

PERCEPTIONS OF CONFESSIONS BY JUVENILE SUSPECTS: EFFECTS OF  
INTERROGATION TECHNIQUE AND SUSPECT AGE

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## ABSTRACT

Juvenile suspects are far more prone than adults to make false confessions. Two interrogation techniques known as Minimization (gentle, friendly approach used to gain suspect's trust) and Maximization (coercive approach using harsh questioning and scare tactics) have been used frequently in cases of proven false confessions in juveniles. The present research examined perceptions of a juvenile suspect's confession in four hundred sixty four participants recruited from psychology courses. They read a sexual assault vignette involving a 12- or 16-year-old male suspect and police interview excerpts utilizing either Minimization or Maximization interrogation techniques. Participants' views depended on their gender, the age of the suspect, and the interrogation technique used. Contrary to hypotheses, the 12-year-old suspect was seen as more likely to confess when questioned with Minimization whereas the 16-year-old was viewed as more likely to confess when questioned with Maximization, Overall, participants did not believe juvenile suspects of either age understood their legal rights or the consequences involved in confessing.

## DEDICATION

For my wonderful parents, Arturo and Karin Villamarin, who have always been my greatest sources of support and encouragement. You both have given everything in order for me to be successful. I love you.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

On January 21, 1998, twelve-year-old Stephanie Crowe and her 14-year-old brother Michael spent the evening watching television and around 9:25 P.M., Stephanie said good night to her family and went to sleep. Around 6:30 A.M. the next morning, Stephanie's grandmother awoke to the sound of Stephanie's alarm going off and went to Stephanie's room to wake her up. Stephanie was found lying in her bedroom doorway where she had been stabbed nine times (Sauer & Wilkens, 1999). When investigators conducted their investigation, they concluded that Stephanie's brother Michael was a key suspect.

Along with initial interview bias, interrogators used certain psychological interrogation techniques including multiple interviews, the presentation of insurmountable evidence (maximization), indicating empathy and promising rewards for cooperation and confession (minimization), suggestive questioning, selective reinforcement or incriminating information, and negative feedback (only reinforcing statements which indicate guilt) (Drizin & Colgan, 2004). The use of these interrogation techniques as well as confusing Michael with questions and false evidence ultimately lead to his confession.

With the evidence from the multiple interrogations, police arrested Michael Crowe and charged him with the murder of his sister, Stephanie Crowe. DNA recovered on the knife that killed Stephanie did not match Michael's, and the timeline described by police was inconsistent for Michael to have committed the crime. However, the interrogation evidence and resulting

confession given by Michael was introduced as evidence at a hearing which determined whether Michael should be tried as a juvenile or adult. Even though the judge presiding over the case did believe there was legal sufficiency to transfer Michael to adult court, she remarked that his statements were “troublesome” and chastised the investigators for twisting Michael’s words until he admitted to committing the murder (Sauer & Wilkins, 2002).

When the case was taken to trial, Michael’s attorney filed a motion to suppress the statements he had made. After having viewed the videotaped interrogations, the trial court took issue with the confession. Michael’s entire confession was thrown out because of police statements that Michael would have received “help” if he confessed to the murder. Ultimately, the actual killer, a drifter named Richard Tuite was apprehended. Tuite was a known by police as a schizophrenic who had a history of violence and also suffered from a methamphetamine addiction. DNA testing of Tuite’s sweatshirt revealed that Stephanie Crowe’s blood was present on it. In light of the DNA evidence, prosecutors dismissed the murder charges against Michael Crowe (Sauer & Wilkins, 1999).

### **Background**

Within the past few decades, researchers have begun to examine the interrogation process of juveniles and factors that may lead to false confessions (Scott-Hayward, 2007). False confessions, especially those made by juveniles are not a new dilemma in the criminal justice system. With the creation of DNA testing in the 1980’s, lawyers and researchers alike have begun to investigate the causes of miscarriages of justice, many of which have lead to wrongful convictions (Scott-Hayward, 2007). Discovering the source and foundation upon which false confessions lie has become increasingly important and understanding the interrogation processes

and tactics used, the personality and individual characteristics of the accused, and the situation in which suspects, both juvenile and adult, are placed will help explain why false confessions occur and reveal techniques and policies that need to be implemented in order to avoid them.

### **False Confessions**

A confession is described as a, “detailed written or oral statement in which a person admits to having committed some transgression, often acknowledging guilt for a crime” (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004, p. 8). In contrast, a false confession is a, “admission to a criminal act- usually accompanied by a narrative of how and why the crime occurred- that the confessor *did not* commit” (Kassin, Drizin, Grisso, Gudjonsson, Leo, & Redlich, 2010, p. 4).

Past research has shown there are several ways to determine a confession is false such as: 1. It is discovered later that no crime had been committed (e.g. the presumed murder victim was found alive); 2. Additional evidence shows it was physically impossible for the individual who had confessed to have committed the crime; 3. The real perpetrator, having no connection to the defendant, is apprehended and linked to the crime; or 4. Scientific evidence affirmatively establishes the confessor’s innocence (using DNA testing) (Kassin, et al., 2010).

Unfortunately, without DNA or other clear-cut evidence, false confessions are not easily discriminated from true confessions. Past psychological research on false confessions has shown that lay people representing jurors perform at no better than chance and that training programs only produce small and inconsistent improvements (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004). Police investigators, judges, psychiatrists, customs inspectors, polygraph examiners, and other professionals with similar experience perform only slightly better than chance when attempting to distinguish false confessions from true confessions (Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004).

Statistically, it cannot be determined with certainty how often false confessions occur or how many innocent people are serving prison sentences. However, research conducted by The Innocence Project, which examines DNA exoneration cases, this organization's research has estimated that between 2.3% and 5% of all prisoners in the United States (regardless of age) are innocent. They explain that if just 1% of all U.S. prisoners were innocent, that would average to around 20,000 innocent people who are serving prison sentences for crimes they did not commit (Innocence Project, 2013).

**Why do adults falsely confess?** It is very difficult to understand why an innocent person would falsely confess to a crime they had not committed. For some time researchers have been trying to understand the phenomenon of false confessions and what factors play a role in producing them. According to Kassin, et al. (2010) there are three main situational risk factors that play a role in false confessions in adults: interrogation time, the presentation of false evidence, and an interrogation strategy known as minimization (to be discussed in subsequent sections of this manuscript). These three situational factors were selected by the authors due to their prevalence in many cases involving false confessions.

Along with situational factors, dispositional factors of an adult suspect are extremely common in cases involving false confessions (Kassin, et al. 2010). Mental impairment has been determined to be one of the biggest factors of concern in false confession cases according to Gross, Jacoby, Matheson, Montgomery, and Patel (2005) whose research found that 69% of the exonerated sample (juveniles and adults) had mental disabilities and were ultimately convicted due to their false confessions.

There are also individual factors such as personality and psychopathology which play a role in the prevalence of false confessions in adults. Personality characteristics such as suggestibility and compliance to authority have shown significant influences on whether a person will falsely confess (Gudjonsson, 2003). Psychological disorders are also highly represented in cases of those who falsely confessed due to the fact these individuals may have trouble monitoring reality, have distorted perceptions of situations, impaired judgment, anxiety, poor self-control, and mood disturbances (Kassin, et al., 2010). Individuals with psychological conditions such as these are put into situations they are not adequately equipped to understand and can fall prey to making false confessions.

### **Juvenile Confessions**

As discussed previously, Gross, et al. (2005) found that out of their sample of exonerated suspects, 44% were juveniles. Drizin and Leo (2004) conducted a study in which they analyzed 125 cases of proven false confessions in the United States between 1971 and 2002. This was the largest sample ever studied on the false confessions. Out of the entire sample's population of accused murderers and rapists, 63% of the false confessions were under the age of 25 and 32% were under the age of 18. Past research has consistently shown a relationship between a suspect's age and the susceptibility to making a false confession (Redlich & Goodman, 2003).

When attempting to examine juveniles' potential for false confessions, three study methodologies have been used. The first methodology examined juveniles' responses to hypothetical vignettes. For example, Grisso, Steinberg, and Woolard (2003) explored both minor and young adults' responses to a hypothetical mock-interrogation situation asking whether they would confess to police, remain silent, or deny the offense. When comparing individuals 16

years old and older, those between the ages of 11-15 years old were more likely to report that they would falsely confess to police. In another study, Goldstein, Condie, Kalbeitzer, Osman, and Geier (2003), investigated male juvenile offenders' self-reported likelihood of providing a false confession across many hypothetical interrogation vignettes. The authors found that younger age greatly predicted the likelihood of false confessions and that 25 percent of participants reported that they would definitely confess to at least one of the hypothetical situations.

The second methodology studied is similar to the self-reported behavior of suspects in hypothetical situations, but instead examines what juveniles and young adults would do in response to a mock crime/interrogation situation that involved slight deception. Redlich and Goodman (2003) used the Kassin and Kiechel (1996) study design of crashing a computer and determining if people would be willing to sign a false statement taking responsibility for the act, except they used a population of young adults' ages 12-16 years old. Participants were required to type on a computer for this study, but were told by the researchers that they should not hit a certain button on the keyboard because it would crash the computer and lose all the data. Regardless of whether the participants hit the button, the computer program was designed to crash the computer at random times. Researchers then questioned participants in regards to them hitting the button and recorded the number of participants who would falsely confess to crashing the computer by signing a confession statement. Authors found that 12-16 year olds were more likely to falsely confess; particularly when the researchers used the ploy of presenting false evidence (lying to the suspects about hitting the key which crashed the computer). This study also found that youths were less likely to question the authority of the researcher/interrogator, with 50 percent not saying anything before signing the confession.



For the third type of methodology studied, juvenile suspects were asked to describe their encounters with police. This method required participants to say what they had done in response to actual situations rather than hypothetical. Viljoen (2005) examined detained pre-trial juveniles ages 11-17 years old. The study found that 73 percent of the defendants who had confessed were younger than 15 years old. Age was also seen as a factor for whether a juvenile would request an attorney. Among the entire sample used in Viljoen's study, only 10 percent had asked for an attorney (all were 15 years old or older), and only one then had an attorney present during their interrogation. This study also found that about one in every five juveniles that were questioned by police were high or intoxicated during the interrogation process, which has been noted as another known risk factor for false confessions in juveniles. When youths were asked if they ever falsely confessed to police, 6 percent said they had.

**Why would younger suspects be more likely to falsely confess?** Like cognitively incompetent adults, juvenile suspects face many limitations when it comes to their understanding of the legal system, their rights, and what their confession can ultimately imply. Juveniles face many limitations due to their immaturity, lack of cognitive abilities, and psychosocial skills. These limitations can cause a younger suspect to make impulsive decisions without considering the consequences of their actions. The inability to comprehend difficult and confusing situations can cause many young suspects to make improper decisions which are not in their best interest (Redich, Quas, & Ghetti, 2008). Younger persons accused of committing crimes tend to lack complete understanding of their legal rights, have difficulty applying their general knowledge of the legal system to their own cases, lack the cognitive ability and social skills required to withstand the stress and rigors of a police interrogation, and all these findings are only amplified

more so when the suspect is younger than 15 years-old (Redlich, Silverman, Chen, & Steiner, 2004).

According to Goldstein, et al. (2003), Grisso (1981) has conducted a majority of the research surrounding juvenile's abilities to understand their legal rights. According to his research when comparing male and female juvenile offenders, those under the age of 15 do not understand the importance or significance involved in the right to remain silent and to have an attorney appointed to them. According to Grisso (1981), the interaction of age and cognitive abilities seem to be a predictor in whether a juvenile will waive their rights. Grisso's studies also revealed that neither gender nor socioeconomic status played a significant role in a juvenile's legal rights understanding.

Younger suspects are also seen to be far more emotionally volatile when compared to older suspects and have issues defending themselves from pressures and influences of those in authority positions. It has also been discussed in previous research that being forced to stay in an interrogation room may cause boredom and restlessness for younger suspects which may lead to impulsive decisions in order to evade the current situation (Grisso, et al., 2003).

**Perceptions of juvenile suspects.** According to Redlich, et al. (2008), jurors tend to evaluate juvenile suspects based on age and gender. Past research has consistently shown that jurors tend to be more skeptical of confessions given by juvenile suspects compared to those of adult suspects. Ghetti and Redlich (2001) found that mock jurors perceived young child suspects as less likely to be competent when standing trial and less likely to have committed the crime when compared to older child suspects. In another study, Tang and Nunez (2003) found that mock jurors who tend to believe the police have arrested the correct person were found more

likely to render a guilty verdict after reading a murder vignette where the suspect was described as 16 or 19 years old than when he was described as 13 years old.

