Community Perceptions of Juvenile Coercion in an Interrogation Context

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Abstract

In the most severe cases, juveniles are often transferred to the adult criminal system and tried before a jury of adults. Research has shown that compared to adults, adolescents are more suggestible which may put them at an increased risk of falsely confessing. However, research is unclear on exactly how adults perceive juveniles in an interrogation context. Two hundred sixty-eight participants completed a survey in which the race and age of an interrogation suspect were manipulated to determine their influence on participants’ perceptions of the suspect. Results indicated that age, not race, leads adults to perceive younger suspects as more suggestible than older suspects, and minimization tactics were perceived to be less coercive than maximization tactics.

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Confession evidence weighs heavily on a judge or jury’s decision when deciding a defendant’s verdict. Many people are baffled by how an innocent person could confess to a crime they did not commit, but it happens more often than one would expect (Garrett, 2008). This is especially true for adolescents, whose psychosocial immaturity increases their susceptibility to falsely confess (Owen-Kostelnik, Reppucci, & Meyer, 2006). In addition to age, race might be a factor that affects people’s perceptions of adolescent suspects. Prior research has examined racial stereotypes of young black males in the legal context and found that they are often perceived as more adult-like in their decision-making capacities (Graham & Lowery, 2004). The current research aims to examine how members of the community think about developmental issues for adolescents of different ages and races when questioned by police. The study also examines whether the public perceives commonly used police interrogation tactics as coercive when used on adolescents and young adults.

Research has demonstrated that many juveniles do not understand the legal terminology and protections afforded to them. These rights were extended to juveniles in the landmark cases Kent v. U.S. (1966) and In re Gault (1967) by giving them legal autonomy to waive their rights without a parent, guardian, or attorney present. Grisso (1981) found that suspects under age 15 do not fully comprehend their Miranda rights or know how to apply them as well as older adolescents and adults. Research has also found that when controlling for verbal IQ, older adolescents understood their rights better than younger adolescents, and Miranda comprehension correlated negatively with false confessions (Goldstein, Condie, Kalbeitzer, Osman, & Geier, 2003). To further complicate the problem, evidence suggests that 90% of juveniles waive their rights when being interrogated by police (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006). Taken together, the body
of research calls into question whether juveniles can competently waive their rights and meet the court’s prescription of a knowing, voluntary, and intelligent waiver. Despite the evidence that young people lack the ability to make a competent waiver, the Supreme Court in *Fare v. Michael C.* (1979) maintained that minors should not receive any extra protection, such as an advocate, when being interrogated. Subsequently, the Court adopted the totality of circumstances approach to assess admissibility of confession evidence in court, reflecting the attitude that juveniles are perceived as adult-like criminals (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006).

Beginning in the late 1970s, states started implementing “get tough” juvenile justice policies, which has led to a greater number of young defendants being transferred to criminal court to be tried as adults (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006; Schubert et al., 2010). Between 1985 and 1994, there was a 71% increase in juvenile cases transferred to adult criminal court, and between 1994 and 1998 there was a 100% increase (Salekin, 2002). Although many juveniles are transferred for serious, chronic, or violent offenses, laws have expanded to include other crimes as well (Klein, 1998). Transfer policies have also widened the age span for eligibility, leading to various levels of developmental competency among juveniles being tried in adult court (Schubert et al., 2010). Of the 200 people exonerated by DNA evidence, 16% had falsely confessed, and 39% were juveniles who had been transferred at the time (Garrett, 2008). When juveniles are transferred to adult criminal court, they often receive similar or harsher sentences than adults and are incarcerated in adult facilities (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006; Steinberg & Scott, 2003). Research has demonstrated that because juveniles are psychosocially immature, which makes them less competent to defend themselves at trial; they are at a greater risk of being convicted (Grisso et al., 2003). One possible explanation for this finding is that jurors may not fully understand the developmental and cognitive decision-making capacities of adolescents, making
them less likely to consider psychosocial immaturity as a mitigating factor when evaluating key pieces of evidence such as a disputed confession.

According to reports from police agencies, between 66% and 88% of police detectives are trained to use the Reid technique (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006). Once an adolescent has been brought in for questioning, detectives begin the process by conducting a behavioral analysis interview (BAI). The purpose of the BAI is to determine the suspect in the case through the use of deception detection, which involves analyzing verbal and non-verbal responses despite research consistently showing that behavioral cues are not indicative of deception (Kassin, Drizin, Grisso, Gudjonsson, Leo, & Redlich, 2010; Meyer & Reppucci, 2007). Studies have shown that college students without interrogation training have similar or higher accuracy rates compared to police officers at detecting deception. Furthermore, training college students and police officers in the Reid technique has been shown to actually reduce accuracy while increasing confidence (Kassin et al., 2010; Kassin & Fong, 1999; Meyer & Reppucci, 2007). It is of special concern that police use behavioral analysis when interviewing juveniles because they commonly show many of the behaviors that the Reid technique has labeled as a sign of deception including gaze aversion, frozen posture, and fidgety movement (Kassin et al., 2010). Adolescents also tend to slouch more in their seats, make less eye contact than adults, and give more delayed responses if they do not understand the legal terminology used by interrogators (Meyer & Reppucci, 2007). Together, these factors can lead detectives to label inaccurately adolescents as deceptive. If, for any reason the detective believes the suspect is guilty, the behavior analysis interview ends and Miranda warnings are read to the juvenile. If juveniles waive their rights, the formal interrogation has begun. Because the interrogation is a guilt-presumptive process and the goal is to obtain a confession, interviewer bias leads detectives to focus only on confirmatory
evidence and avoid exploring possible disconfirmatory evidence (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004; Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006).

Adolescents may be especially vulnerable to perceiving short-term benefits as more valuable than long-term outcomes. The totality of circumstances standard allows judges, even if they perceive the confession not to be completely voluntary, to include confessions and leave it up to the jury to decide how much weight to assign it in light of all the evidence against the defendant. Presumably, this legal standard for interrogation evidence has a substantial impact on subsequent decisions made by jurors because research has shown that people tend to be overconfident in their ability to resist coercion (Wakefield & Underwager, 1998) and even when jury members recognize that interrogation techniques are psychologically coercive, they still believe the interrogation is not likely to elicit a false confession (Leo & Liu, 2009).

