as guilty if they read only his confession without expert testimony (76%).

### **Perceptions of Suspect and Interrogators**

A 2 (Transcript) X 2 (Expert) MANOVA was performed on participants' 11 continuous judgments of the suspect and interrogators (including guilt-confidence composite scores). Supporting Hypothesis 2 (and thereby replicating the results of Study 1), a multivariate effect of Transcript was found,  $F(11,112) = 20.54, p < .001$ . As shown in Table 2, univariate analyses revealed that participants who read Michael's interrogation and confession judged him as more anxious, more stressed, less cooperative, and more strongly denying guilt than those who read only his confession. They also judged the interrogators as more hostile, less friendly, and as having placed more pressure on Michael. Finally—and unlike in Study 1—participants who read the longer interrogation transcript were also less confident in Michael's guilt and believed it to be less likely that Michael had committed the murder.

The multivariate effect of Expert was also significant,  $F(11,112) = 2.40, p = .010$ . Univariate tests revealed significant differences on two items. First, and consistent with Hypothesis 1, participants who read expert testimony believed it was less likely that

Michael had committed the murder ( $M_s = 56.91$  and  $69.32$ ,  $SD_s = 3.89$  and  $4.02$ ). Second, participants who read expert testimony rated Michael as having tried less hard to deny guilt during his interrogation ( $M_s = 4.11$  and  $5.48$ ,  $SD_s = 0.29$  and  $0.29$ , respectively).

Finally, no Transcript X Expert interaction was found,  $F(11,112) = 1.43$ ,  $p = .171$ .

### **Perceptions of the Expert Witness**

For participants in the Expert-Present condition, a one-way MANOVA found no multivariate effect of Transcript on perceptions of the expert's testimony,  $F(5,59) = 2.24$ ,  $p = .063$ . Overall, participants in the Expert-Present condition reported that Dr. Jones' testimony had somewhat influenced their opinions of Michael ( $M = 4.89$ ,  $SD = 2.55$ ), of the interrogators ( $M = 4.85$ ,  $SD = 2.79$ ), and of Michael's guilt or innocence ( $M = 4.85$ ,  $SD = 2.59$ ). In addition, they strongly believed that Dr. Jones' testimony was based on good scientific principles ( $M = 7.54$ ,  $SD = 1.77$ ) and was relevant to Michael's interrogation ( $M = 7.18$ ,  $SD = 2.39$ ).

### **General Discussion**

The current research aimed to better understand how jurors evaluate juvenile interrogation and confessions. Study 1 tested whether people would rate the same interrogation differently depending on whether the suspect was described as a juvenile or an adult, and if these perceptions would depend on the completeness of the interrogation transcript. After finding that age had no effect on perceptions of the interrogation or of guilt, Study 2 tested whether adding expert testimony on age as a dispositional risk factor for false confession would influence participants' perceptions and thereby improve the accuracy of their verdicts.

In both studies, providing people with a more comprehensive account (i.e., a longer transcript) of the suspect's interrogation made them more sensitive to the situational pressures of police interrogation. To be exact, those who read a fuller account of Michael's interrogation judged him as more anxious, more stressed, less cooperative, and more strongly denying guilt than those who read only his confession. They also judged the interrogators as more hostile, less friendly, and as having placed more pressure on Michael to confess. These findings are consistent with the argument that providing jurors with a video recording of the suspect's interrogation will increase their sensitivity to the situational pressures of police interrogation (Sullivan et al., 2008).

In contrast, the two studies produced mixed results as to whether a more complete account of the interrogation would improve fact-finding accuracy. In Study 1, participants who read the longer transcript rated the interrogation as more coercive, but it did not affect their guilt judgments. In Study 2, however, participants who read the longer transcript were less confident in Michael's guilt than those who read only his confession. These discrepant findings could be due to age differences across the two samples (i.e., undergraduate students vs. jury-eligible adults with a mean age of 36 years) that led them to assess the suspect's interrogation and confession differently. These contradictory findings could also be due to the additional comprehension items that were added in Study 2. Unlike in Study 1, participants answered some comprehension items in the middle of the transcript, which may have led them to scrutinize the transcript more closely, and in turn affected their ratings of the interrogation.

Notably, the transcript manipulation on its own did not influence binary guilt judgments in either study—and this variable most closely aligns with real-world trials in

which a jury is asked to render a dichotomous verdict of ‘guilty’ or ‘not guilty.’ The results therefore suggest that giving jurors a more comprehensive account of a suspect’s interrogation may increase their sensitivity to interrogative pressure, but may not in and of itself improve the accuracy of their verdicts. In fact, across both studies, 65% of participants who read the longer transcript still believed (incorrectly) that Michael was guilty. With this in mind, Study 2 investigated whether the effect of transcript length would change if the transcript were accompanied by expert testimony that educates jurors on risk factors for false confession.

Sure enough, participants were least likely to render a guilty verdict if they read the longer transcript with expert testimony (45%), and most likely to render a guilty verdict if they read only the suspect’s confession (76%). Thus, giving people a more complete account of the suspect’s interrogation alongside education about false confession improved the accuracy of their verdicts. These findings suggest that expert testimony, in conjunction with a comprehensive video recording, may be the best approach to improving jurors’ fact-finding accuracy.

On the other hand, expert testimony on its own had little effect on people’s judgments in Study 2. In other words, participants who read expert testimony did not perceive Michael as any more anxious or coerced than those who did not read expert testimony, nor did they form different impressions of the interrogators, nor were they less confident in Michael’s guilt. In contrast, previous studies have found that expert testimony on confessions did influence juror decision-making. For instance, Woestehoff and Meissner (2016) found that case-specific expert testimony indirectly affected guilty verdicts by increasing knowledge about false confession. Similarly, Blandón-Gitlin et al.,

(2011) found that participants rated an interrogation as more coercive and were less likely to render a guilty verdict after reading expert testimony in which the expert made explicit connections between prior research and specific aspects of the suspect's interrogation (i.e., presenting false evidence that the suspect failed a polygraph test).

