Questioning Gender: Police Interrogation of Delinquent Girls

Barry C. Feld
University of Minnesota Law School, feldx001@umn.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarship.law.umn.edu/faculty_articles

Part of the Law Commons

Recommended Citation

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the University of Minnesota Law School. It has been accepted for inclusion in the Faculty Scholarship collection by an authorized administrator of the Scholarship Repository. For more information, please contact lenzx009@umn.edu.
QUESTIONING GENDER: POLICE INTERROGATION OF DELINQUENT GIRLS

Barry C. Feld*

Early juvenile courts emphasized a child's "best interests" and treated youths differently based on personal characteristics such as race and gender.1 Progressive reformers expected judges to handle boys and girls differently because their circumstances and needs differed.2 Juvenile courts processed boys primarily for criminal behavior and girls for noncriminal status offenses—e.g. runaway, incorrigibility, or sexual precocity.3 In the 1970s, efforts to deinstitutionalize status offenders led to substantial declines in the numbers of girls detained and confined for noncriminal misconduct.4 More recently, juvenile justice officials and the public perceived an increase in violent crimes like simple assault committed by girls.5

* Centennial Professor of Law, University of Minnesota Law School. B.A. University of Pennsylvania; J.D., University of Minnesota; Ph.D. Harvard University.


2. See generally Kimberly Kempf-Leonard, The Conundrum of Girls and Juvenile Justice Processing, in Oxford Handbook of Juvenile Crime and Juvenile Justice 485 (Barry C. Feld & Donna M. Bishop eds., 2012) (discussing the difficulties girls face in the juvenile justice system and recommending further understanding of these problems to better help girls in the juvenile justice system); Anthony M. Platt, The Child Savers: The Invention of Delinquency (2d ed. 1977) (analyzing the handling of juvenile offenders before and after the creation of a separate judicial system for juveniles); Steven L. Schlossman, Love and the American Delinquent: The Theory and Practice of “Progressive” Juvenile Justice 1825–1920 (1977) (discussing the juvenile justice system in its formative period).


This, in turn, led policy makers and scholars to reexamine changing patterns of offending and the role of gender in the juvenile justice system. An important but seldom studied aspect of justice administration is police interrogation of suspects. In the vast majority of cases, the real trial occurs during police questioning. Once a suspect confesses, the advantage tilts strongly to the State and often leads to guilty pleas. Despite its crucial role, legal scholars and criminologists have conducted remarkably little research on how police question adult criminal suspects. They have conducted even fewer studies on how police question juvenile suspects. Researchers have not conducted any studies on whether or how police question juvenile girls differently than juvenile boys. Are there genders differences in how youths waive Miranda or in how police treat youths in interrogation? Do police question, and do boys and girls respond differently in the interrogation room? How do justice system personnel perceive girls in the interrogation room,


and do those perceptions affect police practices? This Article presents quantitative and qualitative data to answers these questions.

The Article proceeds in three parts. Part I reviews the origins of juvenile courts and their disparate treatment of girls. It then examines court decisions about interrogating juveniles, developmental psychological research on adolescents' competence to exercise legal rights, and prior research on police interrogation. Part II describes the data and methodology in this study. Since 1994, Minnesota has required police to record custodial interrogations of criminal suspects including juveniles. The study analyzes 307 interrogation case files of sixteen- and seventeen-year-old male and female delinquents charged with felony offenses. The case files include interrogation tapes and transcripts, police reports associated with the offense for which officers questioned youth, court petitions, and sentences. Of the 307 interrogations, police questioned thirty-three female suspects. I interviewed thirty-nine juvenile justice system personnel about their perceptions of girls in the interrogation room. Part III presents and analyzes quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data reveal remarkably few differences in how police questioned male and female delinquents. The boys and girls waived *Miranda* rights at statistically similar rates and police used similar tactics to question them. Despite their objective similarities, interviews with juvenile justice personnel report substantial differences in how they perceive boys and girls. While some described girls as more cooperative than boys, most offered much more negative characterizations of females, describing them as emotional, confrontational, or verbally aggressive. Should we be concerned that even if *Miranda* waivers and questioning appear objectively similar, juvenile justice personnel may hold inappropriate gender stereotypes? If police question boys and girls similarly, then do negative gender stereotypes matter?

I. JUVENILE JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION: GENDER AND POLICE INTERROGATION

Progressive reformers created juvenile courts to separate children from adult offenders and to rehabilitate and treat them rather than to punish them for their crimes.10 Delinquency

10. See generally DAVID J. ROTHMAN, CONSCIENCE AND CONVENIENCE: THE ASYLUM AND ITS ALTERNATIVES IN PROGRESSIVE AMERICA (1980) (detailing the history of America’s prison system as a means for rehabilitation and treatment of offenders); ELLEN RYERSON, THE BEST-LAIRED PLANS: AMERICA’S JUVENILE COURT EXPERIMENT (1978) (explaining that reformers modified the juvenile justice system in a good faith effort to create a constructive system to help juvenile offenders); DAVID S. TANENHAUS, JUVENILE JUSTICE IN THE MAKING (2004) (displaying the structural and conceptual changes in the juvenile justice system over time); Franklin E. Zimring, The Common Thread: Diversion in Juvenile
proceedings focused on a child's background and welfare rather than on the facts of a crime, and juvenile courts dispensed with formal procedures such as lawyers, juries, or rules of evidence.11

In 1967, the Supreme Court in In re Gault12 began a due process revolution that transformed the juvenile court from a social welfare agency into a more formal, legal institution.13 Among other procedural safeguards, Gault recognized that the Fifth Amendment privilege against self-incrimination extended to delinquents.14 Although Progressive reformers rejected procedural safeguards, Gault and its progeny transformed their conception of juvenile courts as a social welfare agency and precipitated the procedural convergence with criminal courts.15 By adopting some criminal procedures, the Court shifted juvenile courts' focus from a child's "real needs" to proof of criminal acts and formalized the connection between crimes and sanctions.16


11. See Feld, supra note 1, at 46–47; Tanenhaus, supra note 10, at 23–25 (describing Cook County, Illinois's first juvenile court).


15. Subsequent Court decisions emphasized the criminal nature of delinquency proceedings. See, e.g., Breed v. Jones, 421 U.S. 519, 541 (1975) (holding that the double jeopardy protections of the Fifth Amendment precluded criminal re-prosecution of a youth as an adult after adjudication as a delinquent for the same offense); McKeiver v. Pennsylvania, 403 U.S. 528, 528 (1971) (denying juveniles the right to a jury trial in state delinquency prosecutions); In re Winship, 397 U.S. 358, 368 (1970) (holding that states must prove delinquency by the criminal standard—beyond a reasonable doubt—rather than by the lower civil standards of proof).

16. See generally Feld, Criminalizing Juvenile Justice, supra note 13 (examining the evolution of procedural due process in juvenile courts); Barry C. Feld, The Constitutional Tension Between Apprendi and McKeiver: Sentence Enhancements Based on Delinquency Convictions and the Quality of Justice in Juvenile Courts, 38 WAKE FOREST L. REV. 1111 (2003) (analyzing the use of delinquent convictions as sentencing enhancements); Feld, Transformation—Part I, supra note 13 (tracing the transformation of the juvenile justice system after the Gault decision); Barry C. Feld, The Transformation of the Juvenile Court—Part II: Race and the "Crack Down" on Youth Crime, 84 MINN. L. REV. 327 (1999) [hereinafter Feld, Transformation—Part II] (examining the changes in the juvenile justice system due to a public perception of an increase in crime among juveniles).
Macro-structural, economic, and racial demographic changes in American cities in the 1970s and 1980s increased homicide rates by black youths in the late 1980s, and the crack cocaine and gun violence epidemic of the early 1990s produced harsh “get-tough” juvenile justice policies.\(^7\) The trend toward punitive action increased the numbers of youths tried as adults and led to harsher sanctions for delinquents. By the end of the twentieth century, states’ get-tough policies equated the crimes and culpability of adolescents with those of adults—for example, “adult crime, adult time.”\(^8\) In the decades since Gault and states’ adoption of get-tough policies, police increasingly use routine arrest and booking procedures to process juvenile offenders just like adults.\(^9\) Policy makers perceived an increase in violent crimes committed by girls, which exposed the girls to the same get-tough policies adopted to confront youth violence more generally.

A. Gender and the Juvenile Court

Juvenile courts’ delinquency jurisdiction initially included only youths charged with violations of criminal law, but reformers added noncriminal status offenses—for example, incorrigibility, runaway, and immorality—to the courts’ definition of delinquency within a few years.\(^20\) Historically, juvenile courts processed boys mainly for

\(^{17}\) See generally FELD, supra note 1 (discussing social and demographic changes that led to the war on crime and the legal changes that occurred because of it); FRANKLIN E. ZIMRING, AMERICAN YOUTH VIOLENCE (1998) (discussing the perceived increase in youth violence in the 1990s); Alfred Blumstein, Youth Violence, Guns, and the Illicit-Drug Industry, 86 J. CRIM. L. & CRIMINOLOGY 10 (1995) (describing role of crack cocaine markets and gun violence in escalation of homicide by black youths); Barry C. Feld, Race, Politics, and Juvenile Justice: The Warren Court and the Conservative “Backlash,” 87 MINN. L. REV. 1447 (2003) [hereinafter Feld, Race, Politics, and Juvenile Justice] (analyzing the change in juvenile justice policies in the second half of the twentieth century); Feld, Transformation—Part II, supra note 16 (examining the changes in the juvenile justice system due to a public perception of an increase in crime among juveniles); Barry C. Feld, Unmitigated Punishment: Adolescent Criminal Responsibility and LWOP Sentences, 10 J.L. & FAM. STUD. 11 (2007) (analyzing the role that race has played in shaping juvenile justice policies).


\(^{19}\) See, e.g., BARRY C. FELD, CASES AND MATERIALS ON JUVENILE JUSTICE ADMINISTRATION 369–76 (4th ed. 2013) (summarizing photographing and fingerprinting practices of arrested juveniles).

\(^{20}\) See, e.g., id. at 7.
criminal conduct and girls mainly for status offenses.\textsuperscript{21} The status jurisdiction reflected Progressives' idea of childhood dependency and paternalistic sexual attitudes.\textsuperscript{22} From the juvenile courts' inception, controlling female sexuality was a focal concern of judicial intervention.\textsuperscript{23} Judges detained and incarcerated girls for minor offenses and status offenses at higher rates than boys.\textsuperscript{24}

Male juveniles commit most serious crimes, and evaluations of juvenile court sentencing practices focus primarily on racial rather than gender disparities.\textsuperscript{25} Sentencing research on gender bias posits chivalry or leniency to explain why girls receive less severe sanctions than do boys.\textsuperscript{26} Other analysts invoke protectionist or paternalistic explanations to account for why sexually active females and status offenders receive more intrusive interventions than do boys charged with minor offenses.\textsuperscript{27} Earlier research consistently reported a gender double standard in which juvenile courts incarcerated proportionally more girls than boys charged for status offenses, but sentenced boys charged with delinquency more severely than similarly charged girls.\textsuperscript{28} More recent studies report

\textsuperscript{21} See Feld, supra note 4. See generally SCHLOSSMAN, supra note 2.