Because the Reid technique advocates using the same tactics with adult and youth suspects, it makes police somewhat insensitive to the developmental capacities of youth in the interrogation context. The techniques used by police when questioning suspects include using multiple parts, negatives, double negatives, and advanced vocabulary which sometimes leads to inaccurate reports from adolescents (Meyer & Reppucci, 2007). When these techniques are used, adolescents are more likely to incorporate the detectives’ suspected account of what happened into their own narrative of the events in question (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006). Thirty-nine of the two hundred individuals exonerated by the Innocence project had falsely confessed to police. Of those, thirteen were minors that had incorporated detailed, accurate information gleaned from the detectives into their confession because they were questioned using manipulative techniques (Garrett, 2009). In a survey of law enforcement officers, Meyer and Reppucci (2007) found that police see juveniles, as compared to adults, as having less mature judgment and decision making,
more likely to focus on immediate consequences, and more malleable. Despite their knowledge of adolescents’ diminished developmental capacities, officers do not apply this to the interrogation context and continue to use unreliable questioning techniques.

Psychosocial immaturity puts juveniles at risk for falsely confessing to a crime. Even if their cognitive processes are equal to that of an adult, their psychosocial development leads them to make decisions that distinguish them from adults (Steinberg & Scott, 2003). In a database of 125 proven false confessions, 33% were juveniles, and more than half of this group was 15 or younger (Drizin & Leo, 2004). In examining 328 exoneration cases, Gross et al. (2005) found that 44% of juvenile exonerees falsely confessed compared to 13% of adults, and 75% of 12- to 15-year olds falsely confessed. Factors that undermine competent decision making include susceptibility to peer influence, inaccurate perception of risk, future orientation, and impulsivity. Together, these are known as immaturity of judgment (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006). Juveniles tend to discount the future and weigh short-term risks and benefits more heavily when making decisions (Steinberg & Scott, 2003). Along with psychologically manipulative interrogation techniques, detectives also isolate the suspect in a small, secluded room to increase anxiety and prompt a confession (Kassin, 2008). Adolescents also tend to use a risk-reward calculus that emphasizes opportunities for gains and discounts protection from losses (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006). As a result of this imbalance, juvenile suspects are especially vulnerable to confessing to leave the highly pressured nature of the interrogation context. The MacArthur Juvenile Capacity Study created a measure of psychosocial maturity by assessing adolescents’ risk perception, sensation seeking, impulsivity, resistance to peer influences, and future orientation (Steinberg, Cauffman, Woolard, Graham, & Banich, 2009). The results indicated that by age 16, adolescents’ have cognitive capacities that are comparable to those of adults; however, their
psychosocial functioning, even at age 18, is significantly less mature than that of individuals in their mid-20s. In an interrogation context where stress is high, adolescents’ skewed cost-benefit calculus and immaturity of judgment make them more likely to value the possibility of escaping the pressure of interrogation by confessing to police. In a sample of 114 justice-involved youth, suspects who were 15-years old and younger, compared to those who were 16- and 17- years old, were significantly more likely to waive their rights to counsel and confess (Viljoen, Klaver, & Roesch, 2005). Combined with the aversive context of an interrogation, the diminished decision making capacity of adolescents likely has an interactive effect with neurobiological development. Brain maturation that occurs during adolescence plays a large role in long-term planning, regulating emotion, impulse control, and the evaluation of risk and reward. These processes continue to mature into late adolescence, leaving young adolescents at the greatest risk of falsely confessing (Steinberg & Scott, 2003).

In addition to psychosocial immaturity, adolescents are also more suggestible than adults. Interrogative suggestibility is the tendency for suspects’ accounts to be influenced by misleading information and pressure from the interrogator (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006). Studies have shown that the younger an adolescent is, the more suggestible he tends to be and the more likely he is to provide a false confession. Juveniles have an increased tendency to comply with authority figures and to provide inaccurate reports when questioned in a leading, repeated, and suggestive fashion (Meyer & Reppucci, 2007; Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006). Although police are aware that coercive questioning techniques may affect the accuracy of suspects’ reports, they do not know that adolescents are at increased risk for suggestion compared to adults (Meyer & Reppucci, 2007). Several aspects of an interrogation contribute to youth’s interrogative suggestibility. These include juveniles’ eagerness to please, trust in authority figures, lack of
self-confidence, desire to protect friends and relatives, concerns about impressing peers, and desire to leave the interrogation as soon as possible (Meyer & Reppucci, 2007). Grisso et al. (2003) used a hypothetical mock-interrogation situation to compare juveniles’ and young adults’ decision to confess to police, remain silent, or deny the offense. Adolescents ages 15 and younger were more likely than adults to make legal choices that complied with requests from authority, emphasized short-term consequences of decisions, and perceived risk differently than adults. In fact, youths ages 15 and younger showed a level of impairment similar to that of people found incompetent to stand trial.

During the interrogation, police may use any number of strategies to get the suspect to confess (Scott-Hayward, 2007). For example, detectives may express absolute certainty of guilt, present real or false evidence, or interrupt denials by the suspect. This highly confrontational approach is known as maximization and is meant to convey that denying involvement is futile. Detectives use this tactic as a way to overwhelm suspects into believing that the evidence against them will certainly lead to a conviction and that confessing to police is in their best interest (Kassin et al., 2010).

In contrast, minimization is a strategy that detectives may also use during the course of an interrogation. This technique commonly offers sympathy and moral justification for the crime, which lead suspects to infer leniency in exchange for a confession. Russano, Meissner, Narchet, and Kassin, (2005) tried to get suspects to confess to cheating by promising leniency, making minimizing remarks, using both tactics, or using no tactics. Minimization, just like an explicit offer of leniency, increased the rate of false confession. Essentially, minimization is a loophole for police because suspects interpret it as a promise of leniency, which is inadmissible in court (Kassin et al., 2010). The usage of maximization and minimization are even more troubling
when used with juveniles, because they are more compliant and suggestible than adults (Redlich & Goodman, 2003). It is believed that these strategies contribute to a greater number of juvenile confessions because interrogators overwhelm psychosocially immature youth and lead them to believe the consequences of confessing are more desirable than continuing to deny involvement. According to the Reid technique, police should use the same strategies and language when interrogating youth (Meyer & Reppucci, 2007), yet research has shown that age is associated with understanding of interrogation procedures. Younger adolescents display poorer understanding of the procedures and deceptive techniques compared to older adolescents and adults (Woolard, Cleary, Harvell, & Chen, 2008).