Notably, these prior studies presented expert testimony on *situational* risk factors for false confession, whereas the expert in the current study focused primarily on a *personal* risk factor for false confession (i.e., age). As attribution theory would predict (Ross, 1977), jurors may be less reliant on expert testimony on dispositional factors (e.g., age and developmental immaturity) insofar as they more readily grasp the importance of these factors, whereas situational influences (e.g., interrogative pressure) may be less intuitive. Moreover, the experts in these studies—but not in Study 2—explicitly alerted jurors to interrogators' use of false evidence ploys and other problematic tactics. For example, the interrogators lied to Michael about DNA evidence that implicated him, but the expert did not specifically point out that this evidence was false. Perhaps the expert testimony would have had a stronger effect if the expert had provided case-specific testimony as was done in these earlier studies.

Expert testimony did have one unexpected effect on perceptions of the interrogation in Study 2: Those who read the expert testimony believed that Michael had tried *less* hard to deny guilt during the interrogation. Consistent with the *cognitive coherence* framework (Simon, 2004; 2011), the content of the expert testimony may have retroactively shaped people's impressions of the interrogation (i.e., the expert explained that juveniles tend to be compliant, and thus participants remembered Michael as more compliant). More broadly, the cognitive coherence model suggests that evidence presented early at trial can

lead a decision-maker toward a particular conclusion, which may then color their interpretation of subsequent evidence in a way that strengthens this conclusion (Simon, 2004; 2011). With this in mind, the order in which expert testimony and interrogation recordings are presented to the jury may impact their decision-making. Prior research has not yet tested order effects with respect to expert testimony specifically, but some research suggests that evidence presented later in a trial is more likely to be remembered and affect jurors' verdicts than earlier evidence (Costabile & Klein, 2005).

There may also be individual differences in how evidence order affects evidence evaluation. For instance, Kassin, Reddy, and Tulloch (1990) had mock jurors read arguments from either the prosecution or the defense, then watch an interrogation recording, and finally read counterarguments from the opposing side. Results indicated that individuals who were high in need for cognition (i.e., the degree to which people enjoy effortful cognitive activities; Cacioppo & Petty, 1982) were more influenced by arguments that preceded the video whereas those who were low in need for cognition were more influenced by arguments that followed the video.

Future research should also explore whether jurors respond differently to a video recording of an interrogation as opposed to a transcript (as was used in the current study). Although research on the effects of video recording interrogations is in its infancy, camera perspective has been shown to affect jurors' perceptions of a suspect's confession, such that a suspect's statements are viewed as more voluntary when the camera focuses on the suspect rather than focusing equally on the interrogator and the suspect (see Lassiter, 2010, for a review). Perhaps the effects of age and/or expert testimony would differ if jurors are

able to *see* (in a literal sense) the suspect's vulnerabilities by watching a video recording of the interrogation.

Taken together, the current findings suggest that the manner and order in which evidence is presented to jurors can significantly affect their decision-making, and that recording interrogations has the potential to improve fact-finding accuracy. That said, the findings from the current study also raise many unanswered questions for future research, especially with respect to the optimal way to present recordings and expert testimony to jurors.

Table 1

*Effects of Transcript Length on Perceptions of the Suspect and Interrogators (Study 1)*

	<b>Confession M (SD)</b>	<b>Lengthy M (SD)</b>	<b>F(1,111)</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>d [95% CI]</b>
How hard did Michael try to deny guilt?	2.63 (2.37)	7.08 (1.98)	122.66	< .001	2.05 [1.60, 2.50]
How much did Michael seem to know about the crime?	3.02 (1.51)	5.46 (2.29)	44.51	< .001	1.25 [0.85, 1.65]
How open and cooperative was Michael in his demeanor?	7.27 (2.35)	4.85 (2.31)	32.33	< .001	-1.05 [-1.43, -0.65]
How hard did the detectives try to get Michael to confess?	5.09 (2.73)	9.34 (0.98)	128.16	< .001	2.09 [1.64, 2.55]
How much pressure did the detectives place on Michael during the interrogation?	3.59 (2.06)	7.85 (1.86)	137.56	< .001	2.18 [1.71, 2.64]
How friendly, sympathetic, and understanding were the detectives toward Michael?	8.25 (1.58)	7.50 (2.28)	4.10	.045	-0.38 [-0.75, -0.01]
How hostile and aggressive were the detectives toward Michael?	1.88 (1.16)	3.95 (2.38)	34.96	< .001	1.10 [0.71, 1.49]
How stressful do you think this interrogation was for Michael?	5.82 (2.92)	8.69 (1.69)	41.68	< .001	1.21 [0.82, 1.61]
Overall, how anxious do you think Michael was during the interrogation?	5.63 (2.73)	8.54 (1.78)	45.47	< .001	1.27 [0.87, 1.67]
What is the likelihood (%) that Michael committed this crime?	80.93 (20.44)	78.95 (20.34)	0.25	.622	-0.10 [-0.46, 0.27]
Guilt-Confidence Composite Score	6.14 (5.38)	5.12 (5.32)	1.10	.296	-0.19 [-0.57, 0.78]