\textsuperscript{23} See TANENHAUS, supra note 10, at 50–53; Schlossman & Wallach, supra note 3, at 65–66.

\textsuperscript{24} See generally Kempf-Leonard, supra note 2 (discussing the difficulties girls face in the juvenile justice system and recommending further understanding of these problems to better handling of juvenile offenders before and after the creation of a separate judicial system for juveniles); SCHLOSSMAN, supra note 2 (discussing the juvenile justice system in its formative period); TANENHAUS, supra note 10 (explaining that the revival of status offenses increased the arrest rate of girls).

\textsuperscript{25} Feld, supra note 4, at 257. See generally JOAN MCCORD ET. AL, JUVENILE CRIME, JUVENILE JUSTICE (2001) (examining race in the juvenile justice system).

\textsuperscript{26} See, e.g., Stephanie Hoyt & David G. Scherer, Female Juvenile Delinquency: Misunderstood by the Juvenile Justice System, Neglected by Social Science, 22 LAW & HUM. BEHAV. 81, 83 (1998).

\textsuperscript{27} See generally SCHLOSSMAN, supra note 2; Meda Chesney-Lind, Girls and Status Offenses: Is Juvenile Justice Still Sexist?, 20 CRIM. JUST. ABSTRACTS 144 (1988) [hereinafter Chesney-Lind, Girls and Status Offenses]; Meda Chesney-Lind, Paternalism and the Female Status Offender, 23 CRIME & DELINQ. 121 (1977); David R. Johnson & Laurie K. Scheuble, Gender Bias in the Disposition of Juvenile Court Referrals: The Effects of Time and Location, 29 CRIMINOLOGY 677 (1991) (explaining the theory that courts may punish girls more harshly than boys because of social ideas about what actions are appropriate for girls compared to what is appropriate for boys); Schlossman & Wallach, supra note 3 (concluding that discriminatory treatment of girls in the juvenile justice system in the early twentieth century was due, in part, to social movements to purify society).

fewer gender differences in sentencing status offenders once analysts control for present offense and prior record. However, analyses of judges' use of contempt power to sanction male and female status offenders who violated a "valid court order" report continuing differential treatment that covertly perpetuates gender bias.

In the early 1970s, critics of juvenile courts' status jurisdiction objected that judges confined noncriminal offenders in institutions with delinquents, stigmatized them with delinquency labels, discriminated against females, and provided few beneficial services. Judicial intervention on behalf of parents to control their wayward girls exacerbated intra-family conflicts. In the early 1970s, states charged about three-quarters of the girls in their juvenile courts with status offenses rather than criminal delinquency.

The 1974 Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act ("JJDP Act") prohibited states from confining status offenders with delinquents in secure facilities and withheld formula grant money from states that did not develop plans to remove them. The JJDP Act's mandate to Deinstitutionalize Status Offenders ("DSO") and

---


30. See, e.g., AM. BAR ASS'N & NAT'L BAR ASS'N, JUSTICE BY GENDER: THE LACK OF APPROPRIATE PREVENTION, DIVERSION AND TREATMENT ALTERNATIVES FOR GIRLS IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM 19 (2001), available at http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publishing/criminal_justice_section_newsletter/crimjust_juvjs_justicebygenderweb.pdf ("Girls are more likely to be cited for contempt, and because contempt offenders are more likely to be detained than non-contempt offenders, gender can be correlated to detention status through the use of contempt proceedings."); Bishop & Frazier, supra note 28, at 1167–68.


increase procedural formality after *Gault* led to a sharp decline in the number of females and status offenders in secure facilities.\(^{36}\) A 1980 amendment to the JJDP Act allowed states to continue to receive federal funds and to confine status offenders if judges committed them to institutions for contempt of court for violating a "valid court order."\(^{37}\) This authority allowed judges to "bootstrap" some status offenders—disproportionately female—into delinquents for violating a court-ordered condition of probation—for example, do not abscond from a nonsecure placement.\(^{38}\) The 1992 reauthorization of the JJDP Act required states to analyze and provide "gender-specific services" to treat female delinquents, but most states only collected data about girls rather than develop new programs for them.\(^{39}\)

As a result of the 1974 DSO initiatives, the number of status offenders in detention facilities and institutions declined dramatically by the early 1980s. Girls benefited especially because states disproportionately confined them for noncriminal misconduct.\(^{40}\) By 1988, the number of status offenders in secure

---


37. *Feld, supra* note 1, at 175–77.

38. *See, e.g., Chesney-Lind & Belknap, supra* note 29, at 207 (noting that relabeling of girls' conflicts with parents from status offenses like incorrigibility to assault "facilitates the incarceration of girls in detention facilities and training schools," which would not be permitted if adjudicated for noncriminal status offenses); *Steffensmeier & Schwartz, supra* note 5, at 54 (noting that one consequence of making it more difficult to confine girls for status offenses has been a trend to relabel minor offenses as assault in order to confine them); *Bishop & Frazier, supra* note 28, at 1167–68 (describing "bootstrapping" of female status offenders as delinquents and the confinement for contempt of court); *Hoyt & Scherer, supra* note 26, at 83–84.


facilities had declined by 95% compared with those detained prior to adoption of the JJDP Act.41

Although the JJDP Act prohibits states from institutionalizing status offenders, it does not require them to appropriate funds or develop community-based programs to meet girls' needs. Three decades after the JJDP Act, states' failure to fund or offer gender-appropriate services provides a continuing impetus to circumvent DSO.42 Status offenders are not a unique or discrete category of juveniles and they share many of the same characteristics and behavioral versatility as delinquent offenders. As a result, juvenile courts could simply charge a status offender with a minor crime, adjudicate her as a delinquent, and evade deinstitutionalization strictures.43 Moreover, the suffering of sexual abuse at higher rates than boys, pressure to conform to traditional gender roles, and high rates of mental illness compound to create the unequal treatment of girls.44

Analysts warned that states could evade DSO requirements by charging status offenders—waywardness or incorrigibility—with simple assault and prosecuting them as delinquents.45 Prophetically, girls' arrests for assault increased in tandem with the

---

44. See, e.g., THOMAS GRISSO, DOUBLE JEOPARDY: ADOLESCENT OFFENDERS WITH MENTAL DISORDERS 36 (2004) (reporting that girls in detention have higher rates of almost all types of mental disorders and mental health problems than do boys); Lisa Bond-Maupin et al., Girls’ Delinquency and the Justice Implications of Intake Workers’ Perspectives, 13 WOMEN & CRIM. JUST. 51, 52 (2002) (summarizing extra burdens of girls in the juvenile justice system); Elizabeth Cauffman, Understanding the Female Offender, 18 FUTURE OF CHILD. 119, 124 (2008), available at http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ815076.pdf (reporting that girls entering the juvenile justice system have higher rates of mental health problems than do male offenders).
45. See Eve S. Buzawa & David Hirschel, Criminalizing Assault: Do Age and Gender Matter?, in FIGHTING FOR GIRLS: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER AND VIOLENCE 33, 39 (Meda Chesney-Lind & Nikki Jones eds., 2010) ("Domestic violence cases involving children as offenders and parents as victims that were previously processed as cases involving 'incorrigibles' or 'persons in need of supervision' have been reclassified as assaults."); NEITHER ANGELS NOR THIEVES, supra note 36, at 31; Kempf-Leonard & Sample, supra note 39, at 98.
deinstitutionalization of status offenders. The perceived increase in girls' violence occurred against the backdrop of the get-tough policies of the 1980s and early 1990s in which states changed their laws to punish delinquents more severely, thereby reflecting a broader shift from rehabilitative to retributive policies. These changes affected girls' susceptibility to arrest. Even though they were not the intended targets, the punitive shift in responses to youth violence adversely affected girls.

Police arrest and juvenile courts process fewer females than their proportion of the juvenile population, especially for serious crimes. Girls comprise less than one-third of all juveniles arrested and less than one-fifth of those arrested for Violence Crime Index offenses. However, over the past two decades, arrest patterns of boys and girls for violent crimes—aggravated and simple assault—have diverged with girls' rates either increasing more or decreasing less than their male counterparts. Police arrest youths for simple assault at higher rates than they do for aggravated assaults, but between 1980 and 2005, arrest rates of girls quadrupled, whereas male arrest rates only doubled. A comparison of the ratios of

46. See Chesney-Lind & Jones, supra note 6, at 4 (noting a dramatic increase in girls' arrests and referrals to juvenile courts for "person" offenses with a disproportionate impact on minority females); Feld, supra note 1, at 176.
48. See Feld, supra note 4.
50. See Feld, supra note 4, at 246; Kempf-Leonard, supra note 2, at 488–96; Steffensmeier et al., supra note 6, at 357; Darrell Steffensmeier & Emilie Allan, Gender and Crime: Toward a Gendered Theory of Female Offending, 22 ANN. REV. SOC. 459, 460 (1996) ("[M]en offend at much higher rates than women for all crime categories . . . [and] [t]his gender gap in crime is greatest for serious crime.").
51. Barry C. Feld, supra note 4, at 246 (reporting that girls constituted 29% of all juveniles arrested and 18% of those arrested for Violent Crime Index offenses).
52. Id. at 247 (reporting that between 1996 and 2005, boys' arrests overall decreased by 28.8% whereas girls' arrests decreased by only 14.3%; boys' arrests for aggravated assaults decreased by 23.4%, whereas girls' arrests declined by only 5.4%; and boys' arrests for simple assault declined by 4.1% while girls' arrests increased by 24%); see also Cauffman, supra note 44, at 120–22 (summarizing trends in juvenile arrest rates by gender); Paul E. Tracy et al., Gender Differences in Delinquency and Juvenile Justice Processing: Evidence from National Data, 55 CRIME & DELINQ. 171, 183–94 (2009) (reporting and comparing arrest data for male and female juveniles between 1980 and 2006).
53. Feld, supra note 4, at 250; Mike Males, Have "Girls Gone Wild?", in Fighting for Girls: New Perspectives on Gender and Violence 13, 26–27
arrests for simple assault to aggravated assault reported that by 2005, police arrested girls almost six times as often for simple assault, compared with only three times as often for boys. 54 "[B]y all the measures—arrests, arrest rates, and ratios of simple to aggravated assaults—the increase in girls’ arrests for simple assaults and boys’ decrease in arrests for aggravated assaults constitute the most significant change in youth violence over the decades." 55 Police exercise considerable discretion when they classify conduct as a status offense—incorrigible or unruly behavior—or as an assault. 56 Analysts contend that more aggressive policing of minor crimes and disorder (zero tolerance), a lower threshold to charge youths with minor offenses, and more active policing in private settings have created a misleading perception of a youth crime wave, especially among girls. 57 Policies of mandatory arrests for domestic violence have increased girls’ vulnerability to arrest for intra-family altercations. 58

(Meda Chesney-Lind & Nikke Jones eds., 2010) (attributing the increase in girls' arrests for simple assaults to increased policing of workplace, school, and domestic violence).

54. Feld, supra note 4, at 250; Tracy et al., supra note 52, at 193 tbl.4 (reporting that police arrested a larger proportion of girls for simple assault than there were total arrests of boys).