Along with age, young suspects tend to be evaluated based on their gender. Sigurdsson and Gudjonsson (1996) found that women prisoners were more likely to claim they falsely confessed than male prisoners. Generally, past research suggests individuals tend to see females as being more likely to make a confession (true or false) in comparison to males. Females tend to be seen as less assertive than males and many jurors view them as more likely to fall victim to improper interrogation techniques and feel more pressure to confess. However, according to Redlich, et al. (2008) there is no known relations between the gender of a suspect and the perceived likelihood of a confession when dealing with both children and adults.

**Believability of juvenile suspects.** In general, children's believability has often been conceptualized by two dimensions: honesty and cognitive competence. The influence of both of these dimensions on ratings of believability can often vary with age. Younger children are seen to more honest, but less cognitively competent while older children and adults are seen to be less honest, but more cognitively competent (e.g. Connolly, Gordon, & Price, 2010; Ross, Jurden, Lindsay, & Keeney, 2003). In research examining jurors' views involving juvenile suspects who make confessions, results have shown that decision makers may be more skeptical and less likely to convict a younger suspect who gave a confession versus that of an older suspect. This is due to the fact that mock jurors have been known to perceive younger juvenile defendants as less likely to be competent to stand trial and less capable of committing a crime compared to an older juvenile defendant (Ghetti & Redlich, 2001).

## **Interrogation Techniques.**

Police manuals suggest using the same interrogation techniques on both adults and juveniles (Redlich et al. 2004). Over the years, these techniques have begun to rely solely on psychological manipulation with the ultimate goal of receiving a confession from the suspect. Police will use a variety of these interrogation techniques such as reward/punishment, selective reinforcement, and suggestive questioning. The present study focuses on two frequently used tactics which encompass most interrogation techniques various characteristics: Minimization and Maximization (Drizin & Colgan, 2004).

**Minimization.** The Minimization technique is described as generally involving a gentle, friendly approach in which the interrogator attempts to gain the suspect's trust and minimize the seriousness of the offense. The interrogator will express sympathy, blame the victim, and provide face-saving excuses. Using this technique, the interrogator will even rationalize the crime committed or give alternate explanations why for the crime occurred (Kassin, et al. 2010).

**Maximization.** Conversely, interrogators may take a more coercive approach than that of the Minimization technique by incorporating the Maximization technique. This technique generally involves the use of harsher interrogation questions or "scare tactics" that are confrontational in nature and designed to emphasize the seriousness of the situation. This technique of interrogation expresses absolute certainty in the suspect's guilt, shuts down denials, exaggerates the seriousness of the offense, and can incorporate bluffing to claim having evidence against the suspect (Ofshe & Leo, 1997).

## **Rationale for the Present Study**

Although prior studies have examined perceptions of juvenile false confessions and the interrogation techniques used in order to elicit those confessions, the purpose of this study is to combine these two elements of age and interrogation techniques in order to examine a possible interaction. Age or lack of cognitive ability can produce a false confession, but the use of certain improper interrogation techniques may modify the influence of age. This study will examine the believability of a juvenile's confession when it is produced in an interrogation using either Minimization or Maximization; both interrogation techniques are frequently used on both adult and juvenile suspects in order to elicit confessions (Drizin & Colgan, 2004).

The purpose of the present study is to expand upon a study conducted by Redlich, et al. (2008) that examined perceptions of juvenile suspects during police interviews. In this study, mock jurors read an actual interrogation of a child suspect being charged with murder that included confession evidence. There were four conditions: the juvenile was described as either 11 or 14 years old, and as either a male or female. After reading the interrogation and confession transcript, participants then provided judgments regarding the coerciveness of the interrogation, the child's legal knowledge, and guilt. Redlich, et al. (2008) found that the suspect's age and legal understanding affected participants' views. There was no main effect of suspect age or gender; however the most consistent predictor of the perception of the suspect was an interaction between gender of the rater and the level of sympathy held for juvenile offenders. Moreover, the effects depended upon whether the participants were men or women: gender was associated with sympathy for the juvenile suspect and sympathy ratings were related to many other variables. Guilt ratings, however, did not differ by gender.

Overall, Redlich et al. (2008) discovered that characteristics of the suspect did not directly influence participant's verdicts of guilt or innocence. Although there was a significant interaction between suspect gender and suspect age, the most consistent findings showed that participants' judgments of overall guilt were predicted by their interpretations of the interview and suspect/police behavior. Although Redlich et al. (2008) did not show a significant correlation between defendant age and ratings of guilt, previous literature has supported this theory. In the present study, results similar to those found in Tang and Nunez's (2003) study are predicted with the older juvenile suspects will having higher guilt ratings than younger juvenile suspects. Also, as found in Redlich et al. (2008), it is expected that participants (mock jurors) will acknowledge older juveniles as having a better understanding of their legal rights regardless of whether they realize that knowledge can affect false confessions believability (Redlich, Silverman, Chen, & Steiner, 2004).

The present study expands on that of Redlich et al. (2008) by using an older suspect (12 versus 16 instead of 11 versus 14), a different vignette scenario (Redlich et al. (2008) used a murder scenario while the present study uses a sexual assault scenario), and manipulating specific interrogation techniques (Minimization and Maximization) in order to see if age and interrogation techniques have an interactive influence on believability of juvenile confessions. Because Redlich et al. (2008) used an actual interrogation transcript it included a combination of several interrogation techniques such as: Suggestive Questioning, Reward and Punishment, Selective Reinforcement, Minimization, and Maximization. Past studies have not isolated individual interrogation techniques such as Minimization and Maximization in order to see their specific effects on believability and perceptions of interview fairness. The present study will

delve deeper into the topic in order to discover if age of a juvenile suspect and interrogation techniques truly can shift a mock juror's perception of a juvenile confession.

## **Hypotheses**

**Age.** The 16-year-old suspect will be seen as more likely to have committed the sexual assault crime in question. In addition, the 16-year-old will be seen as having a fairer interview than the 12-year-old suspect, and as having a better understanding of the situation, his legal rights, and police questions. The 16-year-old will be viewed as less likely to falsely confess, and as deserving a harsher punishment than the 12-year-old suspect.

**Interrogation Technique.** There will be a significant difference between Maximization and Minimization. Overall, there will be higher ratings of false confession likelihood for questioning which utilizes the Maximization technique. The suspects' understanding of his rights will overall be rated lower when Maximization is employed. The police will be viewed as fairer when using the Minimization technique during questioning.

**Interaction.** In addition, when the suspect is 12-years-old and the Maximization technique is utilized he will be seen as less guilty, more likely to falsely confess, and more manipulated/scared into falsely confessing. However, when the suspect is 16-years-old the Maximization technique will produce higher ratings of guilt due to the false evidence presented in the interrogation and its plausibility for a suspect of that age.

## CHAPTER II

### METHOD

#### **Participants**

The sample consisted of 464 students (368 Caucasian; 68 African American; 9 Asian; 7 Bi-Racial; 4 Hispanic; 4 other; 1 Native American) from The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. Participants included 136 males (29.31%) and 325 females (70.04%) with ages of participants ranging from 18-58 years. The average age for this sample was 21.09 ( $SD=4.55$ ). Participants came from introductory psychology ( $n=128$ ), upper level psychology ( $n=261$ ), and unspecified ( $n=75$ ) courses and received extra credit in the class for participating. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions.

After exclusion of 90 participants due to manipulation check failures, the final sample consisted of 374 students (296 Caucasian; 57 African American; 7 Bi-Racial; 5 Asian; 4 Hispanic; 3 other; 1 Native American). Participants included 104 males (27.81%) and 270 females (72.19%) with ages of participants ranging from 18-58 years. The average age for this sample was 21.04 ( $SD=4.80$ ).

#### **Materials**

Four different tasks were used for this study: an assault vignette, interview excerpts, a perceptions questionnaire, and a demographics questionnaire.



**Assault vignette.** Two identical, fictional vignettes were composed and used to manipulate the age of a juvenile suspected of committing an act of sexual assault (i.e., 12 or 16-years-old) (see appendix B). The two vignettes describe an incident of sexual abuse wherein a girl named Ashley goes to her local high school football game and is attacked and sexually assaulted when she enters a public restroom. Although Ashley is unable to give any type of identification in regard to her attacker, two friends in attendance with Ashley at the football game identify a boy as looking suspicious that evening. After reporting the event to her parents as well as the police, the police then canvass Ashley's school for any witnesses with information regarding Ashley's assault. At this time another mutual friend of Ashley's comes forward with the same description given by Ashley's two other friends of a boy noticed near the bathroom Ashley entered at the time of the attack. With these three vague but consistent suspect descriptions (a tall boy with short, dark hair), detectives produce a description of the boy they are looking to question in regard to Ashley's attack. Brandon, a 12 or 16-year-old boy is found to match the description and brought to the school's main office for questioning regarding the sexual assault.

**Interview excerpts.** Two sets of fictional interview excerpts were composed by the researcher based on actual examples from juvenile false confession cases (e.g., from Drizin & Colgon, 2004) (see appendix C). These two sets of excerpts were manipulated to match the sexual assault vignette of (12 or 16-year-old) Brandon, as well as the interrogation technique used by the detectives (Minimization or Maximization).

In order to determine which interrogation techniques to use, a pilot study was first conducted. After researching previous cases dealing with juvenile false confessions, a list consisting of the five most frequently used interrogation techniques and their definitions was composed: Reward and Punishment, Suggestive Questioning, Selective Reinforcement, Minimization, and Maximization. A sample of nine graduate students read a list of the interrogation techniques and their corresponding definitions. Pilot participants were then provided with 10 real case interrogation excerpts utilizing one of the five techniques (two examples per technique, presented in random order). Pilot participants were then asked to match each excerpt to the corresponding interrogation technique. Ultimately, the Minimization and Maximization excerpts were the two techniques most consistently recognized by participants and matched correctly to their corresponding definitions. As for the content of these two sets of questioning excerpts, they only differed in the age of the suspect and the interrogation technique the detectives use. The information regarding the case, as well as the ultimate confession are the same across both questioning excerpts.

**Perceptions questionnaire.** The perceptions questionnaire was loosely based on that used by Redlich et al. (2008) (see appendix D). The first three initial questions are used as a manipulation checks (i.e., How old is Ashley, How old is Brandon, and Who did Ashley first tell about the assault) to make sure participants read the vignette and questioning excerpts and are responding based on an accurate memory of the material. For example, participants who do not remember the age of the subject in the vignette would not have a proper basis for rating the suspect in terms of memory and honesty. The remaining items ask respondents to rate the suspect's credibility, specific aspects of the suspect's confession, views on police fairness in

regards to the suspect's questioning, and the suspect's interview and legal rights understanding. The concluding questions ask respondents to determine the evidence they found helpful in determining their perception of guilt regarding the suspect as well as personal opinion questions in regards to the vignette and questioning excerpts.

**Demographics questionnaire.** A demographics questionnaire was used to collect information about each participant. This questionnaire asked participants for their age, gender, race, level in college, major in college, as well as to list previous psychology courses they had completed (see appendix E). Further questions asked if the participant or someone they knew had ever been formally questioned by the police or suspected of committing any crime (sexual or otherwise), their personal opinion of police, their views regarding the death penalty, their amount of personal experience with children, and their sympathy towards juvenile suspects.

## **Procedure**

After providing informed consent (see appendix A), participants began the experiment. Instructions for all four conditions were the identical and presented to the participants as they made their way throughout the survey packet. Initially participants began to read the assault vignette. After the completion of reading the assault vignette, participants went on to read the interview excerpts. Following the completion of reading the assault vignette and interview excerpts, participants were then asked to fill out the perceptions questionnaire followed finally by the demographics questionnaire. Participants were given as much time as needed in order to read the assault vignette, questioning excerpts, and then to complete the perceptions

questionnaire and demographics questionnaire. When participants had completed their survey packet they returned it to the researcher.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

Data were collected from a total of 464 participants. A manipulation check was used in order to see if participants followed directions and entirely read the assault vignette and interview excerpts. The initial 3 questions of the questionnaire were used as a manipulation check: Ashley's age, Brandon's age, and to whom Ashley first reported the assault. These questions were in multiple choice format and participants were asked to choose one answer. Only those participants answering all three questions correctly were considered to have passed the manipulation check.

A total of 90 participants were discarded for choosing the wrong answers for one or more of the manipulation check items. For the 3 manipulation check questions the incorrect results were: 1. Ashley's age 13.4% ( $N=62$ ), 2. Brandon's age 7.5% ( $N=35$ ), 3. To whom Ashley first reported the assault 2.4% ( $N=11$ ). Overall, 90 (19.4%) of the participants answered at least one question incorrectly, and were therefore excluded from the final sample and analysis.