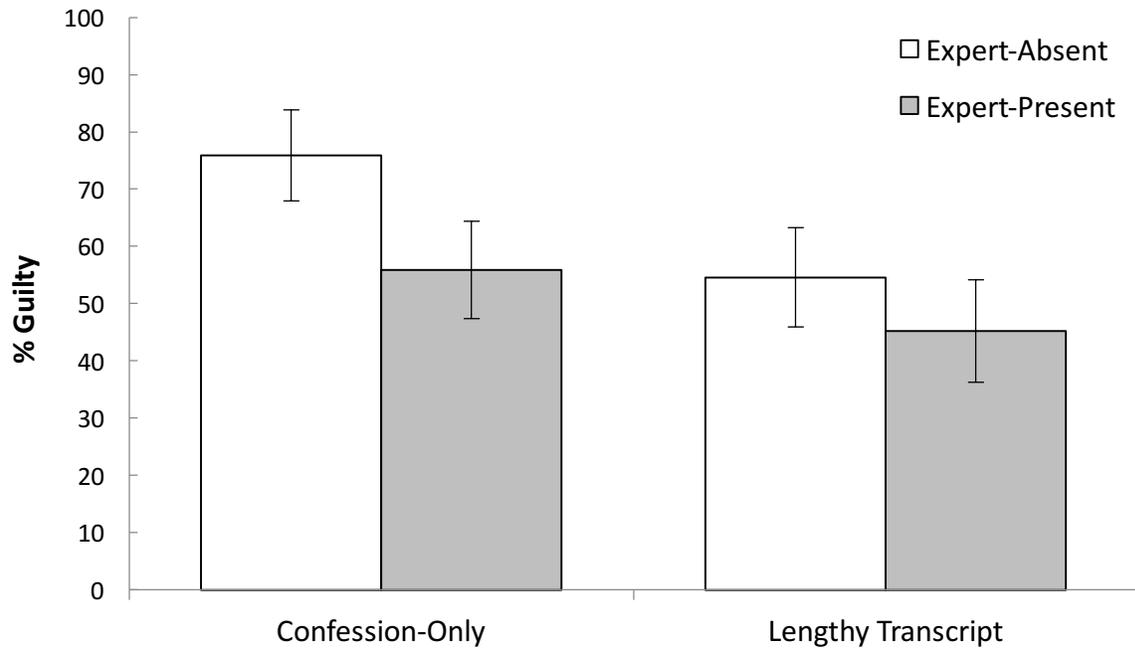
Table 2

*Effects of Transcript Length on Perceptions of the Suspect and Interrogators (Study 2)*

	<b>Confession <i>M (SD)</i></b>	<b>Lengthy <i>M (SD)</i></b>	<b><i>F(1,112)</i></b>	<b><i>p</i></b>	<b><i>d [95% CI]</i></b>
How hard did Michael try to deny guilt?	2.10 (1.81)	7.48 (2.86)	169.73	< .001	2.25 [1.80, 2.20]
How much did Michael seem to know about the crime?	4.52 (2.91)	4.29 (2.58)	0.32	.576	-0.08 [-0.43, 0.27]
How open and cooperative was Michael in his demeanor?	7.81 (1.93)	5.83 (2.64)	22.63	< .001	-0.86 [-1.22, -0.49]
How hard did the detectives try to get Michael to confess?	5.71 (2.69)	8.97 (1.81)	62.31	< .001	1.43 [1.03, 1.82]
How much pressure did the detectives place on Michael during the interrogation?	4.95 (2.65)	8.40 (1.92)	70.10	< .001	1.50 [1.10, 1.89]
How friendly, sympathetic, and understanding were the detectives toward Michael?	8.22 (1.96)	6.38 (2.39)	22.04	< .001	-0.85 [-1.21, -0.48]
How hostile and aggressive were the detectives toward Michael?	2.11 (1.58)	5.00 (2.60)	55.60	< .001	1.35 [0.96, 1.73]
How stressful do you think this interrogation was for Michael?	7.43 (2.48)	9.10 (1.42)	22.41	< .001	0.83 [0.46, 1.19]
Overall, how anxious do you think Michael was during the interrogation?	7.22 (2.38)	8.95 (1.52)	23.89	< .001	0.87 [0.50, 1.23]
What is the likelihood (%) that Michael committed this crime?	69.05 (28.80)	56.63 (34.49)	5.49	.021	-0.39 [-0.74, -0.04]
Guilt-Confidence Composite Score	3.78 (6.73)	0.14 (8.08)	8.31	.005	-0.49 [-0.84, -0.13]

Figure 1

*Transcript X Expert Interrogation on Guilt Judgments (Study 2)*



## **Appendix A**

### **Pre-Transcript Instructions (Study 1)**

#### **Adolescent Condition**

In this study, you will be asked to read parts of the transcript of an actual police interrogation of a suspect in a murder investigation. Please read this transcript carefully. When you are finished, you will be asked to give your opinions about the suspect and the interrogators, and you will be asked several questions about what you read.

The following transcript recounts the interrogation of a person who is suspected of murder. The suspect's name is Michael Wilson, a 14 year-old adolescent who is suspected of having murdered his sister, Stephanie Wilson. On the morning of March 13, 2015 at 7:30am, Michael's parents found Stephanie's body in the hallway of their family home, where both Michael and his sister were living at the time. Michael, his sister, their grandmother, and their parents were all in the home on the night that Stephanie was killed. After investigating the crime scene, Michael was brought to the police station for questioning.

#### **Adult Condition**

In this study, you will be asked to read parts of the transcript of an actual police interrogation of a suspect in a murder investigation. Please read this transcript carefully. When you are finished, you will be asked to give your opinions about the suspect and the interrogators, and you will be asked several questions about what you read.

The following transcript recounts the interrogation of a person who is suspected of murder. The suspect's name is Michael Wilson, a 32 year-old man who is suspected of having murdered his sister, Stephanie Wilson. On the morning of March 13, 2015 at 7:30am, Michael's parents found Stephanie's body in the hallway of their family home, where both Michael and his sister were living at the time. Michael, his sister, their grandmother, and their parents were all in the home on the night that Stephanie was killed. After investigating the crime scene, Michael was brought to the police station for questioning.

**Appendix B**  
**Post-Transcript Questionnaire (Studies 1 and 2)**

1. In your opinion, is Michael (i.e., the suspect who was being interrogated) *guilty* or *not guilty*?

Guilty

Not Guilty

2. How confident are you in this opinion?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all									Very

3. In your opinion, how hard did Michael try to deny guilt?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all									Very

4. How much did Michael seem to know about the crime?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Nothing									Very much

5. How open and cooperative was Michael in his demeanor?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all									Very

6. How hard did the detectives try to get Michael to confess?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all									Very

7. How much pressure did the detectives place on Michael during the interrogation?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
None									Very much



**Appendix C**  
**Comprehension Tests (Study 1)**

**Lengthy Condition**

Please answer each of the questions below by circling one of the three provided options.

1. How old is Michael?
  - a. 14
  - b. 25
  - c. 32
  
2. What crime is Michael accused of?
  - a. Murder
  - b. Rape
  - c. Theft
  
3. Why did Michael get up in the middle of the night?
  - a. He heard a noise.
  - b. He had a headache.
  - c. His friend called on the phone.
  
4. How was Michael's sister killed?
  - a. She was shot.
  - b. She was stabbed.
  - c. She was strangled.

**Confession-Only Condition**

Please answer each of the questions below by circling one of the three provided options.