55. Feld, supra note 4, at 250.

56. Id. at 252.

57. Id. at 250–53; see also Howard N. Snyder & Melissa Sickmund, Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2006 National Report 131–33 (2006); Steffensmeier & Schwartz, supra note 5, at 52–54 (arguing that girls commit less serious crimes, but a net-widening criminalization of less serious "violence," coupled with more intrusive policing in private settings and less tolerance toward juvenile girls increases their arrest-proneness); Zimring, supra note 17, at 37–40; Steffensmeier et al., supra note 6, at 387–90 (attributing the perceived increase in girls’ arrests for violence to changes in police responses to domestic violence); Buzawa & Hirschel, supra note 45, at 36 (arguing that statutes mandating more aggressive arrests and decreased police discretion have increased juvenile girls’ likelihood of arrest for domestic assault); Chesney-Lind & Belknap, supra note 29, at 206 ("[M]easures of girls’ violent crime that are less susceptible to change in policing practices fail to reflect the trends shown in the arrest data."); Males, supra note 53, at 26–27 (attributing the increase in girls’ arrests to “new law enforcement initiatives authorized by stronger laws beginning in the 1980s to make arrests for street, school, workplace, and (especially) domestic violence in cases that once brought warnings or informal discipline").

58. See Susan L. Miller, Victims as Offenders: The Paradox of Women's Violence in Relationships 2 (2005); Bond-Maupin et al., supra note 44, at 67–68 (attributing girls’ arrests to power struggles and fights with parents at home); Buzawa & Hirschel, supra note 45, at 33 (noting expansion of domestic violence statutes to encompass other relationships in addition to female victims of spousal partner violence); Meda Chesney-Lind, Criminalizing Victimization: The Unintended Consequences of Pro-Arrest Policies for Girls and Women, 2 Criminology & Pub. Pol'y 81, 81–90 (2002); Chesney-Lind & Belknap, supra note 29, at 207 (attributing perceived increase in girls’ arrests for violence to “changes in police practices”); Ravoira & Patino, supra note 5 (attributing
Girls' violence is much more likely to involve fights with parents or siblings than is boys' violence, and girls' share of arrests for domestic assaults has increased substantially. The confluence of heightened attention to family violence and limited authority to incarcerate status offenders encouraged police to respond to the same underlying behavior as delinquency and arrest girls for assault rather than incorrigibility. Probation officers describe most girls' assault cases as either a fight with a parent at home or between girls at school. Regardless of who starts a domestic clash, police find it easier and more efficient to arrest the youth as the offender, especially if a parent cares for other children in the home. Although girls comprise only about one-seventh of all delinquents in institutions, between 1997 and 2003 the simple assault category constituted the largest proportion of any offense for

59. See AM. BAR ASS'N & NAT'L BAR ASS'N, supra note 30, at 3 (attributing the growth in girls' arrests for assault to "re-labeling of girls' family conflicts as violent offenses, the changes in police practices regarding domestic violence and aggressive behavior, [and] the gender bias in the processing of misdemeanor cases"); BUREAU OF CRIMINAL INFO. & ANALYSIS, REPORT ON ARRESTS FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN CALIFORNIA, 1998, at 17 (1999); Chesney-Lind & Belknap, supra note 29, at 206 (noting that girls' arrests for violent offenses tended to be "family centered" and involved an altercation between a girl and her mother); Feld, supra note 4, at 254.

60. See, e.g., Chesney-Lind, Girls and Status Offenses, supra note 27, at 144–65; Chesney-Lind & Belknap, supra note 29, at 206; Feld, supra note 4, at 254.


62. See Buzawa & Hirschel, supra note 45, at 38 (noting that parents' "right" to use "reasonable" corporal punishment to discipline children skews police likelihood to "use domestic violence statutes as a powerful tool to uphold and support parental authority"); Gaarder et al., supra note 61, at 565 (noting that police remove children for fights started by parents because "[i]f you arrest the parents, than [sic] you have to shelter the kids.... So the police just make the kids go away and the numbers of kids being referred to the juvenile court for assaulting their parents... have just been increasing tremendously because of that political change"); Ravira & Patino, supra note 5, at 166 ("If the adult is arrested, there is no place to take other children, and thus it is more expedient to arrest the adolescent female."). See generally MEDA CHESNEY-LIND & LISA PASKO, THE FEMALE OFFENDER: GIRLS, WOMEN, AND CRIME (2d ed. 2004) (examining women and girl offenders in an attempt to understand the increase in their incarceration rates).
which states confined girls, and that share has increased steadily.\textsuperscript{63} Ironically, girls became the unintended victims of mandatory arrest policies enacted to prevent abusive males from attacking their female partners.\textsuperscript{64}

B. Police Interrogation of Juveniles

For decades prior to \textit{Miranda}, the Court admonished trial judges to closely examine how youthfulness affected the voluntariness of confessions. The Court in \textit{Haley v. Ohio}\textsuperscript{66} found a fifteen-year-old boy’s confession involuntary because of his youth and inexperience.\textsuperscript{66} The Court in \textit{Gallegos v. Colorado}\textsuperscript{67} found age and immaturity rendered a fourteen-year-old boy’s confession involuntary.\textsuperscript{68} The Court in \textit{In re Gault}\textsuperscript{69} reiterated that youthfulness could adversely affect the voluntariness of juveniles’ statements.\textsuperscript{70} \textit{Gault} based most delinquents’ procedural rights on the Fourteenth Amendment due process clause—notice, hearing, counsel, and cross-examination.\textsuperscript{71} It relied explicitly on the Fifth Amendment to protect youths’ right against self-incrimination in delinquency proceedings.\textsuperscript{72} \textit{Gault} recognized that the Fifth Amendment promotes accurate fact-finding and maintains the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{63} Meda Chesney-Lind, \textit{Jailing “Bad” Girls: Girls’ Violence and Trends in Female Incarceration}, in \textit{FIGHTING FOR GIRLS: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON GENDER AND VIOLENCE} 57, 61 (Meda Chesney-Lind & Nikki Jones eds., 2010) (noting that juvenile courts held over half of girls (51.8%) but less than one-third of boys (21.2%) in pretrial detention for simple assaults); Feld, \textit{supra} note 4, at 259 tbl.4.
\item \textsuperscript{64} Miller, \textit{supra} note 58, at 7–9; see Buzawa & Hirschel, \textit{supra} note 45, at 41–49 (analyzing arrest patterns in domestic assaults and reporting that female juveniles have the greatest likelihood of arrest compared with juvenile or adult males or adult females).
\item \textsuperscript{65} 332 U.S. 596 (1948).
\item \textsuperscript{66} \textit{Id.} at 599–600 (“That which would leave a man cold and unimpressed can overawe and overwhelm a lad in his early teens. … \textit{[W]}e cannot believe that a lad of tender years is a match for the police in such a contest.”).
\item \textsuperscript{67} 370 U.S. 49 (1962).
\item \textsuperscript{68} \textit{Id.} at 54 (“\textit{[A]} 14-year-old boy, no matter how sophisticated … is not equal to the police in knowledge and understanding.”).
\item \textsuperscript{69} 387 U.S. 1 (1967).
\item \textsuperscript{70} \textit{Id.} at 52; see also Thomas Grisso, \textit{Juveniles’ Capacities to Waive Miranda Rights: An Empirical Analysis}, 68 \textit{CALIF. L. REV.} 1134, 1137 (1980) (arguing that \textit{Gault} granted juveniles greater required protection because “their immaturity and greater vulnerability place them at a greater disadvantage in their dealings with the police”).
\item \textsuperscript{71} \textit{Gault}, 387 U.S. at 30; Feld, \textit{Criminalizing Juvenile Justice, supra} note 13, at 154–57 (analyzing constitutional bases for the Court’s juvenile due process decisions).
\item \textsuperscript{72} \textit{Gault}, 387 U.S. at 49–50 (extending the Fifth Amendment privilege to delinquency proceedings and holding that “[i]t would be entirely unrealistic to carve out of the Fifth Amendment all statements by juveniles on the ground that these cannot lead to ‘criminal’ involvement”).
\end{itemize}
adversarial balance between the individual and the State. Gault and subsequent due process decisions fostered a procedural and substantive convergence between juvenile and criminal courts.

Despite the Court's recognition of the vulnerability of youth, Fare v. Michael C. held that the "totality of the circumstances" test used to evaluate adults' waivers of Miranda rights governed juveniles' waivers as well. The Court reasoned that Miranda provided an objective basis to evaluate waivers. It denied that youths' developmental differences dictated special procedural protections and required children to assert their rights clearly.

Miranda provided that if police question a suspect who is in custody—arrested or "deprived of his freedom of action in any significant way"—they must administer a warning. The Court in J.D.B. v. North Carolina concluded that a suspect's age was an

73. Id. at 47. The Court recognized that one function of the Fifth Amendment was "to assure that admissions or confessions are reasonably trustworthy...[and] reliable expressions of the truth." Id. The Court emphasized that another purpose of the privilege was "to prevent the State, whether by force or by psychological domination, from overcoming the mind and will of the person under investigation and depriving him of the freedom to decide whether to assist the [S]tate in securing his conviction." Id.

74. Subsequent decisions further criminalized delinquency proceedings. See Breed v. Jones, 421 U.S. 519, 534-35 (1975) (positing a functional equivalence of criminal and delinquency trials); McKeiver v. Pennsylvania, 403 U.S. 528, 545 (1971) (denying delinquents the right to a jury trial); In re Winship, 397 U.S. 358, 367 (1970) (requiring states to prove delinquents' guilt by the criminal law's standard of proof beyond a reasonable doubt). However, Gault and Winship provided the impetus to transform the juvenile court from a social welfare agency into a scaled-down criminal court. Feld, Criminalizing Juvenile Justice, supra note 13, at 161-62; see Feld, supra note 1, at 106-07; see also Feld, Punishment, Treatment, supra note 13, at 829-31.


76. Id. at 725 (holding that a request for a probation officer did not invoke Miranda's privilege against self-incrimination or right to counsel); see also Kenneth J. King, Waiving Childhood Goodbye: How Juvenile Courts Fail to Protect Children from Unknowing, Unintelligent, and Involuntary Waivers of Miranda Rights, 2006 Wis. L. Rev. 431, 449 (2006) (explaining that the Court decided Michael C. as a Miranda case rather than as a juvenile interrogation case).

77. Michael C., 442 U.S. at 724-25.

78. See id. at 723-24 (deciding that a juvenile's request to see a trusted adult is not an invocation of Fifth Amendment rights); see also Francis Barry McCarthy, Pre-Adjudicatory Rights in Juvenile Court: An Historical and Constitutional Analysis, 42 U. Pitt. L. Rev. 457, 461 (1981); Irene Merker Rosenberg, The Constitutional Rights of Children Charged with Crime: Proposal for a Return to the Not So Distant Past, 27 UCLA L. Rev. 656, 686-91 (1980).


objective fact that would affect whether a young person would feel restrained in *Miranda*'s custody analysis.  