Factors that put youth at an increased risk for falsely confessing may be exacerbated among minorities, especially those from low socioeconomic (SES) backgrounds. Demographic statistics on arrest rates show that minorities are overrepresented in the juvenile justice system. In 2002, black juveniles accounted for 43% of all juvenile arrests, but only 16% of the U.S. population under the age of 18 was black (Engen, Steen, & Bridges, 2002). Eighty-five percent of exonerees between 1989 and 2004 who were younger than 18 at the time of their arrest and had falsely confessed were black (Gross, Jacoby, Matheson, Montgomery, & Patil, 2005). In a study where parents and their teens were interviewed about their knowledge of legal rights and interrogation techniques, minority race was associated with a poorer understanding of interrogations and coercive police strategies (Woolard et al., 2008).

Graham and Lowery (2004) examined whether the stereotype of young black males as hostile, aggressive, violent, and dangerous supersedes the perception of adolescents as vulnerable and immature, leading to a discrepancy between racial stereotypes and society’s view of adolescence. When police and probation officers were unconsciously primed with terms
stereotypically related to African-American culture, they judged the offender as more mature, more culpable, and more deserving of punishment compared to those in the neutral prime condition. Probation officer’s actual written reports about juvenile crimes committed by black males were more likely to be attributed to internal causes and crimes committed by white youth to be attributed to external causes (Bridges & Steen, 1998). Presumably, attributions about crime reflect negative stereotypes held about young black men as more hostile, aggressive and violent (Graham & Lowery, 2004). Stevenson and Bottoms (2009), however, failed to find an effect of defendant race on case judgments for juveniles transferred to criminal court. As a result, the impact of suspect race for juveniles transferred to adult court and judged by adults remains unclear.

Current Study

In the present study, a murder case was used to try to examine the possible effect of race on subsequent case judgments. The goal was to determine the influence of suspect age and race on suggestibility ratings of an interrogation suspect and perceptions about the specific questioning tactics used by the detective. For both black and white suspects, we anticipated that ratings of suggestibility would decrease with age, because suspects would be perceived as more mature and competent as age increased. However, we expected black suspects would be rated as less suggestible overall due to the negative stereotypes attached to young black males being more likely to have been involved with the legal system, and therefore, more familiar with interrogation procedures. Furthermore, 12- and 16-year old black suspects would be seen as less suggestible than white suspects, but a greater difference would be found between the black and white 16-year old suspects compared to the difference between the black and white 12-year old suspects. We predicted that there would be a greater difference between the 16-year olds across
race because 16-year olds may be viewed as developmentally similar to an adult. This similarity might make the negative stereotypes for black juveniles as more adult-like in their competencies (Graham & Lowery, 2004), more salient than the typical perception of adolescents as young and naïve. In contrast, it was expected that there would be no difference in perceived suggestibility between the 21 year old suspects because both would be viewed as adults. The three specific ages were chosen because previous research has shown that 12 year olds (early adolescence) are developmentally different from 16 year olds (mid-adolescence), and 21 year olds are categorized as adults both legally, and developmentally (Grisso et al., 2003; Redlich & Goodman, 2003). Previous research has shown that maximization techniques, specifically presenting false evidence, are perceived as more coercive than minimization techniques when used on adults (Leo & Liu, 2009). Therefore, we hypothesized that maximization would be perceived as more coercive than minimization when used on juveniles and anticipated main effects for both age and race. Furthermore, an interaction was predicted such that coerciveness ratings would be the highest when false evidence ploys were used in the 12- and 16-year old white suspect conditions compared to the 12- and 16-year old black suspect conditions. Similar to the anticipated suggestibility findings, we predicted no difference in coerciveness ratings for 21-year old suspects when false evidence ploys are used.

Method

Participants.

A convenience sample of 329 participants was recruited online. Participants (59% women) had ages ranging from 18-78 ($M = 35.25, SD = 12.97$). The majority of participants were white (78%) and fairly well educated with more than half (65%) having at least a two-year college degree. Sixty-one participants were dropped from the study due to failure to correctly
answer manipulation checks in the questionnaire, including the age of the suspect, race of the suspect, length of the interrogation, and name of the suspect’s brother. Of the 61 participants, 22 were dropped because they incorrectly reported a response to a manipulation check question. For the 22 that were removed, 4 were in the black 12-year old condition; 2 were in the black 16-year old condition; 1 was in the black 21-year old condition; 4 were in the white 12-year old condition; 6 were in white 16-year old condition; and 5 were in the white 21-year old condition. To ensure the understanding of the race manipulation, an additional 39 were removed because they reported they did not remember the race of the suspect. Of these 39, 19 were in the white 12-year old condition; 10 were in the white 16-year old condition; and 10 were in the white 21-year old condition. Therefore, 268 participants were used for subsequent analyses.

**Design**

A 3 (Age: 12, 16, 21) X 2 (Race: black, white) design was employed to assess jurors’ perceptions of the psychosocial maturity of a young suspect being questioned by police. Specifically, jurors were asked to give their perceptions regarding the suggestibility of the suspect and opinions about the different techniques used by the detective. Two details within the vignette were manipulated to reveal the suspect’s race as either white or black. Race was manipulated by varying the name of both the suspect and his brother who was also allegedly involved in the crime. If the suspect was white, he was identified as Brad Williams and his brother’s name was Greg Williams. The black suspect was named Jamal Williams and his brother’s name was Darnell Williams. The names were chosen based on prior work that assessed the uniqueness of black and white names (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). Birth certificate data between 1974 and 1979 from Massachusetts were used to determine which names had the highest frequency in one racial group relative to the other, and participants were asked to identify
the race of a person based on a particular name. The names used for the present study were rated as having the highest overall perception of being white or black. Also based on the race of the suspect, the witness who initially reported the crime to police claimed to see either two black or white males push and stab the victim. Manipulating the variable in this way allowed participants to recognize race without making race overly salient (Stevenson & Bottoms, 2009). The second independent variable was the age of the suspect. Age was explicitly stated in the case summary of the vignette as 12, 16, or 21. These ages were chosen because they are thought to represent three distinct developmental categories of psychosocial and cognitive maturity; early adolescence, mid-adolescence and late adolescence/early adulthood (Steinberg et al., 2009).

**Materials**

Participants read case materials (see Appendix A) and completed self-report measures (see Appendix B) via a computer administered questionnaire regarding their perceptions of the case. The vignette first summarized the case, including the suspect, his brother, a witness, and the crime committed. It was stated that the suspect waived his Miranda Rights and was interrogated for six hours. He eventually confessed but later recanted. Participants then read excerpts from the interrogation transcript and responded to questions assessing their perceptions of the interrogation and the suspect.