1. How old is Michael?
  - a. 14
  - b. 25
  - c. 32
  
2. What crime is Michael accused of?
  - a. Murder
  - b. Rape
  - c. Theft
  
3. What color does Michael use to describe his emotions?
  - a. Red
  - b. Green
  - c. Blue
  
4. What was Michael wearing on the night in question?
  - a. Shirt
  - b. Pajamas
  - c. He couldn't remember



**Appendix E**  
**Expert Testimony (Study 2)**

At trial, the defense called DR. RICHARD JONES as an expert witness, and after having first been duly sworn, was examined and testified on his oath as follows.

**DIRECT EXAMINATION OF DR. JONES**

*Defense:* Can you please tell us your name?

*Dr. Jones:* My name is Dr. Richard Jones.

*Defense:* And could you tell us a little about your profession and where you are employed?

*Dr. Jones:* For the past ten years, I have been a professor of psychology at the University of Iowa, where I teach graduate-level courses in psychology. I also conduct research on adolescents' psychological development and how it affects their decision-making in the legal system.

*Defense:* Could you please tell the jury your educational background and training?

*Dr. Jones:* I hold a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Science degree in psychology, and a PhD in developmental psychology. I have been the principal investigator on over twenty research studies on adolescent development that have been published in peer-reviewed academic journals. I am also a member of several professional organizations, such as the American Psychological Association.

*Defense:* What does it mean for a journal to be 'peer-reviewed'?

*Dr. Jones:* It means that the quality of the research is evaluated by experts in the field, and they decide whether it is worthy of publication.

*Defense:* Do you work directly with adolescents in your research?

*Dr. Jones:* Yes, I have worked with adolescents in many of my studies.

*Defense:* According to your research, are adolescents and adults psychologically different?

*Dr. Jones:* Yes, they are very different.

*Defense:* Can you explain what makes them different?

- Dr. Jones:* Well, it starts with their brains. There is an area of the brain called the prefrontal cortex, which greatly influences decision-making and impulse control. Research has found that this area is not fully developed until young adulthood – around age 25 or so.
- Defense:* Does this part of the brain have any effect on adolescents' behavior?
- Dr. Jones:* Absolutely. Because their brains are still developing, adolescents tend to make more impulsive decisions than adults do. In other words, they tend to care more about short-term rewards and to care less about the long-term consequences of their actions than adults do. They are less likely to appreciate how the decisions they make now will affect them later on.
- Defense:* Can you give an example of this?
- Dr. Jones:* Sure. For example, there is some research showing that adolescents are more likely than adults to engage in unprotected sex, or to get in a car with an intoxicated driver, because they are less worried about how these decisions might play out. They are primarily concerned with the 'here and now,' which can lead to some very short-sighted decisions.
- Defense:* Apart from their brains and their decision-making, have you found any other consistent differences between adolescents and adults?
- Dr. Jones:* They act very differently in social situations. Adolescents tend to be more heavily influenced by social pressure than adults are – like peer pressure, which often leads them to engage in risky behaviors like the ones I just mentioned. They're also more likely to comply with authority figures than adults are. Basically, they're more likely to do what they're told.
- Defense:* Are you aware of any published research on how adolescents respond to police interrogation?
- Dr. Jones:* Yes, there is quite a bit of it. In 2010, I conducted a study on this topic as well.
- Defense:* What were the results of that study?
- Dr. Jones:* We placed people in a simulated police interrogation, and we found that adolescents were more likely than adults to take responsibility for an offense that they didn't actually commit.
- Defense:* And how exactly did you arrive at that conclusion?
- Dr. Jones:* Participants in our study were falsely accused of having caused a computer to crash by pressing a button that they were told not to hit.

Although none of them actually pressed the button, we found that 75% of adolescents falsely confessed to pressing the button, but only 59% of young adults confessed to doing the same thing.

*Defense:* How old were the adolescents who participated in this study?

*Dr. Jones:* They were between 12 and 16 years old.

*Defense:* So, to summarize, your study found that younger individuals were more likely to admit to doing something that they did not actually do?

*Dr. Jones:* Correct.

*Defense:* Is it unusual for a person to confess to something that they didn't do?

*Dr. Jones:* It's not as unusual as one might expect. There have been many documented cases in which a person confessed to a crime, but DNA evidence or some other evidence later proved that they were innocent.

*Defense:* Has there been any research on why people might do this?

*Dr. Jones:* Yes, quite a bit. First off, we know that certain interrogation practices can increase the risk that an innocent person will confess. For example, when police threaten an innocent person, or lie to him, or interrogate him for many hours, he becomes more likely to confess. On top of that, some people are inherently more vulnerable to these sorts of practices.

*Defense:* What sorts of people would that include?

*Dr. Jones:* Research has consistently found that false confessions are more common among people who are mentally ill, intellectually disabled, or younger. These sorts of people are more vulnerable to the social pressure that is typically present during a police interrogation.

*Defense:* Did you read the transcript of Michael Wilson's interrogation?

*Dr. Jones:* Yes, I did.

*Defense:* You mentioned several interrogation practices that are believed to be problematic. Based on your expertise in this area, do you believe that some of these practices were used during Michael's interrogation?

*Dr. Jones:* Yes, I believe that they were.

*Defense:* Thank you, Dr. Jones. No further questions.

**CROSS-EXAMINATION OF DR. JONES**

- Prosecution:* Dr. Jones, you described a study in which you found that people sometimes confessed to committing an action that they didn't commit. What action did you accuse them of having committed?
- Dr. Jones:* They were accused of pressing a computer key that they were instructed not to press, which caused a computer to crash and a large amount of data to be erased.
- Prosecution:* Did these people believe that their confession would have any consequences?
- Dr. Jones:* They were told that, if they confessed, they would have to re-enter all of the data that was erased from the computer, which would take about 10 hours.
- Prosecution:* So these individuals were not accused of an actual crime?
- Dr. Jones:* No.
- Prosecution:* And they did not face serious legal consequences if they confessed?
- Dr. Jones:* No.
- Prosecution:* Who were the participants in this study?
- Dr. Jones:* The young adults were undergraduate students at our university, and the adolescents were recruited from the surrounding community.
- Prosecution:* Had these people ever been suspected of an actual crime?
- Dr. Jones:* Not to my knowledge.
- Prosecution:* And the individuals who conducted the simulated interrogation – had they received formal training in police interrogation?
- Dr. Jones:* No.
- Prosecution:* You also mentioned that the adolescent brain is different from the adult brain, and that this difference can affect their decision-making. Is that correct?
- Dr. Jones:* Yes, that's correct.
- Prosecution:* Might this difference also lead them to engage in criminal behavior?