Most state courts use *Michael C.*'s totality framework for juveniles. When judges evaluate *Miranda* waivers, they consider offender features—age, education, I.Q., or prior police contacts—and the interrogation context: location, methods, and length of questioning. No one factor controls outcomes and appellate courts defer to trial judges’ discretion. Although some states require a parent to be present when police question his or her child, most commentators question the value of a parent’s participation.

---

81. *Id.* at 2403 (“[A] reasonable child subjected to police questioning will sometimes feel pressured to submit when a reasonable adult would feel free to go. We think it clear that courts can account for that reality.”).


83. *See, e.g.*, *Michael C.*, 442 U.S. at 727; *West v. United States*, 399 F.2d 467, 469 (5th Cir. 1968).


86. *See, e.g.*, Feld, *Juveniles' Waiver of Legal Rights, supra* note 84, at 117–18 (questioning whether parents will understand rights, provide legal advice, or mitigate coercive influences); Lisa M. Krzewinski, *But I Didn't Do It: Protecting the Rights of Juveniles During Interrogation*, 22 B.C. THIRD WORLD L.J. 355, 374–77 (2002). *See generally Thomas Grisso, JUVENILES' WAIVER OF RIGHTS:*
Minnesota rejects a parental presence requirement and gauges juveniles' *Miranda* waivers under the totality of the circumstances.87

The Court's "children-are-different" jurisprudence bears on youths' vulnerability during questioning.88 *Roper v. Simmons*89 barred states from executing offenders for a murder committed before the age of eighteen.90 *Graham v. Florida*91 banned life without parole sentences for nonhomicide crimes committed by juveniles.92 *Miller v. Alabama*93 and *Jackson v. Hobbs*94 banned mandatory life sentences without parole for youths who commit murder.95 In all three decisions, the Court emphasized that juveniles' immature judgment and limited self-control caused them to act impulsively and without full appreciation of consequences and

---


87. See, e.g., State v. Burrell, 697 N.W.2d 579, 597 (Minn. 2005) (noting that repeated request for a parent before and after a *Miranda* warning may render a waiver involuntary); State v. Nunn, 297 N.W.2d 752, 755 (Minn. 1980); State v. Loyd, 212 N.W.2d 671, 677 (Minn. 1973).


89. 543 U.S. 551 (2005).

90. Id. at 569. *Roper* attributed juveniles' reduced culpability to three factors. First, "a lack of maturity and an underdeveloped sense of responsibility are found in youth more often than in adults . . . . These qualities often result in impetuous and ill-considered actions and decisions." Id. Second, "juveniles are more vulnerable or susceptible to negative influences and outside pressures, including peer pressure." Id. Third, "the character of a juvenile is not as well formed as that of an adult. The personality traits of juveniles are more transitory, less fixed." Id. at 570. See generally Feld, *Responsibility, Proportionality, and Sentencing*, supra note 18 (analyzing the juvenile death penalty cases leading up to the *Roper* decision); Feld, *A Slower Form of Death*, supra note 47 (analyzing the Court's three diminished responsibility rationales); Feld, *Youth Discount*, supra note 18 (examining the Court's reasoning in *Roper*).


92. Id. at 68 ("[D]evelopments in psychology and brain science continue to show fundamental differences between juvenile and adult minds. For example, parts of the brain involved in behavior control continue to mature through late adolescence.").

93. 132 S. Ct. 2455.

94. Id. (case decided in the same Supreme Court decision as *Miller v. Alabama*).

95. Id. at 2464. See generally Feld, *Responsibility, Proportionality, and Sentencing*, supra note 18 (analyzing sentencing policy implications of the Court's children are different jurisprudence).
reduced their culpability. Greater susceptibility to peer influences also diminished juveniles’ criminal responsibility. These developmental traits—immaturity, impulsivity, and susceptibility to social influences—heighten youths’ vulnerability in the interrogation room.

Developmental psychologists distinguish between cognitive ability and maturity of judgment. Most youths sixteen years of age or older exhibit cognitive abilities comparable to adults, but mature judgment and adult-like, decision-making competence does not fully emerge until their twenties. By mid-adolescence, they can distinguish right from wrong and reason similarly to adults. But the ability to make good choices in a laboratory differs from the ability to make adult-like decisions under stressful conditions with incomplete information. The MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice distinguishes between cognitive ability and maturity of judgment—risk assessment, temporal orientation, capacity for self-regulation,

96. Graham, 560 U.S. at 89; Roper, 543 U.S. at 569.
97. Graham, 560 U.S. at 92; Roper, 543 U.S. at 569.
99. See Laurence Steinberg & Elizabeth Cauffman, The Elephant in the Courtroom: A Developmental Perspective on the Adjudication of Youthful Offenders, 6 VA. J. SOC. POLY & L. 389, 407–09 (1999); see also SCOTT & STEINBERG, supra note 13, at 164 (comparing cognitive competence of adolescents and adults); Laurence Steinberg et al., Are Adolescents Less Mature Than Adults? Minors' Access to Abortion, the Juvenile Death Penalty, and the Alleged APA “Flip-Flop,” 64 AM. PSYCHOLOGIST 583, 584 (2009) (noting that the American Psychological Association affirmed the maturity of adolescent girls to make abortion decisions without parental assistance).
100. See L.P. Spear, The Adolescent Brain and Age-Related Behavioral Manifestations, 24 NEUROSCIENCE & BIOBEHAVIORAL REV. 417, 423 (2000) (noting that adolescents “exhibit considerably poorer cognitive performance under circumstances involving everyday stress and time-limited situations than under optimal test conditions”); Laurence Steinberg & Elizabeth Cauffman, Maturity of Judgment in Adolescence: Psychological Factors in Adolescent Decision-Making, 20 LAW & HUM. BEHAV. 249, 251 (1996); see also Steinberg et al., supra note 99, at 586 (reporting that “adolescents and adults are not of equal maturity with respect to the psychosocial capacities . . . such as impulse control and resistance to peer influence”).
and susceptibility to social influences—which affects youths' vulnerability during interrogation.102

1. Immature Judgment and Risk Perception

Youths differ from adults in time perspective, risk perception, and appreciation of future consequences.103 Adolescents' poorer decisions reflect differences in knowledge, experience, and impulse control.104 Adolescents underestimate risks, use shorter time frames, and focus on gains rather than losses.105 Sixteen- and seventeen-year-old youths are more present oriented and perceive fewer risks than either younger or older subjects.106 Youths' appetite for risk peaks at those ages, and they regard not engaging in risky behaviors differently than do adults.107


103. See Scott & Steinberg, Blaming Youth, supra note 98, at 813 ("The psycho-social factors most relevant to differences in judgment include: (a) peer orientation, (b) attitudes toward and perception of risk, (c) temporal perspective, and (d) capacity for self-management .... [T]hese developmental factors influence adolescent values and preferences that drive the cost-benefit calculus in the making of choices.").

104. See id. at 814 ("Future orientation, the capacity and inclination to project events into the future, may also influence judgment, since it will affect the extent to which individuals consider the long-term consequences of their actions in making choices."); Elizabeth S. Scott et al., Evaluating Adolescent Decision Making in Legal Contexts, 19 Law & Hum. Behav. 221, 227 (1995); Elizabeth S. Scott & Thomas Grisso, The Evolution of Adolescence: A Developmental Perspective on Juvenile Justice Reform, 88 J. Crim. L. & Criminology 137, 160–61 (1997).


106. See Steinberg & Scott, Less Guilty by Reason, supra note 98, at 1012.

107. Emotions affect decision making and researchers distinguish between choices made under conditions of cold and hot cognition or states of arousal. See Jay D. Aronson, Brain Imaging, Culpability and the Juvenile Death Penalty, 13 Psychol. Pub. Pol'y & L. 115, 119 (2007) ("[A]dolescents are much less capable of making sound decisions when under stressful conditions or when peer pressure is strong."); Ronald E. Dahl, Affect Regulation, Brain Development, and Behavioral/Emotional Health in Adolescence, 6 CNS Spectrums 60, 61 (2001) ("Cold cognition refers to thinking under conditions of low emotion and/or arousal, whereas hot cognition refers to thinking under conditions of strong feelings or high arousal."); Steinberg et al., supra note 99, at 592; see also Elizabeth S. Scott, Judgment and Reasoning in Adolescent Decisionmaking, 37 Vill. L. Rev. 1607, 1643–50 (1992); Spear, supra note 100, at 421–23, 428–29.
2. Neuroscience: Adolescents' Judgment and Impulse Control

Neuroscientists attribute differences in adolescent and adult thought and behavior to brain maturation. The prefrontal cortex ("PFC") of the frontal lobe regulates executive functions such as abstract thinking, strategic planning, and impulse control—skills necessary to exercise legal rights. The amygdala (the limbic system) controls emotional and instictual behavior—the fight-or-flight response—and in stressful situations, adolescents rely more heavily on the amygdala and less heavily on the PFC than do adults. Novel circumstances and emotional arousal challenge youths' ability to exercise self-control. Graham noted that youths' diminished judgment, compromised risk-calculus, and short-term

108. See Dahl, supra note 107, at 69 ("Regions in the PFC [prefrontal cortex] that underpin higher cognitive-executive functions mature slowly, showing functional changes that continue well into late adolescence/adulthood."); Elizabeth R. Sowell et al., Mapping Continued Brain Growth and Gray Matter Density Reduction in Dorsal Frontal Cortex: Inverse Relationships During Postadolescent Brain Maturation, 21 J. NEUROSCIENCE 8819, 8826–29 (2001) (discussing significant changes in brain structure prior to adulthood); Spear, supra note 100, at 438 ("[T]he adolescent brain is a brain in flux, undergoing numerous regressive and progressive changes in mesocorticolimbic regions."). See generally Barry C. Feld et al., Adolescent Competence and Culpability: Implications of Neuroscience for Juvenile Justice Administration, in A PRIMER ON CRIMINAL LAW AND NEUROSCIENCE 179 (Stephen J. Morse & Adina L. Roskies, eds. 2013).