#### **Scoring**

**Questionnaire.** Participants answered 36 questions; 28 on a 1-7 likert scale, five multiple choice, and three open ended. The questionnaire was broken down into 7 areas: Initial Questions (3 manipulation check questions), Suspect Credibility Questions (3), Confession Questions (10),

Police Fairness (6), Interview Understanding (5), Rights Understanding (5), and Concluding Questions (4).

**Demographics.** Along with basic demographic questions regarding age, gender, ethnicity, class rank, major, and previous psychology courses taken; participants were asked a few general concluding questions. There were four dichotomous questions (yes/no) asking if the participant or anyone close to them had been involved in a sexual assault crime, if the participant or anyone close to them had been suspected of committing a crime (sexual or otherwise), if the participant or anyone close to them had ever been formally questioned by the police, and if the participant supported or did not support the death penalty. There were three 1-7 likert scale questions for responses involving the participants overall view of police officers, how much experience the participant has had with children, and how much sympathy the participant feels for juveniles who commit crimes.

### **Preliminary Analyses**

Participant gender was used as a covariate to control for individual differences because initial analyses suggested gender played a role in participants' perceptions. In order to ensure there was equal distribution of males and females among the four conditions, frequencies analyses were conducted. Results of these analyses showed that the samples in each of the four conditions were very similar and equally distributed: 12-year-old/Minimization (73.4% female; 26.6% male), 12-year-old/Maximization (74.2% female; 25.8% males), 16-year-old/Minimization (68.5% female; 31.5% male), and 16-year-old/Maximization (73.1% female; 26.9% male).

## Overall Ratings of Guilt and Likelihood of False Confession

Frequency analyses were conducted to show proportions of guilty versus not guilty perceptions in each of the four conditions: 12-year-old/Minimization, 12-year-old/Maximization, 16-year-old/Minimization, and 16-year-old/Maximization (See Table 1). Contrary to the hypothesis that the 12 year-old in the maximization condition would be least likely to be perceived as guilty, the 12-year-old in the minimization condition was least likely to be found guilty. A series of Z test on proportions was conducted in order to determine if any of the four conditions were statistically significant from one another. None of these Z tests were significant.

Table 1 Verdicts By Age and Interrogation Condition

Age Of Suspect	Verdict	Interrogation Condition	
		Minimization	Maximization
12 Year Old	Guilty	34.4%	42.6%
	Not Guilty	65.6%	57.4%
16 Year Old	Guilty	43.8%	41.1%
	Not Guilty	56.2%	58.9%

Further analyses were conducted in order to determine if gender of the participant was a significant factor in determinations of guilt. Overall, men and women did not significantly differ in their perceptions of guilt, but it appeared that there was an interaction by age and condition. The conditions were all relatively similar with the exception of the 16-year-old/Maximization: 12-year-old/Minimization (Female 64.7%; Male 68.0%), 12-year-old/Maximization (55.7%

Female; 62.5%), 16-year-old/Minimization (Female 57.4%; Male 53.6%), 16-year-old/Maximization (Female 62.5%; Male 48.0%).

In order to determine whether the ratings of the likelihood of a false confession differed amongst the four conditions, a 2 (Age) by 2 (Interrogation) ANCOVA with gender as a covariate was conducted. Overall, no significant main effects were found for age or interrogation, however a significant interaction was found,  $F(1, 368) = 5.76$ ,  $MSE = 16.27$ ,  $p = .05$ , partial eta squared = .015. Analyses revealed that the suspect in the 12-year-old/Minimization condition was seen as more likely to make a false confession than the 12-year-old in the Maximization condition. These findings differed from the prediction that the 12-year-old in the Maximization condition would be seen as more likely to give a false confession. Conversely, for the 16-year-old/Minimization condition the suspect was seen as less likely to make a false confession than the 16-year-old/Maximization condition. This interaction (see Figure 1) did not support the hypothesis that participants would view the 16-year-old in the Maximization condition with higher ratings of guilt and less likely to produce a false confession.



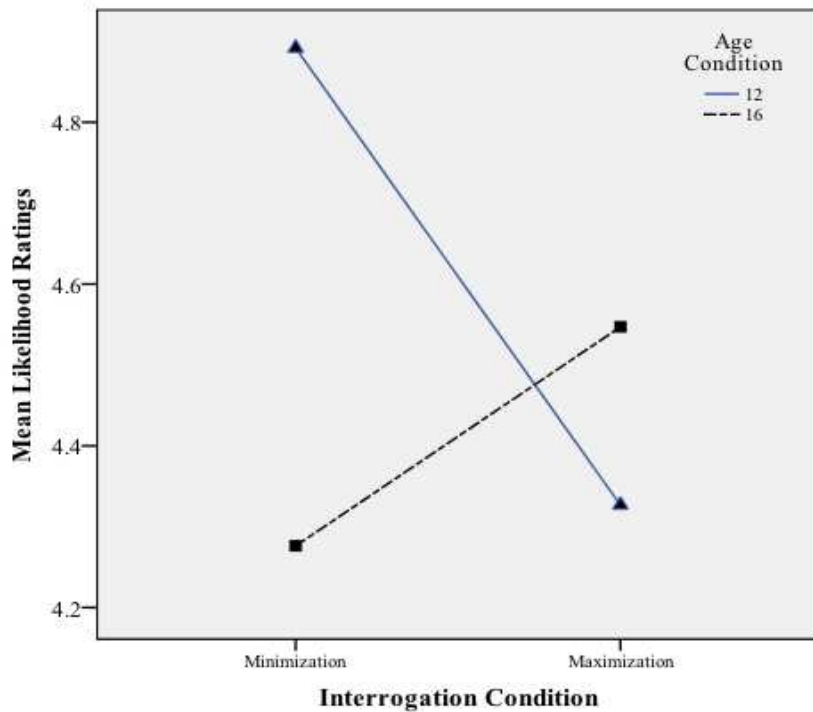


Figure 1 Likelihood of False Confession

In regard to punishment, a 2 (Age) by 2 (Interrogation) ANCOVA with gender as a covariate was conducted. There were no significant effects of age or interaction, but a main effect of interrogation was found,  $F(1, 361) = 4.63$ ,  $MSE = 7.95$ ,  $p = .05$ , partial eta squared = .013. These analyses revealed that participants felt the suspect (regardless of age condition) questioned using the minimization technique should receive less punishment than the suspect questioned with the maximization technique. The analyses also revealed the overall mean on the 5 point scale (1= No punishment, 2= School suspension/expulsion, 3= Probation/community service, 4= Juvenile detention, 5= Prison) averaged 2.20 ( $SD = 1.32$ ) which showed the majority of participants believed the suspect deserved school suspension/expulsion or no punishment at all.

## **Ratings of the Juvenile Suspect**

Overall, no significant effects were found on various ratings of the suspect by age or interrogation. Analyses of Covariance with gender as the covariate were conducted on each of the questions about the suspect. For the question regarding how easily influenced the suspect was, no significant effects were found. Regardless of age or interrogation condition, the overall mean was 2.60 ( $SD= 1.37$ ) on the 7 point likert scale (1=very easily influenced; 7=not very easily influenced), which suggests participants believed the suspect to be easily influenced.

For the question on the suspect's overall believability, the overall mean for all four conditions was 4.08 ( $SD= 1.48$ ) on the 7 point likert scale (1=very believable; 7=very unbelievable), which suggests participants had a neutral opinion in regards to the suspect's level of believability. No significant effects were found in the analysis of the suspect's consistency. The overall mean regardless of age or interrogation condition was 4.10 ( $SD= 1.62$ ) on the 7 point likert scale (1=very consistent; 7=very inconsistent), which suggests participants held a neutral opinion in regards to the suspect's consistency.

For suspect truthfulness, there were no significant effects found. Participants' overall mean for the likeliness the suspect was truthful with the detectives was 3.81 ( $SD= 1.59$ ) on the 7 point likert scale (1=very likely; 7=very unlikely). These findings suggest that overall participants perceived the suspect as being moderately truthful with the detectives.

No significant differences were found among the four conditions for rating of the suspect's remorsefulness. Participants' overall view of the suspect's level of remorsefulness was 4.72 ( $SD= 1.57$ ) on the 7 point likert scale (1=very remorseful; 7=very unremorseful), suggesting that the majority of participants believed the suspect to be moderately unremorseful. Finally,

there were no significant effects of age or interrogation for ratings of the suspect's intellectual competency, which averaged 4.25 ( $SD= 1.38$ ) on the 7 point likert scale (1=very competent; 7=very incompetent). These ratings suggest that the majority of participants had a mostly neutral view of the suspect's level of intellectual competency.

### **Ratings of Police Unfairness**

For the unfairness subscale, a 2 (Age) by 2 (Interrogation) ANCOVA with gender as a covariate was conducted. Overall, no significant effects of age, interrogation, or their interaction were found (see Table 2). Regardless of age or interrogation condition, the majority of participants rated the unfairness of the interview as 4.8 or higher on the 7 point likert scale (1=very fair, 7=very unfair). Thus participants overall saw the interrogation as moderately unfair. The hypothesis that the interview would be seen as more unfair when utilizing Maximization or when used with the younger suspect was not supported.

### **Ratings of Interview Understanding**

A 2 (Age) by 2 (interrogation) ANCOVA with gender as the covariate was conducted for the interview understanding subscale. The interaction of age and condition was not significant, however, results revealed significant main effects for age,  $F(1, 366) = 7.44$ ,  $MSE= 9.99$ ,  $p = .05$ , partial eta squared = .020 and interrogation,  $F(1, 366) = 8.82$ ,  $MSE= 11.86$ ,  $p = .05$ , partial eta squared = .024. Using the 7 point likert scale (1=very unlikely, 7=very likely) the results for age suggest that participants viewed both the 12-year-old ( $M= 2.47$ ;  $SD= 1.16$ ) and 16-year-old ( $M= 2.80$ ;  $SD= 1.18$ ) year as having a low likelihood of interview understanding, but the 12-year-old was significantly lower (see Table 2). Similarly, the results suggest that participants in both the

minimization ( $M=2.45$ ;  $SD= 1.10$ ) and maximization ( $M=2.80$ ;  $SD= 1.23$ ) interrogation conditions deemed the suspect as having little understanding of the interview. However, participants thought the suspect interrogated using the minimization technique had significantly less understanding of the interview than the suspect interrogated with the maximization technique.

### **Ratings of Rights Understanding**

For the rights understanding subscale, A 2 (Age) by 2 (interrogation) ANCOVA with gender as a covariate was conducted. Overall, no significant effects of age, interrogation, or interaction were found (see Table 2). However, the data showed that the majority of the participants scored the suspect 1.2 or lower on the likelihood that he understood his rights using the 7 point likert scale (1=very unlikely, 7=very unlikely). The hypothesis that the suspect would be seen as having less understanding when the interrogation consisted of the Maximization technique or was 12-years-old was not supported.

Table 2 Means (with standard deviations in parentheses) of scaled questions by age and interrogation condition

Scale	Age	Interrogation Condition	
		Minimization	Maximization
		M (SD)	M (SD)
Rights Understanding	12	1.47 (0.72)	1.61 (0.88)
	16	1.63 (0.79)	1.57 (0.67)
Interview Understanding	12	2.31 (1.03)	2.62 (1.27)
	16	2.60 (1.16)	3.00 (1.17)
Police Unfairness	12	4.76 (1.03)	4.86 (1.14)
	16	4.63 (1.12)	4.72 (1.26)

*Note.* Ratings were made on a 7-point scale (1 = *very unlikely*, 4 = *neither likely nor unlikely*, 7 = *very likely*)

### Individual Differences and Predictors

**Police Views.** A significant positive correlation ( $r = .202$ ) was found between participant's views of police and believing there was enough evidence present for a conviction. Overall, if a participant had a more favorable view of police they felt there was enough evidence present for a conviction. A positive correlation ( $r = .164$ ) between participant's views of police and age was found. Overall, as the age of a participant increased their personal view of police became more unfavorable.

**Sympathy for Juvenile Suspects.** A positive correlation ( $r = .167$ ) was found between participants sympathy for juvenile offenders and the likelihood the suspect made a false confession. If a participant had higher ratings of sympathy for juveniles who commit crimes, they also believed the suspects' confession to be false. Additionally, a positive correlation ( $r = .161$ ) was found between sympathy for juvenile suspects and believing there was enough

evidence to convict. Participants had less sympathy for a juvenile suspect if they felt there was enough evidence for a conviction. A negative correlation ( $r = -.171$ ) was found in regards to a participant's sympathy for juvenile suspects and views of the death penalty. Participants who felt less sympathy for juvenile suspects were more likely to support the death penalty.