*Dr. Jones:* Yes, it is possible.

*Prosecution:* Did you read Michael Wilson's interrogation?

*Dr. Jones:* I did.

*Prosecution:* Was Michael facing serious legal consequences if he confessed to murdering his sister?

*Dr. Jones:* Yes.

*Prosecution:* Did Michael confess to murdering his sister?

*Dr. Jones:* Yes.

*Prosecution:* Thank you, Dr. Jones. No further questions.

**Appendix F**  
**Comprehension Test Items (Study 2)**

**Items Used in Both Transcript Conditions**

Please answer each of the questions below by circling one of the three provided options.

1. What crime is Michael accused of?
  - a. Murder
  - b. Rape
  - c. Theft
  
2. How old is Michael?
  - a. 14
  - b. 25
  - c. 32
  
3. What color does Michael use to describe his emotions?
  - a. Red
  - b. Green
  - c. Blue
  
4. What was Michael wearing on the night in question?
  - a. Shirt
  - b. Pajamas
  - c. He couldn't remember

**Additional Items Used in Lengthy Condition**

1. Who is Cloud?
  - a. He is Michael's best friend.
  - b. He is a character from Michael's favorite computer game.
  - c. He is a character from Michael's favorite book.

2. How was Stephanie killed?
  - a. She was shot.
  - b. She was stabbed.
  - c. She was strangled.
  
3. Why did Michael get up in the middle of the night?
  - a. He heard a noise.
  - b. He had a headache.
  - c. His friend called on the phone.
  
4. What time did Michael wake up during the night in question?
  - a. 9:00 pm
  - b. 4:30 am
  - c. 11:00 pm

**Appendix G****Expert Testimony Comprehension Test (Study 2; Expert-Present Condition)**

Please answer each of the questions below by selecting one of the three provided options.

1. Who is Dr. Richard Jones?
  - a. He is a pediatrician.
  - b. He is a psychologist.
  - c. He is a forensic scientist.
  
2. According to Dr. Jones, research has shown that...
  - a. Adolescents are more likely to suffer from depression.
  - b. Adolescents rarely engage in unprotected sex.
  - c. Adolescents tend to be more impulsive than adults.
  
3. In Dr. Jones' research study, what were the participants accused of doing?
  - a. Crashing a computer
  - b. Stealing money
  - c. Cheating on a test
  
4. Who were the participants in Dr. Jones' study?
  - a. Children with severe intellectual disabilities
  - b. Undergraduate students and adolescents from the community
  - c. Juveniles who were recently released from prison



## Appendix I Research Questions

### Study 1

1. **H1:** Participants will rate the interrogation as more coercive—and will be less likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty—if the suspect is described as a juvenile rather than an adult.
2. **H2:** Participants will rate the interrogation as less coercive—and will be more likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty—if they read only the suspect's confession as opposed to a lengthier account of the interrogation.
3. **H3:** The effect of the suspect's age will depend on the length of the transcript, such that those who read a lengthier account of the interrogation of a juvenile will rate the interrogation as most coercive, and will be least likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty. Conversely, those who read only the confession of an adult suspect will rate the interrogation as least coercive, and will be most likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty.

### Study 2

1. **H1:** Participants who read expert testimony will rate the interrogation as more coercive—and will be less likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty—compared to those who do not read expert testimony.
2. **H2:** As in Study 1, participants who read a lengthier account of the interrogation will rate the interrogation as more coercive, compared to those who read only the suspect's confession.
3. **H3:** The effect of transcript length will depend on the presence of expert testimony, such that those who read a lengthier interrogation transcript *and* expert testimony will rate the interrogation as most coercive, and will be least likely to misjudge the suspect as guilty.

**Appendix J**  
**IRB Approval Letter (Study 1)**



**APPROVAL NUMBER** 1610007649

Office of Sponsored  
Programs and Research

Towson University  
8000 York Road  
Towson, MD 21252-0001

t. 410 704-2236  
f. 410 704-4494

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Lauren Grove

**FROM:** Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human  
Participants, Elizabeth Katz, Chair

**DATE:** November 30th, 2016

**RE:** Approval of Research Involving the Use of Human Participants

Thank you for submitting an Application for Approval of Research Involving the Use of Human Participants to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants (IRB) at Towson University. The IRB hereby approves your proposal titled:

***The Influence of Suspect Age on Juror Decision-Making***

Please note that this approval is granted on the condition that you provide the IRB with the following information and/or documentation:

N/A

If you should encounter any new risks, reactions, or injuries while conducting your research, please notify the IRB. Should your research extend beyond one year in duration, or should there be substantive changes in your research protocol, you will need to submit another application for approval at that time.

We wish you every success in your research project. If you have any questions, please call me at (410) 704-2236.

cc: Jeffrey Kukucka

**Appendix K**  
**IRB Approval Letter (Study 2)**



**APPROVAL NUMBER:** 1610007649A001

Office of Sponsored  
Programs and Research

Towson University  
8000 York Road  
Towson, MD 21252-0001

t. 410 704-2236  
f. 410 704-4494

**TO:** Lauren Grove  
**FROM:** Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human  
Participants, Elizabeth Katz, Chair  
**DATE:** May 17th, 2017  
**RE:** Approval of Amended Research Involving the Use of Human  
Participants, Approval Number

Thank you for submitting an Application for Approval of Amended Research Involving the Use of Human Participants to the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Participants (IRB) at Towson University. The IRB hereby approves your amendment to protocol titled:

*The Influence of Suspect Age on Juror Decision-Making*

If you should encounter any new risks, reactions, or injuries while conducting your research, please notify the IRB. Should your research extend beyond one year in duration, or should there be substantive changes in your research protocol, you will need to submit another application for approval at that time.