The dependent variables examined were the suspect’s suggestibility, whether the confession was coerced or voluntary, and the coerciveness of specific techniques used during the interrogation. A 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly Agree*) was used to assess participant’s perception of the suspect’s suggestibility (see Appendix C). For suggestibility, a composite mean score was calculated for each participant giving them an overall suggestibility score. Reliability analyses were conducted on all the suggestibility items used in
the questionnaire. Results of the analysis revealed an acceptable level for the suggestibility factor ($\alpha = .82$). Participants made a forced-choice decision between coerced and voluntary to judge the coerciveness of the interrogation overall. Participants were also given specific examples from the vignette of minimization and maximization techniques that have been used in studies of real police interrogations (Leo, 1996). For minimization, the detective minimized the seriousness of the consequences associated with confessing and minimized the seriousness of the crime. For maximization, the detective confronted the suspect with false physical (fingerprint) evidence of his guilt, and confronted the suspect with false eyewitness evidence. To assess the coerciveness of each technique, participants were asked to provide ratings on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (very not coercive) to 6 (very coercive) (see Appendix D). A composite mean score was also calculated for each participant giving him an overall coerciveness score. Reliability analyses were conducted on all the coerciveness of techniques items used in the questionnaire. Results of the analysis revealed an acceptable level for the factor ($\alpha = .88$). Participants were also asked to indicate the age and race of the suspect, the length of the interrogation, and the name of the suspect’s brother to serve as manipulation checks.

**Procedure**

Participants were recruited online using the Mechanical Turk (MTurk) website. MTurk is an online marketplace powered by Amazon.com. Anyone with Internet access can go to MTurk and take surveys in exchange for monetary compensation. Using MTurk facilitated data collection from a large and diverse population within the United States. Each participant received $0.25 upon agreement to take part in the survey. After obtaining informed consent, participants were randomly assigned to one of six possible versions of a transcript that was adapted from an actual murder case. Participants were instructed to pretend they were serving as a representative
of the community on a citizens review board that was reviewing an interrogation to determine whether the officer acted inappropriately. Next, participants read a vignette that consisted of a case summary, a police report, and an excerpt from an interrogation. Following the vignettes, participants were asked to answer a number of questions regarding the interrogation techniques used by the police officer, their perceptions of the suspect’s judgment capacities, and the voluntariness of the suspect’s confession. At the end of the survey, participants were thanked for their participation and debriefed.

Results

A 3 (age) X 2 (race) analysis of covariance was conducted for each of the dependent variables at alpha = .05. Because gender, ethnicity, and political views have been shown to influence judgments made about juveniles and law enforcement officials (Haegerich, Salerno, & Bottoms, 2012; Sommers & Ellsworth, 2001; Stevenson & Bottoms, 2009), these variables were allowed to covary with each of the outcome variables reported.

Suggestibility

As predicted, a main effect of age was found such that younger suspects were perceived as significantly more suggestible than older suspects, $F(2, 257) = 3.07, p = .048$ (see Table 1 for descriptive statistics for all dependent variables). Figure 1 displays the mean suggestibility ratings for suspect age and race. Contrary to our predictions, no main effect for race or interaction was found, $F(1, 257) = .849, p = .358$ and $F(2, 257) = .260, p = .771$. To test exactly how the three different levels of age differed from one another, simple contrast analyses were conducted. Results of the simple contrasts indicated that participants judged the 12 $t(259) = .29, p < .05$ and 16-year old suspects $t(259) = .23, p = .05$ as more suggestible than the 21-year old suspect.
Coerciveness of interrogation techniques

Ratings of the specific interrogation techniques used by the detective also revealed a main effect of age, $F(2, 257) = 7.39, p = .001$. Figure 2 displays the mean coerciveness ratings for interrogation techniques based on the age and race of the suspect. There was no main effect for race and no interaction ($Fs < 1$). Simple contrasts indicated that participants rated the techniques as more coercive when the detective used them on a 12-year-old suspect $t(259) = .59, p < .01$ and 16-year-old suspect $t(259) = .47, p < .05$ than on a 21-year-old suspect. To compare the categories of techniques used during the interrogation, a paired sample t-test was conducted to evaluate the perceived coerciveness of minimization and maximization strategies. As predicted, minimization techniques were perceived as significantly less coercive than maximization techniques, $t(267) = -11.17, p < .001$. However, overall, both tactics were rated as slightly coercive to very coercive. Figure 3 displays the mean ratings of coerciveness for minimization and maximization techniques.

In addition to rating the coerciveness of the techniques used by the detective, participants made a yes/no judgment about whether the confession was given voluntarily. A logistic regression was conducted to test the effects of age and race. Consistent with our hypothesis, a main effect of age was found $\chi^2(1, N = 268) = 8.35, p < .01$ indicating that participants were more likely to report the suspect gave the confession voluntarily as age increased. Figure 4 displays the proportion of people who perceived the interrogation to be coercive. Contrary to our hypotheses, no main effect for race or interaction was found ($\chi^2s < 2.2$).

Discussion
The present study examined perceived racial differences of adolescents and young adults in an interrogation context. Specifically, suggestibility and the perceived coerciveness of the interrogation were found to decrease as the age of the suspect increased. Overall, this finding implies that people take age into account when assessing the competency of adolescents in an interrogation context. It seems that people realize that adolescents are more suggestible and that using “adult-like” questioning techniques may not be appropriate for juveniles. Older suspects are less susceptible to changing their account of events based on misleading questioning or pressure from interrogators (Owen-Kostelnik et al., 2006), and our data suggest that adults viewing an interrogation see them as less suggestible. In light of the more expansive legislative reforms for juvenile transfer over the past two decades, it’s critical that we gain a clearer understanding of how adults perceive juveniles in criminal court. Although only a first step, our results indicate that people may view age as a proxy for competency judgments when evaluating interrogation evidence.

Although adolescents may have cognitive processes that are similar to those of an adult, they are less psychosocially mature (Steinberg & Scott, 2003; Steinberg et al., 2009). Specifically, adolescents are more susceptible to peer influence, have an altered attitude and perception toward risk, tend to discount the future, and are more impulsive (Owen-Kostelnik et al. 2006). Research has shown that even at age 18, the psychosocial functioning of teens is less mature than individuals in their mid-20s (Steinberg et al., 2009). The diminished psychosocial functioning of adolescents makes them susceptible to tactics used by detectives in an interrogation (Kassin, 2008), such as the ones examined in the current study. In fact, the results indicated that people perceive interrogation techniques as more coercive when used on younger suspects than when they are used on older suspects. Based on these findings, it can be inferred
that the public may have a sense of the diminished psychosocial maturity of adolescents and how it can make them more susceptible to police questioning. Despite evidence and public understanding that juveniles are more suggestible and vulnerable to police pressure; detectives continue to use the same techniques that they use on adults (Meyer & Reppucci, 2007) which, based on our results, may not be consistent with public sentiment.