**Evidence.** A positive correlation ( $r = .346$ ) was found between the likelihood of a false confession and ratings of whether there was enough evidence present for a conviction. If participants felt a confession was more likely to be false, they believed there was inadequate evidence present for a conviction of the suspect. A positive correlation of both age ( $r = .126$ ) and class rank ( $r = .172$ ) was found in regards to participants views of enough evidence present for a conviction. Overall, a participant who was older or in a higher class rank felt there was *less* evidence present for a conviction of the suspect.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of the current study was designed to uncover whether perceptions of juvenile false confessions varied as a function of the suspect's age and police interrogation techniques.

#### **Influence of Age and Interrogation on Perceptions**

Overall, regardless of age or interrogation technique, the majority of participants deemed the suspect as not guilty. Contrary to the proposed hypothesis that the 12-year-old in the maximization condition would be least likely to be perceived as guilty, the 12-year-old in minimization condition was least likely to be perceived as guilty.

In regards to the likelihood that the suspect was making a false confession, these results were congruent to perceptions of guilt. The 12-year-old interviewed using the minimization technique was perceived as less likely to be guilty and more likely to produce a false confession than the 12-year-old interviewed with the maximization technique. One respondent in the 12-year-old/minimization condition illustrated these results stating: "Brandon just seemed like a confused boy that the police coerced into admitting something he didn't do. He does not understand the severity of the situation." These results suggest that the detectives using the minimization technique may have downplayed the severity of the situation the suspect was in and made him believe falsely confessing was the right thing to do. In regards to the 16-year-old

suspect, they were seen as more likely to be not guilty and give a false confession in the maximization condition rather than the minimization condition. Another respondent supported these findings for this condition by stating: “Brandon was annoyed and scared at the alleged accusations, so he just cooperated to stop being harassed.” When looking at interrogation techniques specifically, the present study revealed results different to Kassin and McNall (1991). They found that when mock jurors were presented with adult confessions using the Minimization technique conviction rates were as high as when presented with an unprompted confession, but when mock jurors were presented with Maximization techniques that produced a confession, conviction rates dropped significantly.

Although no significant differences by age or interrogation were found for ratings of the suspect, some trends did emerge which fell in line with the hypotheses. Participants’ ratings showed the majority felt the suspect was easily influenced by the detectives during the interview and lacked understanding of their legal rights. In general, participants’ views of the suspect are incongruent with previous research conducted by Najdowski and Bottoms (2012) on juvenile false confessions. In previous studies, if participants were actual jurors, they may not be appropriately concerned with juvenile suspects’ suggestibility and legal rights understanding which could effect their judgments. Again, the present studies findings may be unlike past findings due to the education level of the participants and their exposure to psychology courses, especially ones dealing with psychological development of adolescents.

### **Influence of Participant Gender on Perceptions**

Preliminary analyses suggested that gender played a role in participants’ perceptions, so gender was controlled for and analyses were conducted in order to show the four conditions were



equally distributed among males and females. For not guilty verdicts by gender, all the conditions were similar except for the 16-year-old/Maximization condition. Each condition only showed to have a few point percentage difference between males and females on not guilty verdicts, but a significant difference of almost 17% was found between males and females for the 16-year-old/Maximization condition. A possible explanation for these findings is that female participants still viewed the 16-year-old as being a child who was coerced by police into confessing, while the male participants viewed the 16-year-old as an adult capable of the crime and providing a true confession. For police fairness, Redlich et al. (2008) found that men and women rated police as equally fair, but only when the suspect was older. The present study yielded different results in that females felt the police were fairer with the 12-year-old than males did and males felt the police were fairer with the 16-year-old than women did.

For interview understanding, the present study found no difference in ratings of interview understanding between male and female participants for the 12-year-old suspect, but women did feel the 16-year-old suspect had more interview understanding than males did. These results differed from Redlich et al. (2008) which stated men were more likely to rate the suspect as having higher understanding of the interview than women, regardless of age.

For rights understanding, this study revealed that males felt both the 12 and 16-year-old suspect had less rights understanding than women did. These results are congruent with Redlich et al. (2008) which found that women rated the suspect as more likely to understand their rights. Overall results did fall in line with past research which has stated men tend to rate the suspect (regardless of age) more favorably than women (Schmidt & Brigham, 1996). These results could be due to gender biases since the suspect and rater share the same gender. Redlich et al. (2008) noted that men rated the suspect as more likely to have committed the murder when they were

female rather than male. Moreover, in the present study the crime was sexual assault of a 14-year-old girl; research has shown that women have more sympathy for sexual assault victims and child sexual abuse victims than men do (Najdowski & Bottoms, 2012).

In regards to sympathy, results found that women felt more sympathy for the 16-year-old suspect than males did, and males felt more sympathy for the 12-year-old suspect than females did. Regardless of the age condition, women were shown to feel more sympathy for the suspect in the Minimization condition than males did. Alternatively, males felt more sympathy for the suspect in the Maximization condition than females did. The present studies' results regarding sympathy and conviction were also similar to Redlich et al. (2008) in that juvenile suspects rated with less sympathy for the crimes they committed were seen as more likely to have enough evidence to receive a conviction.

### **Limitations**

First, it must be acknowledged that the participants in this study were not actual jurors and may have some characteristics that differ from those who would serve on a jury. Because the analyses found age and class rank differences, it can be determined that age along with education level might factor into actual juror verdicts. A further limitation was the use of a fictional interrogation. Although this interrogation was based on real interrogations, the content was fictional, consisted only of excerpts, and utilized only one interrogation technique per condition. Actual interrogations would be an entire transcript containing many pages of dialogue and various interrogation techniques would be used throughout it. Although every attempt was made to convey that the interrogation lasted longer than the excerpts shown (including time stamps at the beginning of each excerpt which indicated the excerpts alone lasted almost 2 hours), the

participants would likely have had different views of interrogations that lasted four or eight or even twelve hours, as actual juvenile interrogations do (Drizin & Colgan, 2004). Lastly, the sample size became a limitation of this study. After excluding 90 participants due to failing manipulation checks, there were not as many participants in each of the four conditions as desired. A larger sample size would have yielded larger power and perhaps revealed different results, particularly involving the interaction effect.

### **Future Research**

Though this study had some limitations, it was the first to show that interrogations using the Minimization technique may actually reduce credibility for younger suspects rather than increase it as originally hypothesized. Another important finding was that participants, in the role of mock jurors, seemed to have an understanding that juveniles suspects do not fully understand their legal rights when questioned, can be easily influenced by questioning techniques, and that some interrogation tactics may be unfair when questioning juveniles. All these findings support the initial thoughts of the researcher in regards to juveniles who are questioned. These findings also align with previous research in that juror gender does seem to play somewhat of a role in perceptions of juvenile suspects (Redlich et al. 2008). The implications of this study only further support the notion that prospective jurors need to be educated on the psychological differences between adult and juvenile suspects. Progress must also continue to be made in the training of interrogators and the tactics they use to interrogate juvenile suspects. Primary focus needs to be directed to finding more appropriate tactics to use when interrogating juvenile suspects in order to reduce false confessions and their detrimental consequences.

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APPENDIX A  
INFORMED CONSENT

November 10, 2012

Dear Participant,

We are conducting a survey to determine people's beliefs and opinions regarding interrogations involving cases of sexual assault. To participate, *you must be 18 years of age or older*. If you choose to participate in this project, you will be asked to complete a survey containing 43 questions. It should take you no more than 30-45 minutes. There are four parts to this survey. In the first part, you are asked to read a vignette depicting a sexual assault. In the second part you are asked to read excerpts of a police questioning involving a suspect for the sexual assault. In the third part, you will answer questions about the vignette and excerpts of police questioning you read. In the fourth part, you will be asked demographical information.

While this survey deals with fictional and hypothetical events, the allegation made in the scenario is explicit. Sometimes thinking about sexual abuse or physical abuse can be deeply disturbing for some people. If the topic makes you uncomfortable, please *do not* participate. In addition, if you feel that you need to talk to anyone about any issues raised by this survey please contact the student counseling center at 423-425-4438, located in the University Student Center. The counseling center provides several services to deal with personal problems, anxiety, depression, and other issues that may be related to experiences of sexual abuse.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your academic standing at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga in any way. If your professor allows any extra credit for participation in research, it will be given according to your professor's guidelines. If you do choose to participate in this study, your participation will be completely anonymous. Neither anyone reading the results of the survey nor I will be able to identify you. This form will *not* be connected with your survey answers, but will be collected separately.

If you have any questions about the project, you may contact Kelsey Villamarin at [rkg726@mocs.utc.edu](mailto:rkg726@mocs.utc.edu) or Dr. Amye Warren at [amy-warren@utc.edu](mailto:amy-warren@utc.edu) or 423-425-4293. This project has been approved by the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga's Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects. If you have any questions or concerns you may contact The Institutional Review Board at [instrb@utc.edu](mailto:instrb@utc.edu) or the IRB chair, Dr. Bart Weathington at [423-425-4289](tel:423-425-4289) .

Your help is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Villamarin

University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Department of Psychology #2803

615 McCallie Ave

Chattanooga, TN 37403



\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Print Full Name

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UTC ID

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Professor

***The Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (FWA00004149) has approved this research project #12-174.***

APPENDIX B  
ASSAULT VIGNETTE(S)

## **Sexual Assault Vignette- 12 year-old**

On the evening of October 19<sup>th</sup>, 14 year old Ashley Jones attended the Weaver High School football game with her two friends Rachel Smith- 16 years old and Jessica Green- 15 years old. On this particular evening Ashley, Rachel, and Jessica had reportedly obtained liquor from Rachel's older brother and all three girls had consumed at least 2 mixed drinks each prior to arriving at the football game. Around 8:00 PM, Ashley, Rachel, and Jessica arrived at the football game and began walking around the stadium while stopping and talking to friends. During half-time the girls headed towards the stands in order to watch their friends on the dance team perform during the half-time show.

Midway through the half-time show, around 8:45 PM, Ashley, Rachel and Jessica left the stands to continue walking around the football stadium. After about ten minutes of walking around, Ashley left the company of Jessica and Rachel in order to visit the concession stand and Rachel and Jessica continued to talk to a group of friends who gathered near by. However, after approximately 20 minutes, both Rachel and Jessica realized Ashley had still not returned from the concession stand. At this point, both girls began walking around in order to find Ashley and head home.

According to the statement given by Ashley, that evening she had left Jessica and Rachel around 8:55 PM to go to the concession stand to get a snack. Ashley explained she ran into a group of boys near the concession stand whom she had met in passing a few times, but did not know very well. According to Ashley, after her brief encounter with the group of boys, she made her way to the girls rest room located near the concession stand, but there was a line, so she went into the handicap restroom. As Ashley entered the lit, one-person restroom, she explained that the lights suddenly went out and she was forcefully shoved from behind into the dark restroom.

Once inside the dark restroom, Ashley described that someone had placed a hand over her mouth, shoved her against the door of the bathroom, forced their hand down her pants, and began to digitally penetrate her. Ashley reported that the entire incident occurred in less than 5 minutes before the perpetrator ran from the dark restroom and slammed the door behind them as they fled. In shock, Ashley explained she did not go after the perpetrator, and stayed hidden inside the bathroom for at least 30 minutes before emerging from the restroom in order to find Rachel and Jessica.

Once Ashley found Rachel and Jessica, she explained to her friends what had occurred in the bathroom. Rachel and Jessica urged Ashley to go home immediately, but Ashley insisted on waiting to leave until the game was over since all three girls had been drinking that evening and didn't want to get in trouble. All three girls then agreed and stayed until the football game was over and then proceeded to Ashley's parent's house where Ashley told her parent's about the assault and the police were called soon after. When questioned about the identity of her attacker, Ashley was not able to give a description due to having no visibility in the dark restroom and the brief duration it took for the whole event took to occur. When questioned, Rachel and Jessica both recalled seeing Ashley stop briefly and talk to the group of boys on the way to the concession stand. Although, neither girl knew the identity of any of the boys in the group, they did recall one boy that stood out to them in particular. Rachel and Jessica described this certain boy as tall with short, dark hair, and was a larger build than the rest of the boys in the group.

In order to gain more leads on the identity of Ashley's attacker, the police canvassed Weaver High School during the next week asking any witnesses to come forward if they had seen Ashley that evening at the Football game or had any information regarding the attack. During this time one mutual friend of Ashley, Jessica, and Rachel came forward with information regarding the possible identity of Ashley's attacker. The friend explained

that they had been near the concession stand and bathrooms around the time Ashley's attack had occurred. The friend also stated they had recalled noticing a small group of boys near the concession stand who were being rather loud and pestering people as they walked past their group. The friend then explained that one boy in particular had stood out in the group because they had first seen him with the rest of the group and the second time they saw him that evening he was in close vicinity of the restrooms, but was by himself. They described this boy as tall, with dark hair and a well built body.