We wish you every success in your research project. If you have any questions, please call me at (410) 704-2236.

cc: Jeffrey Kukucka

### Appendix L Thesis Committee Approval Form

Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines | 26

**TOWSON UNIVERSITY  
OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**THESIS COMMITTEE APPROVAL FORM**

Student's Name

Lauren Grove

Chairperson, Thesis Committee

  
Signature

Jeff Kukucka  
Typed name

Member   
Signature

Maria P. Fracasso  
Typed name

Member   
Signature

B. Brand  
Typed name

Member \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature Typed name

**Note:** Please attach a description of the affiliation and credentials of any non-Towson University members of the Committee, and the members' *curriculum vita*.

Approved by

Graduate Program Director  3/29/17  
Signature Date

Department Chairperson

 3/30/17  
Signature Date

Dean of Graduate Studies

 3-30-17  
Signature Date

**Note:** It is the responsibility of the student to obtain all signatures *before beginning the proposal*.

## Appendix M Informed Consent (Study 1)

You are invited to participate in a research study of how individuals make judgments about police interrogations of criminal suspects. This page contains important information about this study. Please read all of the information on this page before agreeing to participate.

We hope to recruit a total of 120 individuals to participate in this study. Participants must be at least 18 years of age. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to read an actual transcript of the interrogation of a suspect who is accused of murder. You will then be asked to answer several questions about your impressions of the suspect and the interrogator.

This study should take approximately **30 minutes** to complete. In exchange for your participation, you will receive **one** research credit in the Towson University Psychology Research Participant Pool.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you agree to participate, you are free to end your participation at any time during the study without penalty. You are also free to decline to answer any of the questions that you are asked during the study. Your decision to withdraw from this study or to decline to answer any of its questions will not result in any adverse consequences.

**Benefits.** Your participation in this study will provide you with an opportunity to learn about how psychology can inform the criminal justice system. Ultimately, we hope that the results of this study can be used to improve the quality of the information that is presented to jurors in real-life trials.

**Risks.** In this study, you will be asked to read about a murder and the ensuing interrogation. These materials do not include any details that are more graphic than those that are typically found in the news or on crime-related television shows. If you experience any discomfort while reading these materials, you are free to end your participation in the study at any time without penalty.

**Confidentiality.** Any information obtained in this study will be kept strictly confidential. In any written reports or publications, only aggregate data will be presented, and no individual participant will be identified or identifiable. All records will be kept in a locked file cabinet and/or a password-protected computer file, and only the researcher will have access to these records. All data will be destroyed five years after the publication of the study, and no report of the data will ever be linked to you.

**Anonymity.** Each participant will be assigned a unique ID code. These codes will be stored separately from any data that is collected, such that no individual's responses can be linked to their identity.

**Contact information.** The researcher conducting this study is Lauren Grove, a graduate student at Towson University. If you have any questions about this study, you may contact her at [lgrove1@students.towson.edu](mailto:lgrove1@students.towson.edu) or (717) 658-9174. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Towson University Institutional Review Board (Study #1610007649). If you have any concerns or questions about the rights of research participants or ethics of this study, you may contact the Towson University Office of Sponsored Programs and Research at [irb@towson.edu](mailto:irb@towson.edu) or (410) 704-2236, or the chairperson of the Towson IRB, Dr. Elizabeth Katz, at [ekatz@towson.edu](mailto:ekatz@towson.edu) or (410) 704-3207.

By signing below, you are indicating that you have read and understood all of the information on this page, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Informed Consent (Study 1)**

You are invited to participate in a research study of how individuals make judgments about police interrogations of criminal suspects. This page contains important information about this study. Please read all of the information on this page before agreeing to participate.

We hope to recruit a total of 120 individuals to participate in this study. Participants must be at least 18 years of age. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to read an actual transcript of the interrogation of a suspect who is accused of murder. You will then be asked to answer several questions about your impressions of the suspect and the interrogator.

This study should take approximately **80 minutes** to complete. In exchange for your participation, you will receive **three** research credits in the Towson University Psychology Research Participant Pool.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you agree to participate, you are free to end your participation at any time during the study without penalty. You are also free to decline to answer any of the questions that you are asked during the study. Your decision to withdraw from this study or to decline to answer any of its questions will not result in any adverse consequences.

**Benefits.** Your participation in this study will provide you with an opportunity to learn about how psychology can inform the criminal justice system. Ultimately, we hope that the results of this study can be used to improve the quality of the information that is presented to jurors in real-life trials.

**Risks.** In this study, you will be asked to read about a murder and the ensuing interrogation. These materials do not include any details that are more graphic than those that are typically found in the news or on crime-related television shows. If you experience any discomfort while reading these materials, you are free to end your participation in the study at any time without penalty.

**Confidentiality.** Any information obtained in this study will be kept strictly confidential. In any written reports or publications, only aggregate data will be presented, and no individual participant will be identified or identifiable. All records will be kept in a locked file cabinet and/or a password-protected computer file, and only the researcher will have access to these records. All data will be destroyed five years after the publication of the study, and no report of the data will ever be linked to you.

**Anonymity.** Each participant will be assigned a unique ID code. These codes will be stored separately from any data that is collected, such that no individual's responses can be linked to their identity.

**Contact information.** The researcher conducting this study is Lauren Grove, a graduate student at Towson University. If you have any questions about this study, you may contact her at [lgrove1@students.towson.edu](mailto:lgrove1@students.towson.edu) or (717) 658-9174. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Towson University Institutional Review Board (Study #1610007649). If you have any concerns or questions about the rights of research participants or ethics of this study, you may contact the Towson University Office of Sponsored Programs and Research at [irb@towson.edu](mailto:irb@towson.edu) or (410) 704-2236, or the chairperson of the Towson IRB, Dr. Elizabeth Katz, at [ekatz@towson.edu](mailto:ekatz@towson.edu) or (410) 704-3207.

By signing below, you are indicating that you have read and understood all of the information on this page, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Researcher: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Informed Consent (Study 2)**

You are invited to participate in a research study of how individuals make judgments about police interrogations of criminal suspects. This page contains important information about this study. Please read all of the information on this page before agreeing to participate.