In addition to suggestibility, the present study also examined the public’s perception of the coerciveness of commonly used interrogation tactics. Overall, minimization and maximization were perceived as coercive techniques when used on both juveniles and young adults. Previous work has also found that confessions are perceived as coercive when they are prompted by any statements made by an interrogator, compared to an unprompted confession (Kassin & McNall, 1991). Furthermore, and in accordance with previous work (Kassin & McNall, 1991; Leo & Liu, 2009), maximization techniques were perceived as more coercive than minimization techniques. Leo and Liu (2009) found that confronting a suspect with false evidence is perceived as more coercive than implicitly suggesting leniency for a confession. This finding is likely due to the perception that minimization techniques are an implicit promise of leniency, which seems much less threatening than presenting false evidence. Maximization techniques are meant to overwhelm suspects and make them feel like their only choice is to confess because the evidence against them is so strong that an eventual conviction is all but certain. In contrast, when police use minimization techniques the goal is to build rapport with the suspect. This strategy is used to make the suspect feel more comfortable and, in some cases, to persuade the suspect into believing the detective is an ally. Despite the perception that minimization is less coercive, both strategies are troubling when used with juveniles because they contribute to a greater number of youth confessions (Redlich & Goodman, 2003).
The lack of racial differences in perceived suggestibility and coerciveness may indicate that participants are less impacted by race when evaluating an adolescent being interrogated by police. These results seem to contradict previous work showing that police and probation officers unconsciously primed with terms associated with race judged young black offenders as more mature, culpable, and deserving of punishment than those with a neutral prime (Graham & Lowery, 2004). Based on the results presented here, it seems that the public may be less impacted by negative stereotypes associated with young black males compared to police and probation officers. Similarly, Stevenson and Bottoms (2009) found that race did not affect mock jurors’ perceptions or case judgments of a juvenile on trial in criminal court. Taken together, it appears community members perceive black and white adolescents differently than law enforcement officers.

Several limitations of the study should be considered. This investigation used a convenience sample. Although all participants were United States residents over 18, the majority was white and fairly well educated. It is unclear whether the results would generalize to less-educated and minority groups. Also, only four questions assessed participant’s perception of the coerciveness of minimization and maximization techniques. Presumably, in a real-world case the detective would use more questions and a wider range of tactics, including a more diverse set of questioning techniques that would have allowed for a more detailed analysis of people’s perceptions of interrogation strategies.

Future studies should examine the public’s perception of whether minimization and maximization techniques are appropriate to be used with adolescents. Our results indicate that these techniques are perceived as coercive, but do not indicate whether the public still believes they should be used. If the public sees minimization and maximization as both coercive and
unacceptable to use with adolescents, this could have policy implications. Additionally, several other variables would be of interest, including the public’s perception of the suspect’s knowledge of interrogation procedures. For example, it would be valuable to determine to what extent the public perceives that the suspect understood his Miranda rights, the role of a detective, and long-term consequences of confessing. Because of the stereotype that young black males are more likely to have had some experience with the justice system (Graham & Lowery, 2004), it would be interesting to examine whether this stereotype would affect ratings of the suspects’ interrogation knowledge. It would also be interesting to examine whether the current effects would have any impact on verdicts rendered. Based on the results of the present study, the majority of people believe that interrogation techniques, when used on juveniles, are coercive. However, if the majority of people still believe the suspect was guilty of the crime, it would provide evidence that coerced confessions unduly influence juries. Currently, the legal standard toward confessions that are later judged as tainted, is that they are admissible in court based on the *Fulminante v Arizona* (1991) ruling that when taken into consideration with the entire case against the defendant, it may constitute ‘harmless error’ (Kassin & Sukel, 1997).

Overall, this study has several implications on current policies regarding police questioning of adolescents suspected of committing a crime. The results call into question the appropriateness of interrogation techniques when used on juveniles. Specifically, minimization and maximization techniques were perceived as coercive, which suggests the public may not approve of their use when interrogating juveniles. Adolescents may not have the psychosocial maturity to withstand the pressures of the interrogation context or have the knowledge to use the protections afforded to them. Although police may understand that adolescents are more suggestible than adults, they are trained to use the same interrogation techniques regardless of
age (Meyer & Reppucci, 2007). Based on the growing evidence that minimization and maximization techniques are perceived as coercive, developmentally appropriate techniques should be developed and implemented for the questioning of adolescent suspects. Finally, the view that adolescents are suggestible calls into question whether they are able to waive their rights knowingly and voluntarily. If the public views juveniles as suggestible, they might favor a policy more consistent with the per se approach providing extra protections for adolescents during interrogations rather than the current totality of circumstances standard.
References


In re Gault, 387 U.S. 1 (1967).


Appendix A

Imagine that you are serving on a Citizens Review Board as a representative of the community. The Board is reviewing a case to determine whether Officer Mike McCarthy was inappropriately coercive during the interrogation. You will read excerpts from a transcript of an interrogation. You will then be asked to respond to a questionnaire about your perceptions of the interrogation and the confession. The entire process should take you about 20 minutes to complete.

*Please note that the facts and dialogue in the interrogation are taken from an actual case. All identifying information has been changed.*

*Here is a summary of the case:*

Brad/Jamal Williams is a 12/16/21-year-old who has been charged with murder for stabbing a white male victim in the neck with a piece of broken glass.

A witness heard yelling outside of her house and saw two African-American/Caucasian males push the victim to the ground and one of the males stab the victim. Brad/Jamal Williams and his older brother, Greg/Darnell Williams, matched the description of the witness. After they were caught, they were brought to the police station for questioning.

Brad/Jamal Williams waived his Miranda Rights and was interrogated for 6 hours. The law in the state where the case took place requires parents of minors to be notified before minors are interrogated, but parents are not required to be present. Brad/Jamal’s mother was notified but was not present for the interrogation. During the interrogation, the investigator implied that he had more evidence against Brad/Jamal than he actually had. During the interrogation, Brad/Jamal initially denied his involvement in the offense and claimed that the reason he ran from the police was because he had been throwing rocks at cars. However, he eventually admitted to stabbing the victim and provided a confession. Brad/Jamal recanted his confession afterwards, claiming his innocence.
Brad/Jamal’s brother, Greg/Darnell, invoked his Miranda Rights and was not questioned by the police. He did not provide the police with any information.

