OVERVIEW

1. PUTTING THE “JUVENILE” BACK INTO JUVENILE INTERROGATIONS
2. JUVENILE SUSPECTS AND MIRANDA
3. WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ACTUAL JUVENILE INTERROGATIONS?
4. POLICE INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES AND YOUTH CONFESSIONS
5. COMMUNICATING WITH JUVENILE CLIENTS
6. WHAT’S NEXT?
DEVELOPMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN YOUTH AND ADULTS

- Neurological development
  - Neuroplasticity and pruning
  - The prefrontal cortex and limbic system

- Cognitive development
  - Adult-like reasoning and understanding around age 16
  - “Hot” and “cold” cognition

DEVELOPMENTAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN YOUTH AND ADULTS

- Psychosocial development
  - Reward sensitivity
  - Impulsivity
  - Peer influence
  - Future orientation

YOUTH ARE LEGALLY DIFFERENT

- Legal acknowledgments
  - State and federal courts
  - SCOTUS opinions (Roper, Graham, J.D.B.)

- Policy/procedural accommodations
  - Parental presence
  - Parental notification
YOUTH ARE SOCIALLY DIFFERENT

- Role of parents
  - Socialization
  - Whose side are they on?
  - Youth and parent knowledge of police procedures
  - Cultural considerations

- Interpersonal dynamics and control
  - Interrogator—suspect
  - Adult—child
  - Administrator of punishment—recipient of punishment

JUVENILE SUSPECTS AND MIRANDA

- Variation in written forms
- Problems with vocabulary comprehension
- Problems with understanding
- Problems with appreciation

MIRANDA COMPREHENSION ISSUES
MIRANDA PRESENTATION AND WAIVER

- Timing
- Delivery
- Readability
- What am I signing?
- Waiver rates around 90%

WHAT DO WE KNOW ABOUT ACTUAL JUVENILE INTERROGATIONS?

RESEARCH STRATEGIES

- Archival studies of police records
- Laboratory studies with normative samples
- Vignette studies with mixed samples (incarcerated youth and community youth)
- Self-report of incarcerated juveniles
- Observational studies of interrogation recordings
KEY PLAYERS

- Juvenile suspects
  - Middle-adolescent males
  - Felony person and property offenses
  - Custody status varied

- Interrogating officers
  - Single/multiple interviewers

KEY PLAYERS

- Parents
  - Parent presence atypical
  - Parent attitudes/behavior highly variable

- Attorneys
  - Absent in all cases

CONTEXT CHARACTERISTICS

- Physical environment
- Restraints
- Duration
- Flow
- Interrogator appearance
YOUTH BEHAVIOR AND DECISION MAKING

- Incriminating admissions/confessions
- Denials are less common but do occur
- Perceptions of custody
- Perceptions of coercion

POLICE INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES AND YOUTH CONFESSIONS

- Police training manuals/programs
  - Reid Technique
  - Wicklander-Zulawski
- Formal versus on-the-job training
- IACP training curriculum

POLICE TRAINING IN INTERROGATION
POLICE USE OF INTERROGATION TECHNIQUES

- Pre-interrogation
  - Build rapport; observe speech and body language

- Maximization techniques
  - Confront with evidence; emphasize offense seriousness; accuse of lying; multiple interviewers

- Minimization techniques
  - Blame victim; minimize offense seriousness; suggest alternative explanations

INTERROGATING ADULTS VS. YOUTH

- Police likely interrogate youth the same way they interrogate adults
  - Reid definition of “adolescence”
  - Reid’s special themes for youthful offenders

- Adolescent vulnerabilities in the interrogation room
  - Suggestibility/negative feedback
  - Compliance with authority

FALSE CONFESSIONS

- Proven false confessions
  - Four mechanisms

- Ambiguous/probable false confessions

- Risk factors for false confession
  - Situational
  - Dispositional

- Types of false confessions
  - Voluntary
  - Coerced-compliant
  - Internalized
Youth are overrepresented in documented false confession cases

Both laboratory research and youth self-report indicate youths' susceptibility to false confession

COMMUNICATING WITH JUVENILE CLIENTS

- Developmental vulnerabilities
- Inadequate legal knowledge
- Trauma/victimization
- Cultural/linguistic issues
- Parents' roles and involvement

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS
SUGGESTIONS

- Don’t repeat interrogators’ mistakes!
- Active listening: clear, simple, thorough communication
- Get to know the whole client
- Keep your promises

WHAT’S NEXT?

6

NEW DIRECTIONS IN RESEARCH

- Developmental neuroscience: The next frontier
- Police interviewing of juveniles: Noncustodial questioning
- Interrogation on school property: Legal and psychosocial ambiguities
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Thank you!