111. See Scott & Steinberg, Blaming Youth, supra note 98, at 816, (summarizing the interaction between the PFC—the executive functions—and the limbic system—impulsive behavior: "At puberty, changes in the limbic system—a part of the brain that is central in the processing and regulation of emotion—may stimulate adolescents to seek higher levels of novelty and to take more risks; these changes may also contribute to increased emotionality and vulnerability to stress. At the same time, patterns of development in the prefrontal cortex, which is active during the performance of complicated tasks involving planning and decision making, suggest that these higher-order cognitive capacities may be immature well into middle adolescence.").
perspective impaired defense representation and ability to exercise rights.\textsuperscript{112}

3. Adolescents’ Competence to Exercise Rights

Despite the Court’s repeated references to developmental differences, most states use adult legal standards to gauge juveniles’ \textit{Miranda} waivers. If youths differ from adults in their ability to understand \textit{Miranda}, to exercise rights, or to respond to social influences, then the law may hold them to a standard that few can meet. Some juveniles simply do not understand the words of \textit{Miranda} warnings.\textsuperscript{113} The vocabulary, concepts, and reading levels required to understand \textit{Miranda} may exceed the ability of many adolescents.\textsuperscript{114} The concept of a right and the meaning of appointed require a high school education and may render \textit{Miranda} unintelligible to many juveniles.\textsuperscript{115} Juveniles do not fully appreciate the function or importance of rights or view them as an entitlement,\textsuperscript{116} but instead regard them as a privilege that authorities may withdraw.\textsuperscript{117}

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{112} Graham v. Florida, 560 U.S. 48, 78 (2010) (“Difficulty in weighing long-term consequences; a corresponding impulsiveness; and reluctance to trust defense counsel seen as part of the adult world a rebellious youth rejects, all can lead to poor decisions by one charged with a juvenile offense.”).
\bibitem{113} See, e.g., Grisso, supra note 70, at 1143–44; Richard Rogers et al., \textit{An Analysis of Miranda Warnings and Waivers: Comprehension and Coverage}, 31 LAW & HUM. BEHAV. 177, 181 (2007).
\bibitem{115} See Rogers, \textit{Comprehensibility and Context}, supra note 114, at 74 tbl.3, 76 tbl.4. Many juveniles cannot define critical words used in \textit{Miranda} warnings. See Rona Abramovitch et al., \textit{Young People’s Understanding and Assertion of Their Rights to Silence and Legal Counsel}, 37 CANADIAN J. CRIMINOLOGY 1, 10–11 (1995); Rona Abramovitch et al., \textit{Young Persons’ Comprehension of Waivers in Criminal Proceedings}, 35 CANADIAN J. CRIMINOLOGY 309, 320 (1993) (arguing that most juveniles do not have sufficient understanding to competently waive \textit{Miranda}); Rogers, \textit{Comprehensibility and Context}, supra note 114, at 72–75; Jodi Viljoen et al., \textit{Legal Decisions of Preadolescent and Adolescent Defendants: Predictors of Confessions, Pleas, Communication with Attorneys, and Appeals}, 29 LAW & HUM. BEHAV. 253, 261–64 (2005) (finding that youths fifteen years of age and younger had poorer understanding and were more likely to waive rights and confess than older youths). See generally ALAN GOLDSTEIN & NAOMI E. SEVIN GOLDSTEIN, \textit{EVALUATING CAPACITY TO WAIVE MIRANDA RIGHTS} (2010).
\bibitem{116} See Grisso, supra note 86, at 130; Thomas Grisso, \textit{The Competence of Adolescents as Trial Defendants}, 3 PSYCHOL. PUB. POLY & L. 3, 11 (1997)
\end{thebibliography}
Thomas Grisso has studied juveniles' ability to exercise *Miranda* rights for more than three decades and reports that many youths simply do not understand the warning.\(^{118}\) Half of juveniles (55.3%), as contrasted with less than one-quarter of adults (23.1%), misunderstood at least one of the warnings and only one-fifth (20.9%) of juveniles, as compared with almost half (42.3%) of adults, understood the entire warning.\(^{119}\) Although sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds understood *Miranda* comparably with adults, substantial numbers of both groups misunderstood some elements.\(^{120}\) Younger teens consistently misunderstood *Miranda* more than youths in their mid-teens.\(^{121}\)


\(^{119}\) Grisso, supra note 70, at 1152–54.

\(^{120}\) Grisso, *Adolescents as Trial Defendants*, supra note 116, at 10–14. Age-related improvements in comprehension appear in other studies. See Kassin et al., supra note 84, at 8 (“[T]he understanding of adolescents ages 15–17 with near-average levels of verbal intelligence tends not to have been inferior to that of adults.”); Jodi Viljoen & Ronald Roesch, *Competence to Waive Interrogation Rights and Adjudicative Competence in Adolescent Defendants: Cognitive Development, Attorney Contact, and Psychological Symptoms*, 29 LAW & HUM. BEHAV. 723, 736 (2005) (noting that intellectual and verbal abilities increased with age, which indicates that “young adolescents may not yet have acquired the cognitive abilities necessary to adequately understand and participate in legal proceedings”).

\(^{121}\) See Grisso, supra note 70, at 1160 (reporting that the majority of juveniles younger than fifteen years of age “failed to meet both the absolute and relative (adult norm) standards for comprehension ... [and] misunderstood at least one of the four standard *Miranda* statements, and compared with adults, demonstrated significantly poorer comprehension of the nature and significance of the *Miranda* rights”); Jodi Viljoen et al., *Adjudicative Competence and Comprehension of Miranda Rights in Adolescent Defendants: A Comparison of
Even youths who understand *Miranda*'s words may not be competent to exercise rights. Competence to stand trial requires a person to understand proceedings, make rational decisions, and assist counsel. Developmental limitations impair youths' understanding, rationality, and ability to assist counsel in the same ways that mental illness or retardation renders adults incompetent. Many younger juveniles are as severely impaired as adults found incompetent to stand trial.

*Roper* and *Graham* concluded that youths' greater susceptibility to social influences diminished their responsibility. *Miranda* characterized custodial interrogation as inherently compelling because police dominate the setting, control information, and create psychological pressures to comply. Adults expect youths to answer questions posed by authorities—parents, teachers, and police—and youths may acquiesce more readily to suggestions. Youths seek interviewers' approval and respond more readily to

---


124. See Bonnie & Grisso, supra note 122, at 87–88; Grisso et al., *Juveniles' Competence to Stand Trial*, supra note 118, at 356; Redding & Frost, supra note 123, at 374–78.


127. See Steven A. Drizin & Richard A. Leo, *The Problem of False Confessions in the Post-DNA World*, 82 N.C. L. Rev. 891, 1005 (2004) (finding that juveniles' "eagerness to comply with adult authority figures, impulsivity, immature judgment, and inability to recognize and weigh risks in decision-making," puts them at greater risk to falsely confess); Kassin et al., supra note 84, at 8 ("[Y]outh under age 15 ... are more likely to believe that they should waive their rights and tell what they have done, partly because they are still young enough to believe that they should never disobey authority."); Krishna K. Singh & GISLI H. Gudjonsson, *Interrogative Suggestibility Among Adolescent Boys and Its Relationship with Intelligence, Memory, and Cognitive Set*, 15 J. ADOLESCENCE 155, 160 (1992).
negative pressure. Youths may impulsively provide false confessions to escape the stress of a lengthy interrogation.

Although the Court requires suspects to invoke Miranda clearly and unambiguously, some groups—juveniles, females, or racial minorities—may assert rights more tentatively to avoid conflict with those in power. The Court in Davis v. United States recognized that requiring a clear invocation of rights could prove problematic for some suspects. Even older youths who understand Miranda may feel more constrained by power differentials and less able to assert rights effectively.

C. Police Interrogation Practices

The Miranda Court did not have direct evidence or empirical studies of how police questioned suspects. It could not assess how psychological tactics like isolation, confrontation, or minimization affected suspects’ willingness to talk. The Court used training manuals as a proxy, and quoted extensively from Fred E. Inbau


132. 512 U.S. 452.

133. Id. at 460 (“[R]equired of the right to counsel might disadvantage some suspects who—because of fear, intimidation, lack of linguistic skills, or a variety of other reasons—will not clearly articulate their right to counsel although they actually want to have a lawyer present.”).

134. FELD, KIDS, COPS, AND CONFESSIONS, supra note 8, at 58.

135. See Miranda v. Arizona, 384 U.S. 436, 448 (1966) (“Interrogation still takes place in privacy. Privacy results in secrecy and this in turn results in a gap in our knowledge as to what in fact goes on in the interrogation rooms.”).


and John E. Reid's *Criminal Interrogation and Confessions* as a surrogate for interrogation practices.\(^{138}\) The Reid Method remains the foremost training program and underlies most contemporary interrogation practice and research.\(^{139}\)

Isolating a suspect under the Reid Method eliminates social supports and psychological tactics to overcome resistance and create the compulsive pressures of custodial interrogation.\(^{140}\) Psychologists describe the Reid Method's manipulations as maximization and minimization techniques.\(^{141}\) Maximization techniques "convey the interrogator's rock-solid belief that the suspect is guilty and that all denials will fail. Such tactics include making an accusation, overriding objections, and citing evidence, real or manufactured, to shift the suspect's mental state from confident to hopeless."\(^{142}\) Minimization techniques "provide the suspect with moral justification and face-saving excuses for having committed the crime in question. Using this approach, the interrogator offers sympathy

\[\text{[hereinafter Weisselberg, \textit{Mourning Miranda}. See generally Charles D. Weisselberg, \textit{Saving Miranda}, 84 CORNELL L. REV. 109, 119 n.48 (1998) [hereinafter Weisselberg, \textit{Saving Miranda}] (describing the research conducted by the Supreme Court librarian to determine the representativeness of interrogation manuals).}\]

\(^{138}\) *Miranda*, 384 U.S. at 449–55; see also id. at 449 n.9 ("The methods described in Inbau & Reid, Criminal Interrogation and Confessions... have had rather extensive use among law enforcement agencies.").

\(^{139}\) See LEO, POLICE INTERROGATION, supra note 7, at 111–12 (2008). Reid instructors have trained more than 500,000 investigators. Interviewing & Interrogation, JOHN E. REID & ASSOCIATES, INC., http://www.reid.com/training_programs/interview_overview.html (last visited Aug. 22, 2014). And the Reid Method is the most widely taught interrogation technique in North America. Lesley King & Brent Snook, Peering Inside a Canadian Interrogation Room: An Examination of the Reid Model of Interrogation, Influence Tactic, and Coercive Strategies, 36 CRIM. JUST. & BEHAV. 674, 674 (2009). The Reid Method's ubiquity provides a framework for most contemporary research. See, e.g., GUDJONSSON, supra note 126, at 10–21; Feld, Juveniles' Competence to Exercise Miranda Rights, supra note 84, at 50–51; King & Snook, supra at 675–80.

\(^{140}\) *Miranda*, 384 U.S. at 449–55; see also GUDJONSSON, supra note 126, at 10 ("[Inbau and Reid] introduced a nine-step method aimed at breaking down the resistance of reluctant suspects and making them confess, referred to as the 'Reid Technique."); Id. at 30–31 ("Social isolation... can powerfully influence the decision-making of suspects and the reliability of their statements."); Kassn et al., supra note 84, at 15 ("[T]he goal of interrogation is to alter a suspect's decision making by increasing the anxiety associated with denial and reducing the anxiety associated with confession."); Saul M. Kassin, The Psychology of Confession Evidence, 52 AM. PSYCHOLOGIST 221, 222 (1997) [hereinafter Kassin, The Psychology of Confession Evidence] ("Against the backdrop of a physical environment that promotes feelings of social isolation, sensory deprivation, and a lack of control, Inbau et al. (1986) described in vivid detail a nine-step procedure designed to overcome the resistance of reluctant suspects.").

\(^{141}\) See Kassn et al., supra note 84, at 12 (discussing maximization and minimization techniques used in police interrogations).

\(^{142}\) Id.
and understanding...[and] normalizes and minimizes the crime."143

The Reid Method claims that verbal and nonverbal cues—behavioral symptom analysis—enable interrogators to distinguish between guilty and innocent suspects and to question them accordingly.144 It prescribes a nine-step sequence to increase stress, weaken resistance, provide face-saving rationales, and encourage confessions.145 The Reid Method does not modify interrogation tactics to accommodate developmental differences;146 instead, it teaches police that the "principles...discussed with respect to adult suspects are just as applicable the younger ones."147 Its training does not distinguish between male and female suspects and employs the same tactics with both.