After comparing the matching descriptions of both Ashley's friends Rachel and Jessica and the mutual friend who was located near the crime scene around the time of the attack, the police were able to write out and distribute a description of the boy they were looking for to further question regarding the event. Following the release of the police description, Brandon White was sought out for questioning. Brandon was a 12 year old 7<sup>th</sup> grader at Weaver Middle School who was 6' with dark hair, a large build, and had been in the group of students both Rachel, Jessica, and their mutual friend had observed at the football game the night of the attack.

### **Sexual Assault Vignette- 16 year-old**

On the evening of October 19<sup>th</sup>, 14 year old Ashley Jones attended the Weaver High School football game with her two friends Rachel Smith- 16 years old and Jessica Green- 15 years old. On this particular evening Ashley, Rachel, and Jessica had reportedly obtained liquor from Rachel's older brother and all three girls had consumed at least 2 mixed drinks each prior to arriving at the football game. Around 8:00 PM, Ashley, Rachel, and Jessica arrived at the football game and began walking around the stadium while stopping and talking to friends. During half-time the girls headed towards the stands in order to watch their friends on the dance team perform during the half-time show.

Midway through the half-time show, around 8:45 PM, Ashley, Rachel and Jessica left the stands to continue walking around the football stadium. After about ten minutes of walking around, Ashley left the company of Jessica and Rachel in order to visit the concession stand and Rachel and Jessica continued to talk to a group of friends who gathered near by. However, after approximately 20 minutes, both Rachel and Jessica realized Ashley had still not returned from the concession stand. At this point, both girls began walking around in order to find Ashley and head home.

According to the statement given by Ashley, that evening she had left Jessica and Rachel around 8:55 PM to go to the concession stand to get a snack. Ashley explained she ran into a group of boys near the concession stand whom she had met in passing a few times, but did not know very well. According to Ashley, after her brief encounter with the group of boys, she made her way to the girls rest room located near the concession stand, but there was a line, so she went into the handicap restroom. As Ashley entered the lit, one-person restroom, she explained that the lights suddenly went out and she was forcefully shoved from behind into the dark restroom.

Once inside the dark restroom, Ashley described that someone had placed a hand over her mouth, shoved her against the door of the bathroom, forced their hand down her pants, and began to digitally penetrate her. Ashley reported that the entire incident occurred in less than 5 minutes before the perpetrator ran from the dark restroom and slammed the door behind them as they fled. In shock, Ashley explained she did not go after the perpetrator, and stayed hidden inside the bathroom for at least 30 minutes before emerging from the restroom in order to find Rachel and Jessica.

Once Ashley found Rachel and Jessica, she explained to her friends what had occurred in the bathroom. Rachel and Jessica urged Ashley to go home immediately, but Ashley insisted on waiting to leave until the game was over since all three girls had been drinking that evening and didn't want to get in trouble. All three girls then agreed and stayed until the football game was over and then proceeded to Ashley's parent's house where Ashley told her parent's about the assault and the police were called soon after. When questioned about the identity of her attacker, Ashley was not able to give a description due to having no visibility in the dark restroom and the brief duration it took for the whole event took to occur. When questioned, Rachel and Jessica both recalled seeing Ashley stop briefly and talk to the group of boys on the way to the concession stand. Although, neither girl knew the identity of any of the boys in the group, they did recall one boy that stood out to them in particular. Rachel and Jessica described this certain boy as tall with short, dark hair, and was a larger build than the rest of the boys in the group.

In order to gain more leads on the identity of Ashley's attacker, the police canvassed Weaver High School during the next week asking any witnesses to come forward if they had seen Ashley that evening at the Football game or had any information regarding the attack. During this time one mutual friend of Ashley, Jessica, and Rachel came forward with information regarding the possible identity of Ashley's attacker. The friend explained

that they had been near the concession stand and bathrooms around the time Ashley's attack had occurred. The friend also stated they had recalled noticing a small group of boys near the concession stand who were being rather loud and pestering people as they walked past their group. The friend then explained that one boy in particular had stood out in the group because they had first seen him with the rest of the group and the second time they saw him that evening he was in close vicinity of the restrooms, but was by himself. They described this boy as tall with dark hair and a well built body.

After comparing the matching descriptions of both Ashley's friends Rachel and Jessica and the mutual friend who was located near the crime scene around the time of the attack, the police were able to write out and distribute a description of the boy they were looking for to further question regarding the event. Following the release of the police description, Brandon White was sought out for questioning. Brandon was a 16 year old Junior at Weaver High School who was 6' with dark hair, a large build, and had been in the group of students both Rachel, Jessica, and their mutual friend had observed at the football game the night of the attack.

APPENDIX C  
INTERVIEW EXCERPTS

## Police Questioning Minimization Excerpts- 12-year-old

On the following Friday October 26, Brandon White, a 12 year old 7<sup>th</sup> grader at Weaver Middle School was matched with the identification Ashley's friends Jessica, Rachel, and another mutual friend of the girl's had made in regards to Ashley's attacker on the night of Friday October, 19<sup>th</sup>. On the morning of Friday, October 26, Brandon White was called from class around 8:30 AM and asked to report to the main office. Once Brandon entered the main office he was introduced to two detectives who were investigating Ashley's assault. The detectives identified themselves as Detective Larry Barns and Detective Michael Anderson. Neither detective explained why Brandon was called down to the office, but simply introduced themselves and asked Brandon if they could talk to him for a few minutes. Brandon consented and followed the two detectives to an empty room located in the main office where the questioning began.

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### **Friday October 26, 8:40 AM**

**Detective Barns:** Good Morning Brandon, how are you doing this morning?

**Brandon White:** Fine, I guess.

**Detective Anderson:** Good, good; now Brandon, as we told you a few minutes ago, I'm Detective Anderson and this is my partner Detective Barns. We just called you down here this morning to chat for a few minutes. Does that seem okay to you?

**Brandon White:** Well, what's this about?

**Detective Barns:** We're just interviewing a lot of people who went to the game Friday night.

**Brandon White:** Oh, okay, yeah well that's cool then. Will I get in trouble for missing class, though? I don't want my teacher getting on my case for missing work.

**Detective Barns:** No, no. You won't be in any type of trouble. We notified your teacher that we would be speaking to you and she understands and won't be penalizing you in any way.

**Brandon White:** Okay, cool then.

**Detective Anderson:** Alright, well Brandon, as you know there was a home football game this past Friday, and you attended it. Am I correct?

**Brandon White:** Yes.

**Detective Anderson:** Okay, and about what time did you arrive at the game and who did you attend the game with?



**Brandon White:** Uh, I don't know the exact time, but I think my friend Adam and I got there around 8. We walked over to the game because I was hanging out with Adam that afternoon after school and he lives in a neighborhood that's about five minutes from school.

**Detective Barns:** Alright, now Brandon did you happen to know there was an incident at the game on Friday?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I heard about that...that Ashley girl got attacked or something, right? Everyone has been talking about it.

**Detective Barns:** That's correct. Do you remember seeing Ashley that evening or speaking to her at any point during the game?

**Brandon White:** Uh, yeah, I mean I remember seeing her for a few minutes. We're not friends or anything. We don't hang with the same crowd, if you know what I mean. But, uh, yeah she spoke to a few of my friends that night that I was hanging out with, I think. I don't know, all the guys know and like her.

**Detective Anderson:** And why is that?

**Brandon White:** I don't know...'cause she's hot.

**Detective Barns:** Oh, okay. Okay, well listen Brandon, the main reason we brought you down here this morning is because we have a few witnesses who came forward saying you matched the description of a guy Ashley had been seen around right before her attack as well as matching the description of the same guy who was spotted near the location of the attack right after it occurred.

**Brandon White:** uhh, who says? Why does that matter? There were tons of people at the game that night? Wait, you're not trying to put what happened to that girl on me, right? Who's running around saying I did that to her? I had nothing to do with any of that. I don't even know her...

**Detective Barns:** Now, calm down Brandon. There is no need to be getting upset if you did nothing wrong, right? We're just having a friendly chat with you. No need to get upset.

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## **Friday October 26, 9:15 AM**

**Detective Barns:** Alright, Brandon. Now look, we have been talking for a little while now, and I think we all just need to be honest with one another, okay? You seem to be rather upset and both Detective Anderson and I are concerned because we feel you know a lot more about what happened Friday night than what you are telling, and what's more is we truly feel you will feel better if you just open up and be straight with us.

**Brandon White:** No, you guys have it all wrong...I'm getting upset because I didn't do anything! I told you both that...

**Detective Anderson:** Now, Brandon, c'mon...we both know that you weren't even supposed to be at that game Friday night, were you?

**Brandon White:** Well...no, but...

**Detective Anderson:** And exactly why weren't you supposed to be there?

**Brandon White:** Well, it was stupid, really. I had gotten in trouble for skipping classes a few weeks ago with my friend Adam. We both got suspended for a few days; it was stupid and not fair. Well, my parents got all pissed and wouldn't listen to my side of the story so they told me I couldn't hang out with Adam anymore and that I wasn't allowed to go to the football games with him anymore. Some crap about us being a bad influence on one another.

**Detective Barns:** But, you did go to the game with Adam?

**Brandon White:** Well, yeah. I mean he is my best friend and just because we skipped some classes and got in trouble doesn't mean I am not going to be his friend anymore. So whatever, I figured my parents were overreacting and I really wanted to go to the game with Adam, so I told a little lie and said I was going to spend the night at my friend Steve's house that lives down the block. Adam and I weren't doing anything wrong, we were just hanging out. Not a big deal!

**Detective Barns:** So let me get this straight. You feel its okay to tell a lie, if you feel it will protect you?

**Brandon White:** yeah...well no, I mean, in that case it wasn't a big deal, man. I'm not lying about anything else though...

**Detective Anderson:** But, Brandon how do we know that? I mean ever since we began discussing the assault on Ashley you have been getting very agitated. We all know you lied to your parents and attended the game that night with someone you have previously been in trouble with. You were spotted hanging around Ashley that evening by a few witnesses, and even identified as being near the bathroom after the assault took place. Can you see where we are going with this? It just isn't looking very good, and I gotta tell you, lying doesn't make it better.

**Detective Barns:** We're on your side here, son. I don't think you see that. We're not going to pass any judgment. You know we all make mistakes. Like you said earlier, she's a "hot" girl and all the guys like her. Perhaps, she was flirting that night and sent you the wrong message; you know how girls like that are? Always messing with guy's heads and then when the guy makes a move, they pretend they didn't see it coming.

**Brandon White:** Well...I mean yeah that is true. Some girls are like that. But, I can't see me doing that. I don't even really know her...

**Detective Barns:** I thought you said all the guys know her? Maybe, it's that she acts like she doesn't know you? Does that bother you? I know that would bother me.

**Brandon White:** Well, no...she does know me, but she was talking to me about as much as she was talking to any of the other guys is all I'm trying to say, so why aren't you talking to Adam, Mark, Andrew, or any of the other guys that were there?!

**Detective Barns:** Brandon, we will be speaking with everyone, like we told you before. But, right now we just want to focus on you, okay? Let's get back to what happened...

**Detective Anderson:** Okay, from what you've said it sounds like she was flirting with you. Maybe she came off giving you the wrong idea, and so you followed her into the bathroom thinking things were consensual, and then she said it wasn't. It happens all the time. The thing is though Brandon, you have to be honest and just admit it. You'll feel better and the punishment will be far less than if you keep denying stuff. Like I said, both me and Detective Anderson know you aren't a bad kid, but the cards are kind of stacked against you and you wouldn't want to add lying about this on top of the other things you're already going to be in trouble for, right?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I really don't want to get in any more trouble and I'm not a bad guy. I didn't do anything.

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## **Friday October 26, 10:00 AM**

**Brandon White:** Honestly, this whole thing is just pissing me off. I'm tired of talking about it.

**Detective Barns:** We understand, and we feel the reason you are probably so bothered by this conversation is because your conscience is bothering you. As we said before, she's a pretty girl who leads guys on and that's really all it was. You thought she wanted it, she said she didn't, and that's always the way these stories go.

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I know...I'm just tired of this whole situation and want it to be over.

**Detective Barns:** Well, you know the way to finally put this all behind you, Brandon. Just admit to us that you made a mistake Friday. We understand and know you will feel a great deal of relief just getting it off your chest. The punishment for those who just keep lying and denying their mistakes it always much worse and we know you are a smarter guy than that. We also know you are a good guy who can admit when he's messed up.

**Detective Barns:** Also, if you drag this out it will just become more aggravating. All these people will get involved and think the worst of you, and it just won't be good. If you just come clean now and tell us what we need to hear then, it's as good as done. You accept your mistake, get a lesser punishment and go on your way.

**Brandon White:** Will this be the last time I have to talk to you guys? I mean I seriously don't want to go through this again. I mean, I didn't do this crap, but whatever, tell me what I need to say or do to get this over with.