**Excerpts from the 6 hour Interrogation Transcript**

**McCarthy:** Okay, here ya go. This is just your rights form. And we’ll try to make this as quick and painless as possible. How do you spell your name?


**McCarthy:** And how old are ya?

**Williams:** 12/16/21.

*Detective McCarthy continues to collect info about his residence and background for 30 minutes*

**McCarthy:** Okay, Brad/Jamal, you have the rights to protection against self-incrimination listed below. Please initial each statement if you understand it. You have the right to remain silent and to refuse at any time to answer any questions asked by the police officer. Do you understand that?

**Williams:** Uh, huh…

**McCarthy:** Okay, put your initials there. Next one says anything you do or say can be used against you in the court of law. Okay, put your initials there. Do you understand that?

**Williams:** Yes. Initial here?

**McCarthy:** Yup. You have the right to talk to a lawyer and to have the lawyer with you during any questioning. Do you understand that?

**Williams:** Uh huh…

**McCarthy:** And if you cannot afford a lawyer one will be appointed for you and you may remain silent until you have talked to the lawyer. Understand?
Williams: Uh huh...

McCarthy: The above rights have been read to me. I have initialed each paragraph to show I understand each of my rights. I have received a copy of this form. You sign there and then we’re all done. I’ll give you a copy. Okay?

Williams: Uh huh…okay.

[Officer McCarthy begins by collecting info about a party that Williams attended earlier in the evening. Williams reports that the gathering was 4 blocks from where they were picked up by the police, there were 6 other males there besides him.]

McCarthy: Did something happen – when people were leaving?

Williams: U, huh. You already know me and Greg/Darnell was throwing rocks.

McCarthy: Did something else happen? We’ve already talked to Greg/Darnell. So we know what went down and we know that you know about it because everybody says you do.

Williams: Like what?

McCarthy: Well I’d like to believe that what Greg/Darnell told me is the truth.

Greg/Darnell was just talking with me about an hour ago. Tell me what you know. We know Greg/Darnell was involved in something.

Williams: I have no idea about that.

McCarthy: If you don’t corroborate what Greg/Darnell said, then Greg/Darnell’s lying to us. And then something’s up. Maybe some people could have gotten involved in something they didn’t want to be involved in... and I think that
PERCEIVED COERCION IN AN INTERROGATION

that’s where you fall into, okay? And Greg/Darnell wants us to believe
that’s where he falls into, okay?

Williams: I have no idea what you’re talking about. Was there a shooting or
something?

McCarthy: There was a stabbing and now that guy is dead. Happened right between
where you were partying and where we picked you up. And either you’re
part of it or you know about it. There’s no doubt in my mind on that. But if
you’re gonna come in here and not tell me the truth when everybody else
has. Then I gotta think that you’re the bad character and I don’t want to
think that. I have to know what happened from you. We didn’t just pull your
name out of the air. Tell me what happened? [long pause] Don’t get yourself
in trouble for other people, okay?

McCarthy: Had you guys been drinking or using any kinds of drugs?

Williams: We’d been smoking weed but…

McCarthy: OK, well Brad/Jamal your name has been mentioned and positively
identified in this thing.

Williams: Well, I haven’t…they must be mistaken or something.

McCarthy: Why would they mistake you Brad/Jamal? Why would someone just say this
out of the blue that Brad/Jamal and Greg/Darnell did it?

Williams: I don’t know, maybe they’ve mistaken me. Why would I do something like
that, I’m almost off probation.

McCarthy: I’m giving you an opportunity. And I’m not here to play games. The police
department in your neighborhood knows all about you. Right now you’re on
your own. You’re out here dangling. You’re going to be in the system
before long. And I’ll talk to your probation officer if need be.

**Williams:** Huh?

**McCarthy:** I’ll talk to him. But, this is your chance. Instead of sitting here lying to me,
you start coming clean with some of the information…now maybe I am
trying to tell you, well look, maybe you went along with this, maybe one of
the guys from the party is the bad guy in this deal, but if you don’t spill your
beans, you’re going down just as hard as everyone. You’re in just as deep as
everyone and your brother. So this is the time to come clean. Do you
understand the seriousness of this?

**Williams:** Yes, but I wasn’t involved.

**McCarthy:** Do you know how many times I’ve heard that over ten years of
investigations. You wouldn’t be here right now if you weren’t involved, if
we did not have evidence that you were involved. If we didn’t have
statements from others that were involved saying that you were there with
them. And it’s not just one person we’ve got. We’ve got multiple witnesses
on you. You’re screwed. The only question that remains for me is to what
extent you’re involved. Was it your idea? Was it Greg/Darnell’s idea? Was
it just you and Greg/Darnell doing this? And by you sitting there and being a
hard-ass about it, that tells us that you’re just as guilty, you’re just as
culpable if not more so than Greg/Darnell or anybody else is. We’re giving
you a chance, we’re coming to you and saying, hey, you show some
cooperation, we’ll see what we can do to help you, ok. But I’m telling you, you’re involved in it. I’ve got evidence. Guess what we have at the scene?

Williams: I didn’t do it.

McCarthy: Okay, we’ll put it this way. You did do it.

[The interrogation continues like this with McCarthy insisting that Williams was involved and Williams insisting that he was not involved for another 5 hours]

McCarthy: Don’t piss it all away by giving us a bunch of lies. You’re only 12/16/21. You’re not even a teenager/You just got your driver’s license/You just reached the legal drinking age. You have your whole life ahead of you.

Williams: I wouldn’t do this.

McCarthy: You know I’m not going to come back next week and say, ‘hey Brad/Jamal did you change your mind? Do you really want to talk to us now?’ Now is your opportunity. Once I leave this door I’m just going to go back and type up my report and I’ll see you in court and you know how it goes. You’ve been there before. Then you go to court and the cards will be stacked. What do you say Brad/Jamal?

Williams: People are saying that I did it. That’s not good.

McCarthy: No, it’s not. What can we work on to prove that you didn’t do it?

Williams: I don’t know.

McCarthy: Maybe you didn’t. Maybe you didn’t do the worst part. Maybe someone else did the worst part. I’m trying to give you an out. Aren’t you listening?

Williams: Huh?
McCarthy: The best evidence you can possibly get is an eyewitness that is unbiased.
Someone who doesn’t know you and doesn’t have a grudge against you.
That’s what I’ve got Brad/Jamal. Plus, I’ve got physical evidence too,
fingerprints, plus there’s circumstantial evidence there too.