Interrogation training in England and Wales prescribed investigative interviews that are designed to elicit information

---

143. Id. at 14.

144. See Meyer & Reppucci, supra note 128, at 760. Beginning with a "Behavioral Analysis Interview," police decide if an interviewee is a "prime suspect" by observing whether the interviewee exhibits verbal and nonverbal deceptive behaviors such as "gaze aversion, unnatural body postures," "touching and scratching," "lack of confidence, and delays in response." Id. Psychologists question the theoretical underpinnings and scientific validity of the Reid Method. See id. at 671-72; see also GUDJONSSON, supra note 126, at 12 ("Inbau and [Reid] have not published any data or studies on their observations. In other words, they have not collected any empirical data to scientifically validate their theory and techniques.").

145. See GUDJONSSON, supra note 126, at 10-21; id. at 11 (presenting the bases of the Reid Method: "[b]reaking down denials and resistance" and "[i]ncreasing the suspect's desire to confess"); FRED E. INBAU ET AL., CRIMINAL INTERROGATION AND CONFESSIONS 212-16 (4th ed. 2004); LEO, POLICE INTERROGATION, supra note 7, at 119 ("[P]sychological interrogation...is a strategic, multistage, goal-directed, stress-driven exercise in persuasion and deception, one designed to produce a very specific set of psychological effects and reactions in order to move the suspect from denial to admission."); Stephen J. Schulhofer, Reconsidering Miranda, 54 U. CHI. L. REV. 435, 452 (1987) (arguing that the tensions police create in the custodial environment are designed to overcome a suspect's reluctance to talk).


147. INBAU ET AL., supra note 145, at 298. Reid-trained police view adolescents to be as competent as adults and use similar tactics with both. See Meyer & Reppucci, supra note 128, at 761; see also Jessica O. Kostelnik & N. Dickon Reppucci, Reid Training and Sensitivity to Developmental Maturity in Interrogation: Results from a National Survey of Police, 27 BEHAV. SCI. & L. 361, 370-74 (2009) (reporting that Reid-trained police use the same techniques with juvenile offenders and adults).
rather than to secure a confession. The Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1984 (the "PACE Act") required police to record interrogations. Police, psychologists, and lawyers collaborated to develop the PEACE approach to investigative interviewing. The PEACE acronym stands for "Planning and Preparation," "Engage and Explain," "Account," "Closure," and "Evaluate." The PEACE method is an information-gathering method of questioning that is less confrontational or accusatory than the Reid Method. Whereas the Reid Method equates juveniles and adults, PEACE


149. Police and Criminal Evidence Act, 1984, c. 60, § 60 (Eng.); see GUDJONSSON, supra note 126, at 22 ("Since 1991 there has been mandatory tape-recording [in England and Wales] of any person suspected of an indictable offence who is interviewed under caution." (citation omitted)); Milne & Bull, Investigative Interviewing, supra note 148, at 73–76; Bull & Soukara, supra note 148, at 81–82.


151. See GUDJONSSON, supra note 126, at 53; see also MILNE & BULL, INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEWING, supra note 148, at 157–67 (describing the goal of the interview as to gather as much information as possible to create an accurate factual picture, rather than simply to elicit a confession). Advocates of the PEACE approach criticize the Reid Method as "contrary to the principles of good investigative interviewing." Bull & Milne, Attempts to Improve, supra note 148, at 182. Reid tactics seek to control and manipulate the suspect to extract a confession. See id. The accusatorial approach is guilt-presumptive and confrontational and attempts to elicit statements that confirm police hypotheses about the suspect's guilt. See id. By contrast, the information-gathering method emphasizes rapport between the questioner and suspect and seeks the suspect's version of events. See MILNE & BULL, INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEWING, supra note 148, at 157–58; Bull & Soukara, supra note 148, at 84–87.
recognizes youths' vulnerabilities and requires an appropriate adult to attend a juvenile's interview.152

Interrogation training in Minnesota reflects both the Reid Method and the PEACE elements. The Minnesota Supreme Court in State v. Scales153 required police to record all custodial interrogations.154 Because questioning took place "on the record," police trainers developed less confrontational strategies to interview suspects.155 Training protocols advocate the use of open-ended questions to obtain a free narrative and to elicit information rather than to conduct a "recorded interview with the goal of getting a confession."156

D. Police Interrogation: Empirical Research

Despite the critical role of interrogation in justice administration, criminologists and legal scholars have conducted remarkably few empirical studies of how police question suspects.157 Post-Miranda research examined whether police warned suspects


153. 518 N.W.2d 587 (Minn. 1994).

154. Id. at 592.

155. See Neil Nelson, Strategies for the Recorded Interview (2006) (unpublished training manual) (on file with author) (describing, as part of a police interrogation training program, various aspects of interrogation and questioning). The purpose of the interview is "[t]o gather information (not to get a confession) as part of a thorough and exhaustive investigation." Id. at 4.

156. Id. at 10. Neutral, open-ended questions give the suspect an opportunity to provide information without putting her on the defensive. The officer attempts to develop good rapport with the suspect. "Set yourself up as the simple and impartial carrier of facts. You are the vehicle that takes the story to the higher power—the people who decide the suspect's fate (e.g., charging attorney, judge, jury). ... Continually reinforce your role as partner and messenger, rather than decision-maker."). Id. at 18–19.

157. See LEO, POLICE INTERROGATION, supra note 7, at 4–5; LEO, INTERROGATION ROOM, supra note 7, at 267–68 ("[W]e know scant more about actual police interrogation practices today than we did in 1966 when Justice Earl Warren lamented the gap problem in Miranda v. Arizona."). See generally Paul G. Cassell & Bret S. Hayman, Police Interrogation in the 1990s: An Empirical Study of the Effects of Miranda, 43 UCLA L. REV. 839, 840 (1996) (decrying the dearth of knowledge about police interrogations); Richard A. Leo, The Impact of Miranda Revisited, 86 J. CRIM. L. & CRIMINOLOGY 621, 631 (1996) ("[E]verything we know to date about the impact of Miranda comes from research that was undertaken when Miranda was still in its infancy.").
and the impact of warnings on rates of confessions.\(^\text{158}\) Only the 1967 Yale–New Haven study actually observed police questioning suspects.\(^\text{159}\) In the mid-1990s, Richard Leo conducted the only field study of interrogation in the United States.\(^\text{160}\) I have studied tapes and transcripts of interrogations,\(^\text{161}\) and researchers have used other indirect methods.\(^\text{162}\) Researchers in England have analyzed the


\(^{159}\) See Michael Wald et al., Interrogations in New Haven: The Impact of Miranda, 76 YALE L.J. 1519, 1533–58, 1613 (1967) (observing police interrogation of suspects and concluding "[n]ot much has changed after Miranda").

\(^{160}\) In 1992–93, Richard Leo observed 122 interrogations at a major urban police department and reviewed sixty videotaped interrogations performed by two other police departments. Leo, Interrogation Room, supra note 7, at 268; see also Richard A. Leo, Miranda's Revenge: Police Interrogation as a Confidence Game, 30 LAW AND SOC'Y REV. 259, 263 (1996).


\(^{162}\) See, e.g., Cassell & Hayman, supra note 157, at 851–52 (describing how researchers attended screening sessions about interrogations that were conducted by the prosecutor of the police officer); King & Snook, supra note 139 (analyzing forty-four recorded criminal interrogations in Canada to assess the prevalence of Reid Method tactics); Weisellberg, Mourning Miranda, supra note 137, at 1521 (analyzing police training materials); Weisellberg, Saving Miranda, supra note 137, at 134–40 (analyzing police training materials).
PACE Act recordings and transcripts and generated a substantial body of empirical research. Psychologists have conducted extensive laboratory research for decades on the dynamics of questioning and the vulnerability of certain populations, but these studies lack the external validity of custodial interrogation. False confessions provide another look at how police question suspects and highlight the heightened vulnerability of youths.

In light of the general paucity of interrogation research, it should come as no surprise that we know very little about whether police question male and female suspects differently. Limited laboratory research reports few differences between how boys and girls respond to police interrogation. "Nearly all of the studies that have examined gender differences in Miranda comprehension have found no differences between males' and females' understanding and/or appreciation of rights." One analyst reported minor differences, but attributed female delinquents' poorer understanding of Miranda to less justice system experience and contact with lawyers, rather than to gender per se.

This Article examines what happens when police interrogate female delinquents charged with serious offenses. It assesses

163. See, e.g., ROGER EVANS, ROYAL COMM'N ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE, THE CONDUCT OF POLICE INTERVIEWS WITH JUVENILES (1993) (analyzing The PACE Act transcripts of police interviews of juveniles); GUDJONSSON, supra note 126, at 59–60, 79–80 (employing sophisticated quantitative and qualitative methods to code and analyze tapes and transcripts of interrogations); MILNE & BULL, INVESTIGATIVE INTERVIEWING, supra note 148, at 75–76; Bull & Soukara, supra note 148, at 84–93 (analyzing audio tapes of interrogations); Roger Evans, Police Interrogations and the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice, 4 POLICING & SOC'Y 73, 79–80 (1994); J. Pearse et al., Police Interviewing and Psychological Vulnerabilities: Predicting the Likelihood of a Confession, 8 J. CMTY. & APPLIED SOC. PSYCHOL. 1, 1–2 (1998).


165. See, e.g., BRANDON L. GARRETT, CONVICTING THE INNOCENT: WHERE CRIMINAL PROSECUTIONS GO WRONG 279 (2011) [hereinafter GARRETT, CONVICTING THE INNOCENT] (reporting false confessions in 16% of wrongful convictions); BARRY SCHECK ET AL., ACTUAL INNOCENCE: WHEN JUSTICE GOES WRONG AND HOW TO MAKE IT RIGHT 119–21 (2003); Drizin & Leo, supra note 127, at 902 (noting that false confessions occur in about 14–25% or more of cases of wrongful convictions and DNA exoneration); Garrett, supra note 84, at 66, 89 (reporting that of 200 DNA exonerees, 11% were juveniles and many wrongful convictions contained false confessions); Samuel R. Gross et al., Exonerations in the United States, 1989 Through 2003, 95 J. CRIM. L. & CRIMINOLOGY 523, 545 (2005) (reporting that 42% of juveniles gave false confessions).

166. GOLDSTEIN & SEVIN GOLDSTEIN, supra note 115, at 68.

167. Viljoen & Roesch, supra note 120, at 738.
whether girls waive *Miranda* rights significantly more often than boys. It compares and contrasts how police question girls and boys. It reports how police and justice system personnel perceive girls in the interrogation room.

II. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

In 1994, the Minnesota Supreme Court in *State v. Scales* required police to record custodial interrogations.168 *Scales* held that "all custodial interrogation including any information about rights, any waiver of those rights, and all questioning shall be electronically recorded where feasible and must be recorded when questioning occurs at a place of detention."169 Currently, about a dozen states require police to record some or all interrogations.170

This study analyzes *Scales* interrogation tapes and transcripts, and the police reports, juvenile court petitions, and sentences of youths charged with felony offenses. Delinquency trials of sixteen- and seventeen-year-old youths charged with felony offenses are public proceedings.171 County Attorneys in Minnesota's four largest counties allowed me to search the files of sixteen- and seventeen-year-old youths charged with a felony172 and to copy those files in

---


171. MINN. STAT. § 260B.163(1)(c)(2) (2005). At the request of the County Attorneys, this study focused on older felony delinquents to obviate some privacy concerns.

