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The Impact of Youth on Coerced Confessions

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The Impact of Youth On Coerced Confessions



PRESENTER:
Michel Nocera

The Reid Technique

- Developed in the 1940s and is still a cornerstone of the criminal justice system
- Makes use of “minimization” in which interrogators purposely downplay the stakes of the situation to encourage a confession
- Scholars currently question the efficacy and constitutionality of Reid Technique practices

Juvenile Thinking

Studies performed by the American Psychological Association have found that younger offenders are more likely to give in during interrogations, due to:

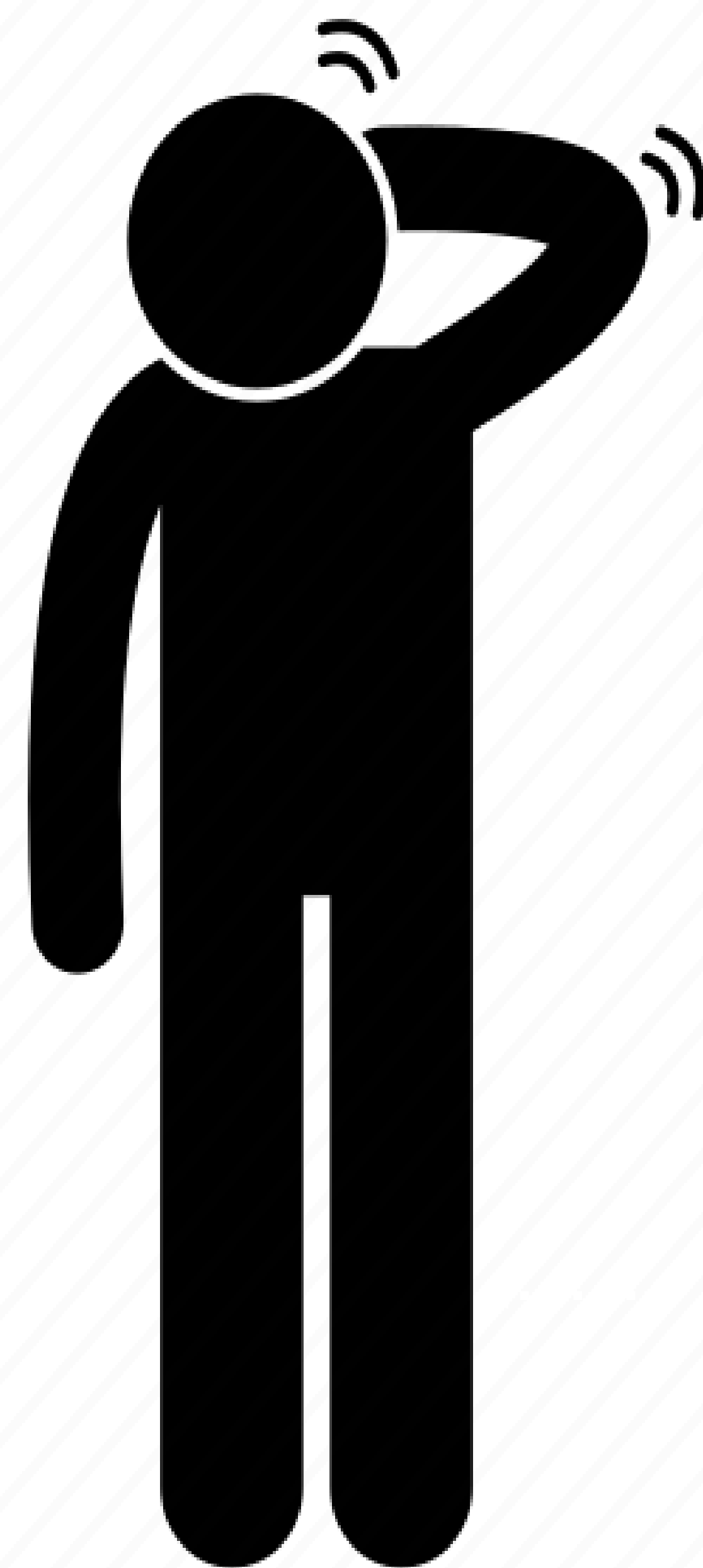
-Heightened susceptibility to social influence

-Impulsivity to make decisions resulting in short-term rewards despite long-term consequences

-Perceived inferiority to adults

Methodology

This project covers a literary review of juvenile psychological studies regarding guilt, as well as scholarly articles on false confession statistics in exonerated individuals.



My Conclusion:

Younger offenders are more likely to falsely confess when accused of a crime.

AGE AND MENTAL STATUS OF EXONERATED DEFENDANTS WHO CONFESSED
NATIONAL REGISTRY OF EXONERATIONS
3/17/2020; N = 2,400

AGE AND MENTAL STATUS OF THE EXONERATED DEFENDANTS	PROPORTION WHO FALSELY CONFESSED
Under 18 Years Old at Time of Crime (76/211)	36%
16 and 17 year olds (46/162)	28%
14 and 15 years old (24/42)	57%
Under 14 years old (6/7)	86%
18 Years or Older at time of Crime (216/2,189)	10%
Mental Illness or Intellectual Disability Reported (103/147)	70%
No Known Mental or Intellectual Disability (189/2,253)	8%
Adults Without Reported Mental Disabilities (138/2,073)	7%
ALL CASES (292/2,400)	12%

Courtesy of the National Registry of Exonerations, 2020*

This study by the National Registry of Exonerations recorded that **36 percent of exonerates under 18 years old falsely confessed**, compared to **10 percent of those over 18 years old.**

“Juveniles’ most ordinary characteristics—immaturity, impulsivity, and susceptibility to external influences (like police pressure)—increase their vulnerability in the interrogation room. And this increased vulnerability, as compared to adults, is ‘categorically shared by every juvenile, no matter how intelligent or mature.’”

REFERENCES

- Katz 1967, 192
- Malloy 2014, 182
- Spieler 2017, 1741
- Strang 2020, 94