Williams: Damn.

McCarthy: Fingerprints, all that kind of stuff if you want to go that route. And you have
no alibi. You tell us you were with your brother, but he is saying you guys
did this. People who were involved in this offense they’re saying you done
it.

Williams: Hold up. My brother is saying I done it? Who are you talking about?

McCarthy: Here’s what I’ve been told. You either did something or you saw what
happened. I know you do not want to put this on your brother.

Williams: But what am I supposed to do?

McCarthy: At this point you need to worry about yourself. And if something did take
place involving your brother, you’ve got to be able to be man enough to step
up and say, you know, he’s my brother, but something did happen.

Williams: Oh, man.

McCarthy: I asked your brother these same things. In my opinion, don’t make your
brother carry this burden if that’s not the case.

Williams: What? What good is it to say anything?

McCarthy: To tell us the truth so that when this goes to court…do you hear what I’m
saying…cuz it will go to court that the judge can say ‘Brad/Jamal was
willing to cooperate, Brad/Jamal was willing to help, Brad/Jamal was
remorseful, Brad/Jamal was sorry that he did this crap, Brad/Jamal knew that he made a mistake, maybe Brad/Jamal was forced to do it’. I know how peer pressure goes. Right? You know, I went along to be with the crowd, cuz I thought it was cool at the time. Right? I’ve heard that before. And now’s your time to make it right Brad/Jamal, not when this goes to court.

Williams: You’re saying I could leave tonight?

McCarthy: What I’m saying is that if I get the information Brad/Jamal, that I feel is genuine, and I think you know what that means, that your cooperation will show what kind of guy you are. Why don’t we start from square one when you walked up to the guy.

Williams: I don’t know about that.

McCarthy: I can’t help you out. I can’t help you out with your PO. You realize that.

Williams: What do you mean? I’m not getting out tonight? How do you figure I’m going to get out?

McCarthy: What do you know about the incident with your brother? What put you up to it? What made you and Greg/Darnell do it?

Williams: Weed. I got high and…and I guess some guy was bothering us over there.

McCarthy: Do you know that guy’s name?

Williams: No.

McCarthy: What’s he look like?

Williams: I don’t know some white dude.

McCarthy: OK. Just you and Greg/Darnell?

Williams: We didn’t go there to hurt the guy.
McCarthy: OK, you weren’t going there to hurt the guy. The guy was mouthing off to you right? Maybe he said some stupid white guy thing.

Williams: I believe so.

McCarthy: OK. What happened when you and Greg/Darnell got there?

Williams: We walked up to him and he said something stupid. Can’t remember what and we started fighting.

McCarthy: Did you knock him down?

Williams: Yeah.

McCarthy: Did you stab him or did Greg/Darnell stab him?

Williams: Oh man.

McCarthy: Cut it out Brad/Jamal. Are you gonna put this on your brother?

Williams: No.

McCarthy: Did you stab him first or did he start saying stupid crap first?

Williams: He started saying stupid crap first.

McCarthy: Then you stabbed him?

Williams: Yeah, it was then. I stabbed him then. I cut him alright. He was bein’ stupid, and I was high and didn’t mean to, but I stabbed him. The whole thing was stupid. I didn’t mean to hurt the guy.

[Williams provides a written confession after having been interrogated for a total of 6 hours]
Appendix B

I. Please make the following judgment. Please keep in mind the following principles:
   - A coerced confession means that 1) the will of the suspect was seriously compromised, or 2) the suspect had no reasonable alternative to confessing during the interrogation and thus would have been willing to confess to things he didn’t do.
   - “Police misconduct” during interrogation is generally defined as physical brutality, explicit threats, or explicit quid-pro-quo promises of leniency. An example of an explicit quid-pro-quo promise of leniency is, “If you confess, the District Attorney will charge you with a lesser crime.” Implicit threats or promises of leniency are not automatically considered police misconduct.

1. The confession was: COERCED or VOLUNTARY. (circle one)

2. Rate your confidence in the above coerced/voluntary judgment on a scale of 1 (not at all confident) – 6 (very confident).
   Circle One: 1 2 3 4 5 6

II. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please circle the number “1” if you strongly disagree, “2” if you disagree, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The will of the suspect was compromised during the interrogation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The suspect had no reasonable alternative to confessing.</td>
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<td>3. The techniques that the investigator used during the interrogation were appropriate.</td>
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<td>4. The confession would be admissible at trial.</td>
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<td>5. The confession should be admissible at trial.</td>
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III Please read the following paragraphs and then fill out the tables below.

- During the interrogation, the investigator *minimized the seriousness of the confession* on a couple of occasions. For example, the investigator said, “To tell us the truth so that when this goes to court…do you hear what I’m saying…cuz it will go to court that the judge can say ‘Brad/Jamal was willing to cooperate, Brad/Jamal was willing to help. Brad/Jamal was remorseful. Brad/Jamal was sorry that he did this crap, Brad/Jamal knew that he made a mistake, maybe Brad/Jamal was forced to do it’.”

- During the interrogation, the investigator *minimized the seriousness of the crime* on a couple of occasions. For example, the investigator said, “OK, you weren’t going there to hurt the guy. The guy was mouthing off to you right?”

- During the interrogation, the investigator *confronted the suspect with false physical evidence of his guilt* on a couple of occasions. For example, the investigator said, “Plus, I’ve got physical evidence too, fingerprints, plus there’s circumstantial evidence there too.”

- During the interrogation, the investigator *confronted the suspect with false evidence of his guilt from a witness* on a couple of occasions. For example, on p. 11, the investigator said, “You tell us you were with your brother, but he is saying you guys did this. People who were involved in this offense they’re saying you done it.”