We hope to recruit a total of 160 individuals to participate in this study. Participants must be at least 18 years of age. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to read an actual transcript of the interrogation of a suspect who is accused of murder. You will then be asked to answer several questions about your impressions of the suspect and the interrogator.

This study should take approximately **20 minutes** to complete. In exchange for your participation, you will receive a **\$1.00** credit to your Amazon Mechanical Turk Account.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you agree to participate, you are free to end your participation at any time during the study without penalty. You are also free to decline to answer any of the questions that you are asked during the study. Your decision to withdraw from this study or to decline to answer any of its questions will not result in any adverse consequences.

**Benefits.** Your participation in this study will provide you with an opportunity to learn about how psychology can inform the criminal justice system. Ultimately, we hope that the results of this study can be used to improve the quality of the information that is presented to jurors in real-life trials.

**Risks.** In this study, you will be asked to read about a murder and the ensuing interrogation. These materials do not include any details that are more graphic than those that are typically found in the news or on crime-related television shows. If you experience any discomfort while reading these materials, you are free to end your participation in the study at any time without penalty.

**Confidentiality.** Any information obtained in this study will be kept strictly confidential. In any written reports or publications, only aggregate data will be presented, and no individual participant will be identified or identifiable. All research records will be kept in a password-protected computer file, and only the researcher will have access to these records. All data that is collected will be destroyed five years after the publication of the study, and no report of the data will ever be linked to you.

**Anonymity.** The only link between your identity and the information that you provide in this study will be your Amazon Mechanical Turk user ID. Your ID code will be stored separately from your responses, such that your responses cannot be traced back to your ID code. After the study is completed, these user ID codes will be permanently deleted from our records.

**Contact information.** The researcher conducting this study is Lauren Grove, a graduate student at Towson University. If you have questions about this study, you may contact her at [lgrove1@students.towson.edu](mailto:lgrove1@students.towson.edu) or (717) 658-9174. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Towson University Institutional Review Board (Study #1610007649). If you have any concerns or questions about the rights of research participants or ethics of this study, you may contact the Towson University Office of Sponsored Programs and Research at [irb@towson.edu](mailto:irb@towson.edu) or (410) 704-2236, or the chairperson of the Towson IRB, Dr. Elizabeth Katz, at [ekatz@towson.edu](mailto:ekatz@towson.edu) or (410) 704-3207.

By checking the box below and clicking “next,” you are indicating that you have read and understood all of the information on this page, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I have read all of the information on this page and I agree to participate in this study

### **Informed Consent (Study 2)**

You are invited to participate in a research study of how individuals make judgments about police interrogations of criminal suspects. This page contains important information about this study. Please read all of the information on this page before agreeing to participate.

We hope to recruit a total of 160 individuals to participate in this study. Participants must be at least 18 years of age. If you agree to participate, you will be asked to read an actual transcript of the interrogation of a suspect who is accused of murder. You will then be asked to answer several questions about your impressions of the suspect and the interrogator.

This study should take approximately **60 minutes** to complete. In exchange for your participation, you will receive a **\$4.00** credit to your Amazon Mechanical Turk Account.

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. Even if you agree to participate, you are free to end your participation at any time during the study without penalty. You are also free to decline to answer any of the questions that you are asked during the study. Your decision to withdraw from this study or to decline to answer any of its questions will not result in any adverse consequences.

**Benefits.** Your participation in this study will provide you with an opportunity to learn about how psychology can inform the criminal justice system. Ultimately, we hope that the results of this study can be used to improve the quality of the information that is presented to jurors in real-life trials.

**Risks.** In this study, you will be asked to read about a murder and the ensuing interrogation. These materials do not include any details that are more graphic than those that are typically found in the news or on crime-related television shows. If you experience any discomfort while reading these materials, you are free to end your participation in the study at any time without penalty.

**Confidentiality.** Any information obtained in this study will be kept strictly confidential. In any written reports or publications, only aggregate data will be presented, and no individual participant will be identified or identifiable. All research records will be kept in a password-protected computer file, and only the researcher will have access to these records. All data that is collected will be destroyed five years after the publication of the study, and no report of the data will ever be linked to you.

**Anonymity.** The only link between your identity and the information that you provide in this study will be your Amazon Mechanical Turk user ID. Your ID code will be stored separately from your responses, such that your responses cannot be traced back to your ID code. After the study is completed, these user ID codes will be permanently deleted from our records.

**Contact information.** The researcher conducting this study is Lauren Grove, a graduate student at Towson University. If you have any questions about this study, you may contact her at [lgrove1@students.towson.edu](mailto:lgrove1@students.towson.edu) or (717) 658-9174. This study has been reviewed and approved by the Towson University Institutional Review Board (Study #XXXXXX). If you have any concerns or questions about the rights of research participants or ethics of this study, you may contact the Towson University Office of Sponsored Programs and Research at [irb@towson.edu](mailto:irb@towson.edu) or (410) 704-2236, or the chairperson of the Towson IRB, Dr. Elizabeth Katz, at [ekatz@towson.edu](mailto:ekatz@towson.edu) or (410) 704-3207.

By checking the box below and clicking “next,” you are indicating that you have read and understood all of the information on this page, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I have read all of the information on this page and I agree to participate in this study.

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**Footnotes**

<sup>1</sup> Undergraduate participants volunteered for either a 90-minute session or a 30-minute session, which dictated whether they were assigned to the *Lengthy* or *Confession-Only* condition (respectively). Each session was randomly assigned to either the *Juvenile* or *Adult* condition.

<sup>2</sup> Online participants volunteered for either a 60-minute study (for which they were paid \$4.00) or a 20-minute study (for which they were paid \$1.00), which dictated whether they were assigned to the *Lengthy* or *Confession-Only* condition (respectively). Then, within each Transcript condition, each individual participant was randomly assigned to either the *Expert-Present* or *Expert-Absent* condition.

<sup>3</sup> Online participants volunteered for either a 60-minute study or a 20-minute study. Because both studies were posted at the same time, some participants completed both. For people who completed the study twice, the data from their first response were included (as indicated by an electronic timestamp), but the data from their second response were excluded.