**Detective Anderson:** Yeah, well I think you know the truth Brandon, and so do we. Mistakes happen and you can learn from them. You're a good guy, I can feel it.

**Brandon White:** Okay...and you guys won't tell my parent's I was at the game with Adam on Friday?

**Detective Barns:** You cooperate with us and just tell us what you did, and we will cooperate with you. Sounds like a good deal, right?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I guess, whatever. This whole thing is just screwed up.

**Detective Anderson:** We understand Brandon. Okay, so let's get this straight. You saw Ashley last Friday night at the football game. You two flirted and you followed her to the restroom, you both entered the restroom where you stuck your hand down her pants, and then you left the rest room with Ashley still there. Is that about it?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, sure, whatever you say. I just want to leave.

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## **Police Questioning Maximization Excerpts 12-year-old**

On the following Friday October 26, Brandon White, a 12 year old 7<sup>th</sup> grader at Weaver Middle School was matched with the identification Ashley's friends Jessica, Rachel, and another mutual friend of the girl's had made in regards to Ashley's attacker on the night of Friday October, 19<sup>th</sup>. On the morning of Friday, October 26, Brandon White was called from class around 8:30 AM and asked to report to the main office. Once Brandon entered the main office he was introduced to two detectives who were investigating Ashley's assault. The detectives identified themselves as Detective Larry Barns and Detective Michael Anderson. Neither detective explained why Brandon was called down to the office, but simply introduced themselves and asked Brandon if they could talk to him for a few minutes. Brandon consented and followed the two detectives to an empty room located in the main office where the questioning began.

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### ***Friday October 26, 8:40 AM***

***Detective Barns:*** Good Morning Brandon, how are you doing this morning?

***Brandon White:*** Fine, I guess.

***Detective Anderson:*** Good, good; now Brandon, as we told you a few minutes ago, I'm Detective Anderson and this is my partner Detective Barns. We just called you down here this morning to talk for a few minutes. Okay?

***Brandon White:*** Well, what's this about?

***Detective Barns:*** We're just interviewing a lot of people who went to the game Friday night.

***Brandon White:*** Oh, okay, yeah well that's cool then. Will I get in trouble for missing class, though? I don't want my teacher getting on my case for missing work.

***Detective Barns:*** No, no. You won't be in any type of trouble. We notified your teacher that we would be speaking to you.

***Brandon White:*** Okay, cool then.

***Detective Anderson:*** Alright, well Brandon, as you know there was a home football game this past Friday, and you attended it. Am I correct?

***Brandon White:*** Yes.

***Detective Anderson:*** Okay, and about what time did you arrive at the game and who did you attend the game with?

**Brandon White:** Uh, I don't know the exact time, but I think my friend Adam and I got there around 8. We walked over to the game because I was hanging out with Adam that afternoon after school and he lives in a neighborhood that's about five minutes from school.

**Detective Barns:** Alright, now Brandon, you do know there was an incident at the game on Friday, right?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I heard about that...that Ashley girl got attacked or something? Everyone has been talking about it.

**Detective Barns:** That's correct. Do you remember seeing Ashley that evening or speaking to her at any point during the game?

**Brandon White:** Uh, yeah, I mean I remember seeing her for a few minutes. We're not friends or anything. We don't hang with the same crowd, if you know what I mean. But, uh, yeah she spoke to a few of my friends that night that I was hanging out with, I think. I don't know, all the guys know and like her.

**Detective Anderson:** And why is that?

**Brandon White:** I don't know...'cause she's hot.

**Detective Barns:** Oh, okay. Okay, well listen Brandon, the main reason we brought you down here this morning is because we have a few witnesses who came forward saying you matched the description of a guy Ashley had been seen around right before her attack as well as matching the description of the same guy who was spotted near the location of the attack right after it occurred.

**Brandon White:** uhh, who says? Why does that matter? There were tons of people at the game that night? Wait, you're not trying to put what happened to that girl on me, right? Who's running around saying I did that to her? I had nothing to do with any of that. I don't even know her...

**Detective Barns:** Now, calm down Brandon. There is no need to be getting upset if you did nothing wrong, but your reaction so far seems to be telling us differently.

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## **Friday October 26, 9:15 AM**

**Detective Barns:** Alright, Brandon. Now look, we have been talking for a little while now, and I think you just need to be honest with us and stop playing games, okay? You seem to be rather upset and both Detective Anderson and I know that you know a whole lot more about what happened Friday night than what you are telling, and what's more is we don't appreciate you acting like this isn't a big deal. You need to grasp the intense gravity of this situation and stop brushing it off as not a big deal.

**Brandon White:** I know it's a big deal, but you guys have it all wrong...I'm getting upset because I didn't do anything! I told you both that...

**Detective Anderson:** Now, Brandon, c'mon...we both know that you weren't even supposed to be at that game Friday night, were you?

**Brandon White:** Well...no, but...

**Detective Anderson:** And exactly why weren't you supposed to be there?

**Brandon White:** Well, it was stupid, really. I had gotten in trouble for skipping classes a few weeks ago with my friend Adam. We both got suspended for a few days; it was stupid and not fair. Well, my parents got all pissed and wouldn't listen to my side of the story so they told me I couldn't hang out with Adam anymore and that I wasn't allowed to go to the football games with him anymore. Some crap about us being a bad influence on one another.

**Detective Barns:** But, you did disobey your parents and go to the game with Adam who you just admitted you have been in trouble with before?

**Brandon White:** Well, yeah. I mean he is my best friend and just because we skipped some classes and got in trouble doesn't mean I am not going to be his friend anymore. So whatever, I figured my parents were overreacting and I really wanted to go to the game with Adam, so I told a little lie and said I was going to spend the night at my friend Steve's house that lives down the block. Adam and I weren't doing anything wrong, we were just hanging out. Not a big deal!

**Detective Barns:** So let me get this straight. You feel its okay to tell a lie, if you feel it will protect you?

**Brandon White:** yeah...well no, I mean, in that case it wasn't a big deal, man. I'm not lying about anything else though...

**Detective Anderson:** But, Brandon how do we know that? I mean ever since we began discussing the assault on Ashley you have been getting very agitated and only those who are guilty react as you have been. We all know you lied to your parents and attended the game that night with someone you have previously been in trouble with. You were spotted hanging around Ashley that evening by a few witnesses, and even identified as being near the bathroom after the assault took place. Can you see where we are going with this? It just isn't looking very good, and I gotta tell you, lying doesn't make it better.

**Detective Barns:** In fact, lying about what happened that night only makes you look even guiltier. If you continue to dig this hole you're in, no one will be able to help you out; not us or your parents. Now you have already admitted Ashley was hot and that all the guys like her. Sounds like you were flirting with her that evening, perhaps got it in your head that you wanted to make a move on this girl and you weren't going to take no for an answer. Now she's coming forward with these accusations of being attacked and you don't want to take responsibility like a man.

**Brandon White:** No, that isn't it! Look, yeah I did say she was hot, and perhaps we did flirt a little, but I can't see me doing that. I don't even really know her that well...I wouldn't hurt anyone! I'm not lying!

**Detective Barns:** Now, Brandon do not try to play that card with us. You just told us all the guys know her. What's more is we have more than one witness who saw you hanging around and flirting with her that night. Backtracking and changing your story doesn't help your case any. We know for a fact that you do know her. Maybe, it's that she acts like she doesn't know you? Does that bother you? Maybe the problem here is that you

know her and she wouldn't give you the attention or time of day and you got upset and followed her to the bathroom?

**Brandon White:** Well, wait, hold on a minute here. None of that is true! Okay, you guys are misunderstanding me. She does *know* me, but she was talking to me about as much as she was talking to any of the other guys is all I'm trying to say. That doesn't mean I am the one who did this. I don't even have a problem with her. I could care less if she likes me or not, I wouldn't go and do what was done to her because she wouldn't speak to me. Like I said, she didn't just talk to me that night so why aren't you talking to Adam, Mark, Andrew, or any of the other guys that were there?! This is such crap!

**Detective Barns:** Brandon, we actually have been speaking to other people who attended the game Friday night as well as your friends you hung around. We wanted to see if you would do the right thing and come clean about what you did on your own, but so far you have been denying and lying as you usually do. We have to tell you that when we spoke to your other friends who were there that evening, they said you would talk about Ashley all the time and how you were upset that night because she always brushed off your approaches. What's more is some of your friends are even claiming you told them you were happy she was attacked and that you hinted at the fact that it was you who assaulted her. So yes, we have interviewed other people, but we wanted your side of the story first. We wanted to give you a chance to confess to your actions, but you continue to lie and make this whole situation worse for yourself.

**Brandon White:** What?! That's absolute lies! I never said I attacked Ashley. My friends are liars! You guys have to believe me! I'm not going to get in trouble for something I didn't do. Why would they try to put this one me?! I'm not that guy, I didn't do anything!

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## **Friday October 26, 10:00 AM**

**Brandon White:** Honestly, this whole thing is just pissing me off. I'm tired of talking about it.

**Detective Barns:** Well the reason you are probably so bothered by this conversation is because your conscience is bothering you. As we said before, it sounds like you attempted to make a pass at Ashley that night and she wasn't having it. You got tired of the rejection and you decided to take matters into your own hands. You just didn't think she would come forward.

**Brandon White:** No, this is so messed up...I should have never even talked to her. I'm just tired of this whole situation and want it to be over.

**Detective Barns:** Well, you know the way to finally put this all behind you, Brandon. Just admit to us what you did Friday. If you continue to lie and not take responsibility, you are going to receive a greater punishment. A judge will look at your case and see that you did not cooperate with authorities or show any remorse for your mistake, and they won't have any problem giving you the worst sentencing possible. This is a very big deal, Brandon. It's only a matter of time before the truth comes out. You can come clean and confess to what you did now, or the evidence will force you to come clean later. It's up to you.



**Brandon White:** What do you mean the evidence will force me to come clean?

**Detective Anderson:** DNA evidence, Brandon. In cases such as these, we send both the victims and suspects clothes off to be analyzed. Almost every time matching DNA evidence comes back and that is all the proof we need to convict you of this crime. That's why we are trying to explain to you that playing games and lying or making excuses is only going to make your punishment worse. Just admit to what you did now, so that when the evidence comes back both Detective Barns and I aren't forced to look for a harsher punishment because you not only committed this crime, but lied to authorities as well.

**Detective Barns:** Also, if you drag this out it will just become more aggravating. All these people will get involved and think the worst of you, and it just won't be good. If you just come clean now and tell us what you did and then it's done. You accept your mistake, you receive a lesser punishment, and maybe the judge will even be easier on you since we expressed that you were very cooperative with us and remorseful. But, if you don't cooperate, you're on your own Brandon.

**Brandon White:** This is just so unfair. I don't want all that to happen. I'm just really sorry...I mean, I didn't do this crap, but I don't want to get into more trouble, tell me what I need to say or do to get this over with.

**Detective Anderson:** Yeah, well I think you know the truth Brandon, and so do we. Mistakes happen and you can learn from them. Just don't make the further mistake of lying to those who know the truth and could help you.

**Brandon White:** I know...

**Detective Barns:** Listen; let's not make this harder than it has to be. It's pretty simple. You cooperate with us and just tell us what you did, and we will cooperate with you.

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I guess, whatever. This whole thing is just screwed up.

**Detective Anderson:** Okay, so let's get this straight. You saw Ashley last Friday night at the football game. You two flirted and you followed her to the restroom, you both entered the restroom where you stuck your hand down her pants, and then you left the rest room with Ashley still there. Is that about it?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, sure, whatever you say. I just want to leave.

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## **Police Questioning Minimization Excerpts 16-year-old**

On the following Friday October 26, Brandon White, a 16 year old Junior at Weaver High School was matched with the identification Ashley's friends Jessica, Rachel, and another mutual friend of the girl's had made in regards to Ashley's attacker on the night of Friday October, 19<sup>th</sup>. On the morning of Friday, October 26, Brandon White was called from class around 8:30 AM and asked to report to the main office. Once Brandon entered the main office he was introduced to two detectives who were investigating Ashley's assault. The detectives identified themselves as Detective Larry Barns and Detective Michael Anderson. Neither detective explained why Brandon was called down to the office, but simply introduced themselves and asked Brandon if they could talk to him for a few minutes. Brandon consented and followed the two detectives to an empty room located in the main office where the questioning began.

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### ***Friday October 26, 8:40 AM***

***Detective Barns:*** Good Morning Brandon, how are you doing this morning?

***Brandon White:*** Fine, I guess.

***Detective Anderson:*** Good, good; now Brandon, as we told you a few minutes ago, I'm Detective Anderson and this is my partner Detective Barns. We just called you down here this morning to chat for a few minutes. Does that seem okay to you?