A. Please indicate the extent to which you believe the tactics *in the specific examples above* were coercive. Please circle the number “1” for “not at all coercive”, “2” for “coercive”, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Not Coercive</th>
<th>Moderately Not Coercive</th>
<th>Slightly Not Coercive</th>
<th>Slightly Coercive</th>
<th>Moderately Coercive</th>
<th>Very Coercive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Minimizing the seriousness of the confession.</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Minimizing the seriousness of the crime.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Confronting the suspect with false physical evidence of his guilt.</td>
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<td>4. Confronting the suspect with false evidence of his guilt from a witness.</td>
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</table>
IV. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please circle the number “1” if you strongly disagree, “2” if you disagree, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The suspect is suggestible.</td>
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<td>2. The suspect is vulnerable to outside influences.</td>
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<td>3. The suspect is easily intimidated by authority figures.</td>
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<td>4. The suspect understood his right to remain silent and not answer questions.</td>
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<td>5. The suspect understood what the role of a detective would be in this situation.</td>
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<td>6. The suspect understood his Miranda rights.</td>
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<td>7. The suspect seems unaware of the long-term consequences of confessing.</td>
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<td>8. The suspect understood the impact that punishment associated with confessing would have on his life.</td>
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<td>9. The suspect understood he could stop the interview any time he wanted.</td>
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<td>10. The suspect recognized the degree of seriousness of the situation.</td>
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<td>11. The suspect understood that any statement he gave could be used against him.</td>
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<td>12. The suspect understood that if he wanted a lawyer, he would not have to pay for one.</td>
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<td>13. The suspect is vulnerable to outside pressures.</td>
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<td>14. The suspect accurately understood the likelihood that the confession would lead to serious punishment.</td>
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<td>15. The suspect recognized the risk associated with confessing.</td>
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<td>16. The suspect had a good understanding of the interrogation situation.</td>
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V. Based on the evidence provided, if you had to render a verdict it would be: GUILTY or NOT GUILTY
VI. Based on the evidence provided, please estimate the probability of the suspect’s guilt. I estimate that there is a _____ % chance that the suspect actually committed the crime.

0  5  10  15  20  25  30  35  40  45  50  55  60  65  70  75  80  85  90  95  100
No chance  Guilt and Innocence  Suspect is definitely guilty
the suspect is guilty

VII. Please answer the following questions about the case and interrogation.

1. Indicate the age of the suspect:
   [  ] 12-years-old
   [  ] 16-years old
   [  ] 21-years-old
   [  ] Do not remember

2. Indicate the race of the:
   Suspect
   [  ] African-American
   [  ] Asian
   [  ] Hispanic
   [  ] Caucasian
   [  ] Do not remember
   Victim
   [  ] African-American
   [  ] Asian
   [  ] Hispanic
   [  ] Caucasian
   [  ] Do not remember

3. Indicate the length of the interrogation:
   [  ] 1 hour
   [  ] 2 hours
   [  ] 6 hours
   [  ] Do not remember

4. What was the name of the suspect’s brother?
   [  ] Brendan/Hakim
   [  ] Greg/Darnell
   [  ] Jay/Leroy
   [  ] Todd/Tyrone
VIII. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. Please circle the number “1” if you strongly disagree, “2” if you disagree, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The suspect is guilty of the crime charged.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>2. The confession was reliable/trustworthy/true.</td>
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<td>3. Given what the police knew about this case from the investigation, it would be wrong for the officer to use coercion during the interrogation.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>No sympathy</th>
<th>A Moderate amount of sympathy</th>
<th>A lot of sympathy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How much sympathy overall do you have for juvenile offenders?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

IX. Please provide the following information about yourself:

1. Age: ____________

2. Sex: Female [ ] Male [ ]

3. Highest Education Level: Self
   - [ ] Elementary School
   - [ ] Junior High
   - [ ] Some High School
   - [ ] High School or GED
   - [ ] Some College
   - [ ] Associates Degree (2 Year Degree)
   - [ ] Bachelors Degree (4 Year Degree)
   - [ ] Some Graduate School
   - [ ] Master’s Degree
   - [ ] JD
   - [ ] MD
   - [ ] PhD
   - [ ] Graduate Degree
   - [ ] Other
   - [ ] MBA
4. Occupational Status:
   [ ] Full-time employment (30 hours/week or more)
   [ ] Part-time employment (less than 30 hours/week)
   [ ] Unemployed
   [ ] Retired
   [ ] Disabled

5. Student Status:
   [ ] Full-time student
   [ ] Part-time student
   [ ] Not a student

6. Political View:
   [ ] Strongly Conservative
   [ ] Moderately Conservative
   [ ] Slightly Conservative
   [ ] Neutral
   [ ] Slightly Liberal
   [ ] Moderately Liberal
   [ ] Strongly Liberal

7. Religion or Faith:
   [ ] Atheist
   [ ] Agnostic
   [ ] Buddhist
   [ ] Catholic
   [ ] Jewish
   [ ] Muslim
   [ ] Protestant
   [ ] Other

8. Race/Ethnicity:
   [ ] American Indian/Alaska Native
   [ ] East Asian
   [ ] South Asian
   [ ] Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
   [ ] Black or African-American
   [ ] White, Caucasian, or European (not Hispanic)
   [ ] Mixed; parents are from two different groups
   [ ] Hispanic or Latino/a (of any race)
   [ ] Middle Eastern/ East Indian/Pakistani
   [ ] Other (write in): ___________________________
Appendix C

Suspect’s Suggestibility

The suspect is suggestible.
The suspect is vulnerable to outside influences.
The suspect is easily intimidated by authority figures.
The suspect is vulnerable to outside pressures.
Appendix D

Coerciveness of Techniques

Minimizing the seriousness of the confession.
Minimizing the seriousness of the crime.
Confronting the suspect with false physical evidence of his guilt.
Confronting the suspect with false evidence of his guilt from a witness.
Table 1
*Means and Standard Deviations for Suggestibility, Coerciveness of Techniques, and Coerciveness of Interrogation*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Suggestibility</th>
<th>Technique</th>
<th>Coercive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.82 (.78)</td>
<td>4.92 (.85)</td>
<td>.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.78 (.97)</td>
<td>4.90 (1.03)</td>
<td>.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.55 (.78)</td>
<td>4.36 (1.27)</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.68 (.85)</td>
<td>4.65 (1.15)</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.77 (.83)</td>
<td>4.98 (.85)</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>4.60 (.91)</td>
<td>4.71 (1.14)</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>4.47 (.84)</td>
<td>4.41 (1.31)</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>4.61 (.86)</td>
<td>4.69 (1.14)</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 12</td>
<td>4.79 (.81)</td>
<td>4.96 (.84)</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 16</td>
<td>4.67 (.93)</td>
<td>4.78 (1.10)</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total 21</td>
<td>4.51 (.81)</td>
<td>4.39 (1.29)</td>
<td>.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Means are reported and standard deviations are in parentheses. Ratings for suggestibility and coerciveness of techniques are on a 6-point scale. Higher numbers indicate higher amounts of suggestibility and coerciveness. For the coerced versus voluntary judgments, proportions are reported.
Figure 1. Suggestibility of defendant.
Figure 2. Coerciveness of interrogation techniques.
Figure 3. Coerciveness of interrogation techniques.
Figure 4. Proportion of perceived coercion.