## Lauren J. Grove

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### EDUCATION

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- 2018 (expected)**      **M.A., Clinical Psychology**, Towson University (GPA: 3.96)  
 Thesis: *Not Guilty by Reason of Youth? Perceptions of Coercion in Juvenile Interrogations*  
 Advisor: Jeff Kukucka, Ph.D.
- 2015**                      **B.A., Psychology**, *Summa Cum Laude*, Temple University (GPA: 3.96)  
 Honors Thesis: *Future Expectations of Formally and Informally Processed Juvenile Offenders*  
 Advisor: Laurence Steinberg, Ph.D.

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### HONORS AND AWARDS

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- 2017-Present              Research Assistantship with Tuition Waiver, Towson University
- 2016-Present              Graduate Assistantship with Tuition Waiver, Towson University
- 2017                          Graduate Research Grant, Towson University (\$500)
- 2017                          Graduate Research Travel Grant, Towson University (\$500)
- 2013-15                      Honors Psychology Program, Temple University
- 2012-15                      Dean's List, Temple University
- 2012-15                      Psi Chi, International Honor Society in Psychology, Temple University
- 2012-15                      Academic Excellence Scholarship, Temple University

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### CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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- Grove, L., & Kukucka, J. (2018).** *Does expert testimony sensitize jurors to juveniles' vulnerability in the interrogation room?* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Psychology-Law Society, Memphis, TN.
- Grove, L., & Kukucka, J. (2017).** *Not guilty by reason of youth? Perceptions of coercion in adolescent interrogations.* Poster presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Psychological Science, Boston, MA.
- Grove, L., & Steinberg, L. (2015).** *Future expectations of formally and informally processed juvenile offenders.* Poster presented at the Temple University Undergraduate and Graduate Research Symposium, Philadelphia, PA.

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### RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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- 2017-present      **Research Assistant, Dr. Jeff Kukucka** (Towson University)  
*Psychology and Law Lab*
- Developed and carried out two independent research projects on juror perceptions of adolescence as a risk factor for false confession.
  - Collected original data from undergraduates and from Amazon Mechanical Turk and analyzed data using SPSS.
- 2017-present      **Research Assistant, Dr. Joan Antunes** (Towson University)  
*Moving to collective efficacy: How inner-city mobility impacts minority and immigrant youth victimization and violence.*  
*Funded by W.E.B. Du Bois Fellowship Grant*
- Conducted extensive literature reviews to assess how residential mobility impacts minority and immigrant youth delinquency.
  - Analyzed data using SPSS and Hierarchical Linear Modeling.
- 2015-16            **Research Assistant, Dr. Laurence Steinberg** (Temple University)  
*Crossroads: Formal vs. Informal Processing in the Juvenile Justice System*
- Administered over 60 research interviews to juvenile offenders to assess mental health, risky behaviors, peer networks, and recidivism.
  - Managed caseloads of approximately 5-10 participants each month by gathering consent forms and scheduling interviews.
  - Developed an original undergraduate research thesis and analyzed data using SPSS.
- 2014-15            **Research Assistant** (Temple University)  
*Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System: Funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*
- Administered research surveys to 15 Philadelphia high school classes to assess risky behavior and mental health in adolescents.
  - Presented research findings from the previous year to educators in each school.

### CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

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- 2017-present      **Clinical Intern, Office of the Public Defender** (Baltimore, MD)  
Supervisor: Nikiana Dorsey, LCSW-C
- Conducted biopsychosocial interviews with detained youth to assist with mitigation in their case.
  - Conducted collateral interviews with the youths' family members, guardians, and teachers.

- Researched and recommended treatment plans such as residential treatment centers, mentor programs, family and individual therapy, and vocational assistance programs.
- Synthesized clinical interviews and treatment recommendations into a comprehensive psychological report for the court.

2015-16

**Assistant Training Coordinator, Beck Institute (Philadelphia, PA)**

Supervisor: Judith Beck, Ph.D., Maritza Lawson, LCPC

- Managed the Beck Supervision Program by pairing clinical trainees with experienced practitioners
- Conducted phone intakes and consultations with new clients at the Beck Institute Center for Psychotherapy.
- Organized cognitive behavioral therapy workshops for licensed mental health professionals and researchers globally by assembling workshop materials, registering participants, and managing events.

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**OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE**


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2016-present

**Graduate Assistant, Towson University Clinical Psychology Program**

Supervisors: Dr. Elizabeth Katz, Ph.D., Dr. Jonathan Mattanah, Ph.D.

- Promoted the clinical psychology program through outreach to potential applicants and marketing at university program fairs and events.
- Organized, scheduled, and managed over 40 interviews with applicants.
- Assisted graduate students with registering for classes, finding internships, and meeting their academic requirements.

2016-17

**Tutor, Towson University Writing Center**

- Mentored undergraduate and graduate students in writing and research skills through one-on-one and group tutoring.

2015

**Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program**

- Engaged in a semester-long, interactive seminar with 15 undergraduate students and 15 incarcerated men at Graterford Prison in Pennsylvania.
- Generated strategies collaboratively to prevent the cycle of crime in adolescence through weekly class presentations and research papers.

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**COMMUNITY/INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**


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2014-15

**Volunteer, Center City Crime Victim Services (Philadelphia, PA)**

- Organized court documents and claims and scheduled appointments with staff psychologists, lawyers, and financial coordinators.
- Provided outreach to victims of crime in Philadelphia to connect them with available services.

2014

**Study Abroad Program, Temple University (Rome, Italy)**

- Studied psychology through the perspective of Italian and European culture by exploring cultural differences in language, behavior, and societal norms.

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**PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS**


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2017

*American Psychology-Law Society, Student Member*

2017

*Association for Psychological Science, Student Member*


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**RESEARCH QUALIFICATIONS/CLINICAL SKILLS**


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**Computer Skills:** SPSS (including PROCESS macro) • Amazon Mechanical Turk • PsychSurveys for online research • Microsoft Office

**Assessments:** *Differential Ability Scale-II (DAS-II) • International Personality Disorder Examination (IPDE) • The Minnesota Multiphase Personality Inventory (MMPI) • NEO Personality Inventory-3 (NEO-PI-3) • The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-IV (WAIS-IV) • The Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-5 (WISC-5)*

**Clinical Training:** Manualized Cognitive Behavior Therapy • Biopsychosocial Interviewing • Unified Protocol for Emotional Disorders