***Brandon White:*** Well, what's this about?

***Detective Barns:*** We're just interviewing a lot of people who went to the game Friday night.

***Brandon White:*** Oh, okay, yeah well that's cool then. Will I get in trouble for missing class, though? I don't want my teacher getting on my case for missing work.

***Detective Barns:*** No, no. You won't be in any type of trouble. We notified your teacher that we would be speaking to you and she understands and won't be penalizing you in any way.

***Brandon White:*** Okay, cool then.

***Detective Anderson:*** Alright, well Brandon, as you know there was a home football game this past Friday, and you attended it. Am I correct?

***Brandon White:*** Yes.

***Detective Anderson:*** Okay, and about what time did you arrive at the game and who did you attend the game with?

**Brandon White:** Uh, I don't know the exact time, but I think my friend Adam and I got there around 8. We walked over to the game because I was hanging out with Adam that afternoon after school and he lives in a neighborhood that's about five minutes from school.

**Detective Barns:** Alright, now Brandon did you happen to know there was an incident at the game on Friday?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I heard about that...that Ashley girl got attacked or something, right? Everyone has been talking about it.

**Detective Barns:** That's correct. Do you remember seeing Ashley that evening or speaking to her at any point during the game?

**Brandon White:** Uh, yeah, I mean I remember seeing her for a few minutes. We're not friends or anything. We don't hang with the same crowd, if you know what I mean. But, uh, yeah she spoke to a few of my friends that night that I was hanging out with, I think. I don't know, all the guys know and like her.

**Detective Anderson:** And why is that?

**Brandon White:** I don't know...'cause she's hot.

**Detective Barns:** Oh, okay. Okay, well listen Brandon, the main reason we brought you down here this morning is because we have a few witnesses who came forward saying you matched the description of a guy Ashley had been seen around right before her attack as well as matching the description of the same guy who was spotted near the location of the attack right after it occurred.

**Brandon White:** uhh, who says? Why does that matter? There were tons of people at the game that night? Wait, you're not trying to put what happened to that girl on me, right? Who's running around saying I did that to her? I had nothing to do with any of that. I don't even know her...

**Detective Barns:** Now, calm down Brandon. There is no need to be getting upset if you did nothing wrong, right? We're just having a friendly chat with you. No need to get upset.

.....

## **Friday October 26, 9:15 AM**

**Detective Barns:** Alright, Brandon. Now look, we have been talking for a little while now, and I think we all just need to be honest with one another, okay? You seem to be rather upset and both Detective Anderson and I are concerned because we feel you know a lot more about what happened Friday night than what you are telling, and what's more is we truly feel you will feel better if you just open up and be straight with us.

**Brandon White:** No, you guys have it all wrong...I'm getting upset because I didn't do anything! I told you both that...

**Detective Anderson:** Now, Brandon, c'mon...we both know that you weren't even supposed to be at that game Friday night, were you?

**Brandon White:** Well...no, but...

**Detective Anderson:** And exactly why weren't you supposed to be there?

**Brandon White:** Well, it was stupid, really. I had gotten in trouble for skipping classes a few weeks ago with my friend Adam. We both got suspended for a few days; it was stupid and not fair. Well, my parents got all pissed and wouldn't listen to my side of the story so they told me I couldn't hang out with Adam anymore and that I wasn't allowed to go to the football games with him anymore. Some crap about us being a bad influence on one another.

**Detective Barns:** But, you did go to the game with Adam?

**Brandon White:** Well, yeah. I mean he is my best friend and just because we skipped some classes and got in trouble doesn't mean I am not going to be his friend anymore. So whatever, I figured my parents were overreacting and I really wanted to go to the game with Adam, so I told a little lie and said I was going to spend the night at my friend Steve's house that lives down the block. Adam and I weren't doing anything wrong, we were just hanging out. Not a big deal!

**Detective Barns:** So let me get this straight. You feel its okay to tell a lie, if you feel it will protect you?

**Brandon White:** yeah...well no, I mean, in that case it wasn't a big deal, man. I'm not lying about anything else though...

**Detective Anderson:** But, Brandon how do we know that? I mean ever since we began discussing the assault on Ashley you have been getting very agitated. We all know you lied to your parents and attended the game that night with someone you have previously been in trouble with. You were spotted hanging around Ashley that evening by a few witnesses, and even identified as being near the bathroom after the assault took place. Can you see where we are going with this? It just isn't looking very good, and I gotta tell you, lying doesn't make it better.

**Detective Barns:** We're on your side here, son. I don't think you see that. We're not going to pass any judgment. You know we all make mistakes. Like you said earlier, she's a "hot" girl and all the guys like her. Perhaps, she was flirting that night and sent you the wrong message; you know how girls like that are? Always messing with guy's heads and then when the guy makes a move, they pretend they didn't see it coming.

**Brandon White:** Well...I mean yeah that is true. Some girls are like that. But, I can't see me doing that. I don't even really know her...

**Detective Barns:** I thought you said all the guys know her? Maybe, it's that she acts like she doesn't know you? Does that bother you? I know that would bother me.

**Brandon White:** Well, no...she does know me, but she was talking to me about as much as she was talking to any of the other guys is all I'm trying to say, so why aren't you talking to Adam, Mark, Andrew, or any of the other guys that were there?!

**Detective Barns:** Brandon, we will be speaking with everyone, like we told you before. But, right now we just want to focus on you, okay? Let's get back to what happened...

**Detective Anderson:** Okay, from what you've said it sounds like she was flirting with you. Maybe she came off giving you the wrong idea, and so you followed her into the bathroom thinking things were consensual, and then she said it wasn't. It happens all the time. The thing is though Brandon, you have to be honest and just admit it. You'll feel better and the punishment will be far less than if you keep denying stuff. Like I said, both me and Detective Anderson know you aren't a bad kid, but the cards are kind of stacked against you and you wouldn't want to add lying about this on top of the other things you're already going to be in trouble for, right?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I really don't want to get in any more trouble and I'm not a bad guy. I didn't do anything.

.....

## **Friday October 26, 10:00 AM**

**Brandon White:** Honestly, this whole thing is just pissing me off. I'm tired of talking about it.

**Detective Barns:** We understand, and we feel the reason you are probably so bothered by this conversation is because your conscience is bothering you. As we said before, she's a pretty girl who leads guys on and that's really all it was. You thought she wanted it, she said she didn't, and that's always the way these stories go.

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I know...I'm just tired of this whole situation and want it to be over.

**Detective Barns:** Well, you know the way to finally put this all behind you, Brandon. Just admit to us that you made a mistake Friday. We understand and know you will feel a great deal of relief just getting it off your chest. The punishment for those who just keep lying and denying their mistakes it always much worse and we know you are a smarter guy than that. We also know you are a good guy who can admit when he's messed up.

**Detective Barns:** Also, if you drag this out it will just become more aggravating. All these people will get involved and think the worst of you, and it just won't be good. If you just come clean now and tell us what we need to hear then, it's as good as done. You accept your mistake, get a lesser punishment and go on your way.

**Brandon White:** Will this be the last time I have to talk to you guys? I mean I seriously don't want to go through this again. I mean, I didn't do this crap, but whatever, tell me what I need to say or do to get this over with.

**Detective Anderson:** Yeah, well I think you know the truth Brandon, and so do we. Mistakes happen and you can learn from them. You're a good guy, I can feel it.

**Brandon White:** Okay...and you guys won't tell my parent's I was at the game with Adam on Friday?

**Detective Barns:** You cooperate with us and just tell us what you did, and we will cooperate with you. Sounds like a good deal, right?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I guess, whatever. This whole thing is just screwed up.

**Detective Anderson:** We understand Brandon. Okay, so let's get this straight. You saw Ashley last Friday night at the football game. You two flirted and you followed her to the restroom, you both entered the restroom where you stuck your hand down her pants, and then you left the rest room with Ashley still there. Is that about it?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, sure, whatever you say. I just want to leave.

.....

## Police Questioning Maximization Excerpts 16-year-old

wing Friday October 26, Brandon White, a 16 year old Junior at Weaver High School was matched with the identification Ashley's friends Jessica, Rachel, and another mutual friend of the girl's had made in regards to Ashley's attacker on the night of Friday October, 19<sup>th</sup>. On the morning of Friday, October 26, Brandon White was called from class around 8:30 AM and asked to report to the main office. Once Brandon entered the main office he was introduced to two detectives who were investigating Ashley's assault. The detectives identified themselves as Detective Larry Barns and Detective Michael Anderson. Neither detective explained why Brandon was called down to the office, but simply introduced themselves and asked Brandon if they could talk to him for a few minutes. Brandon consented and followed the two detectives to an empty room located in the main office where the questioning began.

.....

### **Friday October 26, 8:40 AM**

**Detective Barns:** Good Morning Brandon, how are you doing this morning?

**Brandon White:** Fine, I guess.

**Detective Anderson:** Good, good; now Brandon, as we told you a few minutes ago, I'm Detective Anderson and this is my partner Detective Barns. We just called you down here this morning to talk for a few minutes. Okay?

**Brandon White:** Well, what's this about?

**Detective Barns:** We're just interviewing a lot of people who went to the game Friday night.

**Brandon White:** Oh, okay, yeah well that's cool then. Will I get in trouble for missing class, though? I don't want my teacher getting on my case for missing work.

**Detective Barns:** No, no. You won't be in any type of trouble. We notified your teacher that we would be speaking to you.

**Brandon White:** Okay, cool then.

**Detective Anderson:** Alright, well Brandon, as you know there was a home football game this past Friday, and you attended it. Am I correct?

**Brandon White:** Yes.

**Detective Anderson:** Okay, and about what time did you arrive at the game and who did you attend the game with?

**Brandon White:** Uh, I don't know the exact time, but I think my friend Adam and I got there around 8. We walked over to the game because I was hanging out with Adam that afternoon after school and he lives in a neighborhood that's about five minutes from school.

**Detective Barns:** Alright, now Brandon, you do know there was an incident at the game on Friday, right?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I heard about that...that Ashley girl got attacked or something? Everyone has been talking about it.

**Detective Barns:** That's correct. Do you remember seeing Ashley that evening or speaking to her at any point during the game?

**Brandon White:** Uh, yeah, I mean I remember seeing her for a few minutes. We're not friends or anything. We don't hang with the same crowd, if you know what I mean. But, uh, yeah she spoke to a few of my friends that night that I was hanging out with, I think. I don't know, all the guys know and like her.

**Detective Anderson:** And why is that?

**Brandon White:** I don't know...'cause she's hot.

**Detective Barns:** Oh, okay. Okay, well listen Brandon, the main reason we brought you down here this morning is because we have a few witnesses who came forward saying you matched the description of a guy Ashley had been seen around right before her attack as well as matching the description of the same guy who was spotted near the location of the attack right after it occurred.

**Brandon White:** uhh, who says? Why does that matter? There were tons of people at the game that night? Wait, you're not trying to put what happened to that girl on me, right? Who's running around saying I did that to her? I had nothing to do with any of that. I don't even know her...

**Detective Barns:** Now, calm down Brandon. There is no need to be getting upset if you did nothing wrong, but your reaction so far seems to be telling us differently.

.....

## **Friday October 26, 9:15 AM**

**Detective Barns:** Alright, Brandon. Now look, we have been talking for a little while now, and I think you just need to be honest with us and stop playing games, okay? You seem to be rather upset and both Detective Anderson and I know that you know a whole lot more about what happened Friday night than what you are telling, and what's more is we don't appreciate you acting like this isn't a big deal. You need to grasp the intense gravity of this situation and stop brushing it off as not a big deal.

**Brandon White:** I know it's a big deal, but you guys have it all wrong...I'm getting upset because I didn't do anything! I told you both that...



**Detective Anderson:** Now, Brandon, c'mon...we both know that you weren't even supposed to be at that game Friday night, were you?

**Brandon White:** Well...no, but...

**Detective Anderson:** And exactly why weren't you supposed to be there?

**Brandon White:** Well, it was stupid, really. I had gotten in trouble for skipping classes a few weeks ago with my friend Adam. We both got suspended for a few days; it was stupid and not fair. Well, my parents got all pissed and wouldn't listen to my side of the story so they told me I couldn't hang out with Adam anymore and that I wasn't allowed to go to the football games with him anymore. Some crap about us being a bad influence on one another.

**Detective Barns:** But, you did disobey your parents and go to the game with Adam who you just admitted you have been in trouble with before?

**Brandon White:** Well, yeah. I mean he is my best friend and just because we skipped some classes and got in trouble doesn't mean I am not going to be his friend anymore. So whatever, I figured my parents were overreacting and I really wanted to go to the game with Adam, so I told a little lie and said I was going to spend the night at my friend Steve's house that lives down the block. Adam and I weren't doing anything wrong, we were just hanging out. Not a big deal!