172. The files involved cases in which all court proceedings had been concluded, but which had not yet been transferred to storage in archives. Police conducted most of the interrogations in this study between about 2003 and 2006. Anoka, Dakota, Hennepin, and Ramsey Counties are the four most populous of Minnesota's eighty-seven counties and account for almost half (47.6%) of the state's population and nearly half (45.6%) of the delinquency petitions filed. *See* FELD, KIDS, COPS, AND CONFESSIONS, supra note 8, at 272 for a more complete description of the methodology and data summarized here.
which police interrogated or juveniles invoked *Miranda*.

I obtained 307 files in which juveniles invoked or waived *Miranda*. Thirty-three cases involved female delinquents, which I compare and contrast with those of male delinquents.

I reviewed police reports and other documents to learn about the crime, the context of interrogation, and what evidence police possessed when they questioned a suspect. I coded each file to analyze where and when interrogations took place, who was present, how police gave the *Miranda* warning, whether juveniles invoked or waived, how officers questioned juveniles, how they responded, and how invoking *Miranda* affected case processing. The 307 files reflect some sample selection bias because they are charged cases, serious delinquents, more likely to go to trial, and perhaps include more juveniles who waived *Miranda*. Despite these caveats, the study includes a range of serious crimes, analyzes one of the largest number of routine felony interrogations ever aggregated in the United States, and reports on how police question serious female suspects. More than 150 officers from more than fifty agencies

173. Court orders authorized access to juvenile courts' files and included confidentiality restrictions to protect juveniles' identities. I personally transcribed interrogation tapes and coded all of the files to address confidentiality concerns. The courts' confidentiality restrictions precluded use of multiple coders and inter-rater reliability scores.


175. The sample includes only juveniles whom prosecutors charged with a felony and for whom an interrogation or invocation record exists. Other evidence being equal, prosecutors are more likely to charge suspects who waive *Miranda* than those who invoke *Miranda* because they have plea bargain advantage. Police made these *Scales* recordings during custodial interrogation, and the files do not include unrecorded, noncustodial interviews. The felony cases in which prosecutors charged that contained transcripts may differ in some ways from those in which juveniles invoked *Miranda* or from those that police did not move forward on charging. They may also differ from those cases that prosecutors did not charge, or from those that they charged but which did not contain transcripts. Minnesota excludes cases of sixteen- or seventeen-year-old youths charged with Murder 1 from juvenile court jurisdiction. *Minn. Stat. § 260B.007(6)(B)* (2011); see also Barry C. Feld, *Violent Youth and Public Policy: A Case Study of Juvenile Justice Law Reform*, 79 MINN. L. REV. 965, 1051–57 (1995). Also, prosecutors filed transfer motions against some other youths charged with the most serious offenses. See generally Marcy Rasmussen Podkopacz & Barry C. Feld, *The End of the Line: An Empirical Study of Judicial Waiver*, 86 J. CRIM. L. & CRIMINOLOGY 449, 462–68 (1996). As a result, the sample under-represents some of the most serious crimes: murder, criminal sexual conduct, and armed offenses.
interviewed these suspects. In addition to the quantitative data, I interviewed police, prosecutors, defense lawyers, and juvenile court judges to elicit their views, learn from their experiences, and test my findings. I also asked whether they perceived differences between boys and girls in the interrogation room and, if so, what were the differences.

III. QUESTIONING GIRLS

After describing characteristics of the youths in this study, I examine quantitative data on boys’ and girls’ invocation or waiver of Miranda rights. I then analyze how police questioned the vast majority of boys and girls who waived their Miranda rights and the outcomes of interrogations. In the next Part, I present qualitative data of how police and justice system personnel perceived girls in the interrogation room.

A. Quantitative Findings: Police Question Boys and Girls

Similarly Table 1 describes the boys and girls in this study. Girls comprised one-tenth (10.7%) of the youths whom prosecutors charged with felony offenses—the same ratio at which police arrest girls and boys for felony-level crimes. Although girls constitute a small portion of the felons whom police questioned, the girl results are strikingly similar to the boy results. A significantly larger
proportion of girls were seventeen years old compared with boys (66.7% vs. 40.1%). There were no other statistically significant differences between girls and boys questioned by police. Nearly two-thirds (63.6%) of the girls questioned by police lived in urban counties, whereas the boys were more evenly distributed between urban (52.2%) and suburban (47.8%) locales. The types of crimes that delinquents committed in urban and suburban counties were not significantly different. Prosecutors charged a somewhat larger proportion of girls with property and drug crimes and a smaller proportion with violent crimes than they did boys, but these differences were not statistically significant. Girls had somewhat fewer prior arrests, but again the differences were not statistically significant. Because the boys and girls are so similar, I attribute differences in how police questioned them and their responses to gender.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>58.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>35.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>11.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>County Type</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>52.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>47.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Offense</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firearms&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other&lt;sup&gt;5&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior Arrests</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>31.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misdemeanor</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Felony</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>15.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Felonies</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>14.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior Juvenile Court Referrals</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One or More</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>57.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Court Status at Time of Interrogation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>47.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prior Supervision</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation/Parole</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Placement</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study Total</strong></td>
<td>274</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Very few differences distinguish the context in which police questioned boys and girls.\textsuperscript{179} Police arrested, detained, and questioned equal proportions of girls and boys in custodial locations, such as police stations or detention centers (78.8% girls; 78.9% boys).\textsuperscript{180} They questioned a somewhat larger proportion of girls than they did boys within twenty-four hours of the offense (78.8% vs. 68.6%, respectively), suggesting that more girls were caught in the act. As a result, police had somewhat stronger evidence at the time they questioned girls than boys (78.8% vs. 61.8%, respectively).\textsuperscript{181} This, in turn, would somewhat reduce their need to use more confrontational tactics to elicit information.

The Court in \textit{Miranda} required police to warn a suspect to dispel the inherent coercion of custodial interrogation.\textsuperscript{182} Justice White's \textit{Miranda} dissent asked why those same compulsive pressures do not coerce a waiver as readily as an unwarned statement.\textsuperscript{183} Research confirms Justice White's intuition that after police isolate suspects in a police-dominated environment, a warning cannot adequately empower them.\textsuperscript{184} Post-\textit{Miranda} studies reported

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{179} See generally FELD, KIDS, COPS, AND CONFESSIONS, supra note 8 (providing a more complete account of the data gathered in this study).
  \item \textsuperscript{180} \textit{Id.} at 283. Overall, 78.8% of interrogations occurred in custodial settings and police detained nearly two-thirds (61.7%) of those whom they questioned. \textit{Id.} at 63.
  \item \textsuperscript{181} \textit{Id.} at 283.
  \item \textsuperscript{183} \textit{Id.} at 536 (White, J., dissenting) ("The Court apparently realizes its dilemma of foreclosing questioning without the necessary warnings but at the same time permitting the accused, sitting in the same chair in front of the same policemen, to waive his right to consult an attorney.").
\end{itemize}
that about 80% of adult suspects waived their rights.  The Yale–New Haven study concluded, "[W]arnings had little impact on suspects' behavior." Richard A. Leo reported that more than three-quarters (78%) of suspects waived their rights after receiving the warnings. Observers of police-prosecutor charging conferences reported that 83.7% of adult suspects waived. A survey of police estimated that 81% of adult suspects waived. Juveniles waive Miranda at somewhat higher rates than adults do—about 90% of the time. Juveniles' higher waiver rates may reflect lack of understanding, inability to invoke rights effectively, or less prior involvement with the justice system. Table 2 reports that boys and girls waived their Miranda rights at statistically similar rates (92.3% boys; 97% girls; and an overall waiver rate of 92.8%). Interviews with police and justice system personnel confirmed the validity of this finding: nearly all delinquents—male and female—waived Miranda. The marginal difference in rates of Miranda waivers by gender is consistent with the police officers' experiences. One officer observed, "[Girls] may be a little less likely to refuse to talk to you. I don't think I've ever had a female refuse to

also Weisselberg, Mourning Miranda, supra note 137, at 1537–38 ("[I]nterrogation . . . works by increasing suspects' anxiety, instilling a feeling of hopelessness, and . . . leading them to believe that they will benefit by making a statement.").

185. FELD, KIDS, COPS, AND CONFESSIONS, supra note 8, at 93–94.
186. Wald et al., supra note 159, at 1563.
187. Leo, Interrogation Room, supra note 7, at 276.
188. Cassell & Hayman, supra note 157, at 859.
190. See GOLDSTEIN & SEVIN GOLDSTEIN, supra note 115, at 50 (stating that studies conducted in the 1970s found rates of waiver by juveniles to be over 90% and a study in 2005 found the rate of waiver to be 87%); GRISSO, supra note 86, at 36 (reporting that juveniles refused to talk during interrogations at a "considerably smaller" rate than adults); J. Thomas Grisso & Carolyn Pomicter, Interrogation of Juveniles: An Empirical Study of Procedures, Safeguards, and Rights Waiver, 1 LAW & HUM. BEHAV. 321, 333–34 (1977) (finding 90.6% of juvenile felony suspects chose to talk when interrogated); Viljoen et al., supra note 115, at 261 (reporting that, in a retrospective study of delinquents interviewed in detention, 13.15% reported they had asserted their right to silence).
191. See Viljoen & Roesch, supra note 120, at 736–37.
192. See, e.g., FELD, KIDS, COPS, AND CONFESSIONS, supra note 8, at 95 (noting that "[w]hen asked how many juveniles waive Miranda, one officer said, 'Almost all of them. I couldn't even tell you the last time a kid told me he didn't want to talk.' Another estimated 90%; 'N]ot very many kids that don't talk to you.' Other police officer[s] said, 'I haven't had very many not speak to me. I would have to say 95% of them or more talk.' A second confirmed, 'I'd say better than 95%,' and a third said, 'Vast majority. I'd say high 90s.' A suburban prosecutor observed, 'We don't have very sophisticated criminals. Maybe 10% refuse to talk.' Almost all personnel thought that 90% or more of youths waive Miranda, and none estimated that fewer than 80% waive").
talk to me. They always want to say something, even if it's a denial.”

**TABLE 2: JUVENILES WHO WAIVED OR INVOKED MIRANDA BY GENDER AND PRIOR ARRESTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Miranda</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waive</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>92.3</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>92.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invoke</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prior Arrests*  
Non-Felony**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waive</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>94.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invoke</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**One or More Felony**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Waive</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>87.7</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invoke</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Statistically significant at $\chi^2 (1, N = 300) = 5.7, p < .05$. Totals for separate variables may not equal 100% of $N$ due to missing data.