**Detective Barns:** So let me get this straight. You feel its okay to tell a lie, if you feel it will protect you?

**Brandon White:** yeah...well no, I mean, in that case it wasn't a big deal, man. I'm not lying about anything else though...

**Detective Anderson:** But, Brandon how do we know that? I mean ever since we began discussing the assault on Ashley you have been getting very agitated and only those who are guilty react as you have been. We all know you lied to your parents and attended the game that night with someone you have previously been in trouble with. You were spotted hanging around Ashley that evening by a few witnesses, and even identified as being near the bathroom after the assault took place. Can you see where we are going with this? It just isn't looking very good, and I gotta tell you, lying doesn't make it better.

**Detective Barns:** In fact, lying about what happened that night only makes you look even guiltier. If you continue to dig this hole you're in, no one will be able to help you out; not us or your parents. Now you have already admitted Ashley was hot and that all the guys like her. Sounds like you were flirting with her that evening, perhaps got it in your head that you wanted to make a move on this girl and you weren't going to take no for an answer. Now she's coming forward with these accusations of being attacked and you don't want to take responsibility like a man.

**Brandon White:** No, that isn't it! Look, yeah I did say she was hot, and perhaps we did flirt a little, but I can't see me doing that. I don't even really know her that well...I wouldn't hurt anyone! I'm not lying!

**Detective Barns:** Now, Brandon do not try to play that card with us. You just told us all the guys know her. What's more is we have more than one witness who saw you hanging around and flirting with her that night. Backtracking and changing your story doesn't help your case any. We know for a fact that you do know her. Maybe, it's that she acts like she doesn't know you? Does that bother you? Maybe the problem here is that you

know her and she wouldn't give you the attention or time of day and you got upset and followed her to the bathroom?

**Brandon White:** Well, wait, hold on a minute here. None of that is true! Okay, you guys are misunderstanding me. She does *know* me, but she was talking to me about as much as she was talking to any of the other guys is all I'm trying to say. That doesn't mean I am the one who did this. I don't even have a problem with her. I could care less if she likes me or not, I wouldn't go and do what was done to her because she wouldn't speak to me. Like I said, she didn't just talk to me that night so why aren't you talking to Adam, Mark, Andrew, or any of the other guys that were there?! This is such crap!

**Detective Barns:** Brandon, we actually have been speaking to other people who attended the game Friday night as well as your friends you hung around. We wanted to see if you would do the right thing and come clean about what you did on your own, but so far you have been denying and lying as you usually do. We have to tell you that when we spoke to your other friends who were there that evening, they said you would talk about Ashley all the time and how you were upset that night because she always brushed off your approaches. What's more is some of your friends are even claiming you told them you were happy she was attacked and that you hinted at the fact that it was you who assaulted her. So yes, we have interviewed other people, but we wanted your side of the story first. We wanted to give you a chance to confess to your actions, but you continue to lie and make this whole situation worse for yourself.

**Brandon White:** What?! That's absolute lies! I never said I attacked Ashley. My friends are liars! You guys have to believe me! I'm not going to get in trouble for something I didn't do. Why would they try to put this one me?! I'm not that guy, I didn't do anything!

.....

## **Friday October 26, 10:00 AM**

**Brandon White:** Honestly, this whole thing is just pissing me off. I'm tired of talking about it.

**Detective Barns:** Well the reason you are probably so bothered by this conversation is because your conscience is bothering you. As we said before, it sounds like you attempted to make a pass at Ashley that night and she wasn't having it. You got tired of the rejection and you decided to take matters into your own hands. You just didn't think she would come forward.

**Brandon White:** No, this is so messed up...I should have never even talked to her. I'm just tired of this whole situation and want it to be over.

**Detective Barns:** Well, you know the way to finally put this all behind you, Brandon. Just admit to us what you did Friday. If you continue to lie and not take responsibility, you are going to receive a greater punishment. A judge will look at your case and see that you did not cooperate with authorities or show any remorse for your mistake, and they won't have any problem giving you the worst sentencing possible. This is a very big deal, Brandon. It's only a matter of time before the truth comes out. You can come clean and confess to what you did now, or the evidence will force you to come clean later. It's up to you.

**Brandon White:** What do you mean the evidence will force me to come clean?

**Detective Anderson:** DNA evidence, Brandon. In cases such as these, we send both the victims and suspects clothes off to be analyzed. Almost every time matching DNA evidence comes back and that is all the proof we need to convict you of this crime. That's why we are trying to explain to you that playing games and lying or making excuses is only going to make your punishment worse. Just admit to what you did now, so that when the evidence comes back both Detective Barns and I aren't forced to look for a harsher punishment because you not only committed this crime, but lied to authorities as well.

**Detective Barns:** Also, if you drag this out it will just become more aggravating. All these people will get involved and think the worst of you, and it just won't be good. If you just come clean now and tell us what you did and then it's done. You accept your mistake, you receive a lesser punishment, and maybe the judge will even be easier on you since we expressed that you were very cooperative with us and remorseful. But, if you don't cooperate, you're on your own Brandon.

**Brandon White:** This is just so unfair. I don't want all that to happen. I'm just really sorry...I mean, I didn't do this crap, but I don't want to get into more trouble, tell me what I need to say or do to get this over with.

**Detective Anderson:** Yeah, well I think you know the truth Brandon, and so do we. Mistakes happen and you can learn from them. Just don't make the further mistake of lying to those who know the truth and could help you.

**Brandon White:** I know...

**Detective Barns:** Listen; let's not make this harder than it has to be. It's pretty simple. You cooperate with us and just tell us what you did, and we will cooperate with you.

**Brandon White:** Yeah, I guess, whatever. This whole thing is just screwed up.

**Detective Anderson:** Okay, so let's get this straight. You saw Ashley last Friday night at the football game. You two flirted and you followed her to the restroom, you both entered the restroom where you stuck your hand down her pants, and then you left the rest room with Ashley still there. Is that about it?

**Brandon White:** Yeah, sure, whatever you say. I just want to leave.

APPENDIX D  
PERCEPTIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

\*Please circle only one choice for each question and attempt to answer every question to the best of your ability.\*

**Initial Questions:**

1. How old is Ashley? (Circle the age)

12    13    14    15    16    17

2. How old is Brandon? (Circle the age)

12    13    14    15    16    17

3. Who did Ashley first tell about the assault? (Circle one)

- A. Police Officer
- B. Her parents
- C. Her friends
- D. Security guard
- E. Principle

**Suspect Credibility Questions:** (Please circle only one answer/number)

4. Do you think Brandon is guilty? (Yes) (No)

-Why or why not?

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5. How confident are you in your rating of Brandon's guilt or innocence?





(Very Accurate)

(Neutral)

(Very Inaccurate)

**13.** How easily influenced do you find Brandon?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

(Very Easily Influenced)

(Neutral)

(Not Very Easily Influenced)

**14.** How likely do you feel Brandon was truthful with the detectives?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

(Very Likely)

(Neutral)

(Very Unlikely)

**15.** How remorseful do you find Brandon?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

(Very Remorseful)

(Neutral)

(Very Unremorseful)

**16.** How intellectually competent do you find Brandon?

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

(Very Competent)

(Neutral)

(Very Incompetent)

**Police Fairness:** (Please circle only one number.)



**17. How fair do you think the interview was overall?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7  
(Very Fair)                      (Neutral)                      (Very Unfair)

**18. How fair do you think the interview questions were?**

1      2      3      4      5      6      7  
(Very Fair)                      (Neutral)                      (Very Unfair)

**19. How consistent do you think the detectives were during the interview?**

1                      2      3      4      5      6      7  
(Very Consistent)                      (Neutral)                      (Very Inconsistent)

**20. How manipulative do you think the detectives were?**

1                      2      3                      4      5      6                      7  
(Very Manipulative)                      (Neutral)                      (Very Non-Manipulative)

**21. How likely is it that the detectives were trying to confuse Brandon during the interview?**

1                      2      3                      4      5      6                      7  
(Very Likely)                      (Neutral)                      (Very Unlikely)



(Very Likely)

(Neutral)

(Very Unlikely)

**27.** How likely do you think Brandon understood he had a choice in confessing and signing a statement?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

(Very Likely)

(Neutral)

(Very Unlikely)

**Rights Understanding:** (Please circle only one number.)

**28.** How likely is it that Brandon understood his right to have a lawyer or his parent(s) present during the questioning?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

(Very Likely)

(Neutral)

(Very Unlikely)

**29.** How likely is it that Brandon understood that if he wanted a lawyer, he would not have to pay for one if he could not afford it?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

(Very Likely)

(Neutral)

(Very Unlikely)

**30.** How likely is it that Brandon understood his right to remain silent and not answer questions?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7

(Very Likely)

(Neutral)

(Very Unlikely)

**31.** How likely is it that Brandon understood that any statement or confession he gave could be used against him?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7  
(Very Likely)                      (Neutral)                      (Very Unlikely)

**32.** How likely is it that Brandon knew he could stop the interview any time he wanted?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7  
(Very Likely)                      (Neutral)                      (Very Unlikely)

**Concluding Questions** (Please circle only one answer/number.)

**33.** What evidence did the detectives present against Brandon? **(Check all of the below that apply.)**

- A. Matches description from anonymous witness
- B. Friends stating Brandon confessed to the crime
- C. DNA evidence
- D. Prior history of getting in trouble at school
- E. Prior history of lying
- F. Victim identified Brandon from a photo line-up
- G. Prior history of violence
- H. Prior threats against girls/others who rejected him

**34.** All together do you feel there is enough evidence against Brandon to convict him?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7  
(Substantial Evidence)                      (Little Evidence)                      (No Evidence)

**35.** What punishment do you think Brandon deserves?

- A. No punishment
- B. School suspension/expulsion

- C. Probation/community service
- D. Juvenile Detention
- E. Prison

**36.** What is the likelihood that you would ever confess to a crime you did not commit?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
(Very Likely)			(Neutral)			(Very Unlikely)

APPENDIX E  
DEMOGRAPHICS QUESTIONNAIRE

**Demographics:**

Your Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Gender: \_\_\_Female \_\_\_Male

Your Ethnicity (Race): \_\_\_Asian  
\_\_\_African American  
\_\_\_Bi-Racial  
\_\_\_Caucasian  
\_\_\_Hispanic  
\_\_\_Native American  
\_\_\_Other

Class Rank: \_\_\_Freshman  
\_\_\_Sophomore  
\_\_\_Junior  
\_\_\_Senior  
\_\_\_Graduate Student

Major: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list all Psychology courses you have taken:

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**37.** Have you or has anyone close to you (friend or family) been involved in a sexual assault crime?

(Yes) (No)

**38.** Have you or has anyone close to you (friend or family) ever been suspected of committing a crime (sexual or otherwise)?

(Yes) (No)

**39.** Have you or has anyone close to you ever been formally questioned by the police?

(Yes) (No)





APPENDIX F  
IRB APPROVAL LETTER

## MEMORANDUM

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TO: Kelsey Villamarin **IRB # 12- 174**  
Dr. Amye Warren

FROM: Lindsay Pardue, Director of Research Integrity  
Dr. Bart Weathington, IRB Committee Chair

DATE: November 1, 2012

SUBJECT: IRB # 12-174: Perceptions of Juvenile Interrogations and Confessions

The Institutional Review Board has reviewed and approved your application and assigned you the IRB number listed above. You must include the following approval statement on research materials seen by participants and used in research reports:

***The Institutional Review Board of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga (FWA00004149) has approved this research project #12-174.***

Please remember that you must complete a Certification for Changes, Annual Review, or Project Termination/Completion Form when the project is completed or provide an annual report if the project takes over one year to complete. The IRB Committee will make every effort to remind you prior to your anniversary date; however, it is your responsibility to ensure that this additional step is satisfied.

Please remember to contact the IRB Committee immediately and submit a new project proposal for review if significant changes occur in your research design or in any instruments used in conducting the study. You should also contact the IRB Committee immediately if you encounter any adverse effects during your project that pose a risk to your subjects.

For any additional information, please consult our web page <http://www.utc.edu/irb> or email [instrb@utc.edu](mailto:instrb@utc.edu)

Best wishes for a successful research project.

## VITA

Kelsey Ana Villamarin is from Chattanooga, TN. She attended the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, where she received a Bachelor of Science in Psychology in May 2011. After graduation she stayed at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga to complete her Masters degree in Research Psychology under the supervision of Dr. Amye Warren. Her interests are in psychology and the law. She worked as a graduate assistant at Psi Chi International Honor Society in Psychology under Executive Director Dr. Martha Zlokovich preparing, analyzing, and presenting survey data results. While at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga she participated in fellow graduate student's research, poster presentations at several conferences, and presented her own research findings at UTC Research Day 2013. She plans to continue her education and pursue a doctoral program focusing in Forensic or Clinical Psychology.