The Court in *Fare v. Michael C.* cited Michael C.'s prior experience with police when it found a valid waiver.\(^194\) Criminologists report a relationship between prior arrests and *Miranda* invocations.\(^195\) Suspects with prior arrests waived their rights and confessed at lower rates than did those with less experience.\(^196\) More than one-quarter (27.4%) of the juveniles in this

---

193. *Id.* at 284.
194. *Fare v. Michael C.*, 442 U.S. 707, 726 (1979); *see also* Grisso, *supra* note 86, at 64 (reporting that judges cite a juvenile’s prior experience to find she understood *Miranda* warning).
195. *See* Leo, *Interrogation Room, supra* note 7, at 286 ("[A] suspect with a felony record... was almost four times as likely to invoke his *Miranda* rights as a suspect with no prior record and almost three times as likely to invoke as a suspect with a misdemeanor record.").
196. *See, e.g.*, Grisso, *supra* note 86, at 37 (reporting that juveniles with prior felony referrals were less likely to talk); Kassin, *On the Psychology of
study had one or more prior felony arrests at the time of questioning. As Table 2 reports, both male and female delinquents with one or more prior felony arrests were significantly more likely to invoke Miranda than those with less experience.

Several factors likely contribute to boys and girls with more serious prior records having a greater likelihood to invoke Miranda. Prior arrests give youths opportunities to spend time with lawyers, learn about rights, and understand legal proceedings. Prior felony arrests provide a reasonable proxy for understanding how to navigate the justice system. Prior arrests provide opportunities to hear Miranda warnings, experience interrogation, consult with counsel, and learn the adverse consequences of waiving. Justice system personnel described youths who invoked Miranda as "sophisticated," "savvy," "streetwise," "gang-involved," or similarly experienced.

Interrogation enables police to obtain incriminating admissions or leads to other evidence—physical evidence, witnesses, or stolen property—which strengthens prosecutors' cases and facilitates guilty pleas. Police seek suspects' statements—true or false—to contradict changes they later make in their stories and impeach their credibility. Police tell suspects that the interview is their opportunity to "tell their story." They described themselves as

Confessions, supra note 164, at 218 (reporting that individuals with criminal justice experience are less likely to waive rights than those with no prior felony record); Leiken, supra note 158, at 21 tbl.4 (reporting that defendants with prior arrests and felony convictions gave fewer confessions than did those with fewer arrests or convictions).

197. Supra Table 1.
198. See Viljoen & Roesch, supra note 120, at 737 (finding that juveniles with prior arrests had spent time with lawyers and gained a greater understanding of rights and legal proceedings).
199. Feld, Kids, Cops, and Confessions, supra note 8, at 99.
200. Id.
201. Id. A police officer described youths who invoke Miranda as "more streetwise. They've been in the system. They know that talking to us isn't going to help them; it's just going to help us get them convicted. They're more streetwise, they're tougher kids. They know the game." Id. at 100. A public defender described them similarly. "[They're] the ones who have been through the system before and are more savvy, are a little more streetwise. . . . The kids who have experience tend not to give up their rights as easily as first-timers." Id. at 99–100. A prosecutor attributed youths' invocations "largely [to] prior exposure to the system . . . [as] [c]ertain juveniles develop street smarts, savvy about the system. Those are the juveniles—repeated customers—who develop resistance to talking to the police because they've learned." Id. at 100.
202. Id. at 104.
203. Id. at 104–05.
204. Id. at 108. Several officers gave similar descriptions of their standard opening to an interrogation. "You just go in and tell them that this is your opportunity to tell me your side of the story. I've already got the other side of the story. I just want to hear what you say happened, and then I'm going to write it up and send it on. And they'll decide." Id.
neutral report-writers who want to forward the suspect's statement to prosecutors and judges for evaluation.205

Police use maximization and minimization tactics to overcome resistance and make it easier to confess.206 Maximization strategies emphasize the seriousness of a crime, the strength of the evidence, and the futility of denials.207 Minimization techniques provide moral justifications and face-saving alternatives, or shift blame to others.208 Police use maximization tactics to scare or intimidate suspects by confronting them with evidence and similar strategies.209 Officers may challenge inconsistencies or contradictions, explain that the suspect's claims are implausible, and describe the negative impact false statements have on prosecutors and judges. Police initially encouraged a suspect to commit to a story and then used confrontational tactics to challenge that version.210 Police confronted suspects with evidence (54.4%); accused them of lying (32.6%); exhorted them to tell the truth (29.5%); asked Behavioral Analysis Interview questions (28.8%); challenged inconsistencies (20.0%); emphasized the seriousness of the crime (14.4%); and accused them of other crimes (8.4%).211 In nearly one-third (30.9%) of interrogations, police did not use any maximization tactics; in another quarter (23.1%), they used only one.212 Most youths apparently did not require a lot of persuasion or intimidation to induce them to talk.

This study found that police used maximization tactics significantly more often to interrogate boys than they did to question girls. Table 3 reports that police confronted a larger

205. Id. at 105. See supra notes 139–43 and accompanying text.
206. See FELD, KIDS, COPS, AND CONFESSIONS, supra note 8, at 110; Kassin et al., supra note 84, at 12; Leo, Interrogation Room, supra note 7, at 278–79 (explaining that interrogators use "negative incentives (tactics that suggest the suspect should confess because of no other plausible course of action) and positive incentives (tactics that suggest the suspect will in some way feel better or benefit if he confesses)." See generally Kassin & Gudjonsson, supra note 136, at 42–44 (describing the interrogation process, including the use of minimization).
207. See Kassin et al., supra note 84, at 12 ("Maximization [is] designed to convey . . . that the suspect is guilty and that all denials will fail."); Kassin, The Psychology of Confession Evidence, supra note 140, at 223 ("[Maximization] . . . uses 'scare tactics' designed to intimidate a suspect believed to be guilty.").
208. Kassin, The Psychology of Confession Evidence, supra note 140, at 223 ("[Minimization] . . . is a 'soft sell' technique in which the detective tries to lull the suspect into a false sense of security by offering sympathy, tolerance, face-saving excuses, and moral justification; by blaming the victim or an accomplice; and by underplaying the seriousness or magnitude of the charges.").
209. See FELD, KIDS, COPS, AND CONFESSIONS, supra note 8, at 110; Feld, Real Interrogation, supra note 8, at 5; Leo, Interrogation Room, supra note 7, at 278.
210. Leo, Interrogation Room, supra note 7, at 278.
211. FELD, KIDS, COPS, AND CONFESSIONS, supra note 8, at 110.
212. Id. at 112.
proportion of boys than girls with evidence (56.1% vs. 40.6%). They accused boys of lying twice as often as they did girls (34.4% vs. 18.8%). They urged boys to tell the truth almost three times as often as they did girls (31.6% vs. 12.5%). Recall that police questioned a larger proportion of girls than boys within twenty-four hours of the offense (78.8% vs. 68.6%), and had stronger evidence when they questioned girls than boys (78.8% vs. 61.8%). Because more girls were “caught in the act,” police had less need to use maximization tactics.

No statistically significant differences emerged for police use of minimization tactics to question boys and girls. Boys and girls responded to police questioning very similarly. Girls were somewhat more likely than boys to give extended answers and somewhat less likely to deny their involvement, but the differences were not significant. One public defender reported, “Girls talk more. The girls will volunteer information.”213 Girls’ propensity to talk made the task of a defense lawyer “a giant nightmare.”214

**TABLE 3: MAXIMIZATION QUESTIONS: TYPES AND FREQUENCY BY GENDER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interrogation Strategy</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>% of Cases</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>% of Cases</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confront with Evidence**</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuse of Lying***</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>34.4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell the Truth****</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAI Questions</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confront</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouble</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accuse Other Crimes</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This Table was previously published in substantially the same form in Feld, Kids, Cops, and Confessions, supra note 8, at 284. Based on juveniles (N=285) who waived Miranda rights and whom police questioned.

**Statistically significant at: $\chi^2 (1, N = 285) = 2.752, p < .1$

***Statistically significant at: $\chi^2 (1, N = 285) = 3.160, p < .1$

****Statistically significant at: $\chi^2 (1, N = 285) = 4.996, p < .05$

213. Id. at 285.
214. Id.
Girls were somewhat more likely than boys to confess (68.8% vs. 57.3%), and less likely to completely deny their involvement (3.1% vs. 12.6%), differences that were not statistically significant. Boys were significantly more likely than girls to provide police with leads to other corroborating evidence (19.8% vs. 6.3%). Most boys and girls exhibited similarly cooperative attitudes when police questioned them (79.1% boys; 84.4% girls). Police questioned boys and girls for similar, brief lengths of time and concluded 90% of interviews in less than thirty minutes.

There were no significant differences between the level of offense for which the State convicted boys and girls, "whether the State reduced charges, or the type of disposition they received." Apart from officers' somewhat greater use of maximization techniques with boys, police questioned boys and girls very similarly, youths responded in the same ways, and youths confessed at the same rates. Police are trained to question suspects in one way and they use the same techniques whether they question adults or juveniles, and boys or girls.

B. Qualitative Findings: Justice Personnel Perceive Girls Differently than Boys—Emotional or Confrontational

Few criminologists have interviewed juvenile justice personnel to elicit their perceptions of girls. Emily Gaarder interviewed juvenile probation officers to obtain their views of girls and how those assessments might affect their treatment. Despite girls' histories of abuse and neglect, probation officers consistently described them as "manipulative, liars, and criers." The study described a disconnect between the trauma in girls' case files—histories of sexual abuse and teenage parenthood—and probation officers' negative descriptions of girls as manipulative and complaining, and "troubled and troublesome." Another study of juvenile intake workers reported that they found girls more difficult to work with than boys because they were more emotional and manipulative. They negatively described girls as "manipulative

---

215. Id.
216. Id.
217. Id.
218. Id. at 156. Most interrogations, of adults and juveniles, are surprisingly brief. Id. Police concluded over 75% of these interviews in less than fifteen minutes and 90% in less than half an hour. Id. Juveniles questioned about guns elicited longer interrogations. Id. at 165.
219. Id.
220. Gaarder et al., supra note 61, at 547.
221. Id. at 556.
222. Id. at 555.
223. Id. at 558.
224. See Bond-Maupin et al., supra note 44, at 57–58.
and uncooperative." Youth workers in Australian juvenile courts perceived girls as more difficult to work with than boys. The limited research on justice personnel's perceptions of girls reports consistent negative attributions.

I asked police and justice system personnel to describe differences between boys and girls in the interrogation room. Several noted that it was a difficult question to answer because "we have very few girls." One public defender commented, "We don't see many girls come through. I could probably count on my hand the number of serious felonies I've had where the respondent was female, one hand."

With that caveat, justice system personnel described differences between boys and girls in the interrogation room. Consistent with the quantitative data, police described girls as "more likely to talk, less likely to invoke their rights." Because of their greater propensity to talk, police were less likely to use maximization tactics to elicit statements. One prosecutor attributed girls' greater likelihood to talk to the presence of powerful adults. "[It's] an authority figure. Girls tend to be more cooperative and talk more." Even when charged with felony offenses, several police suggested that girls talked more freely because they played a secondary role in the crime. "Usually the girls are kind of just along for the ride and usually tell it as best they can, minimizing their activities." One officer explained as follows:

Usually in felony-level offenses, [girls] play more of a peripheral role. In the ag[gravated] robbery cases, they're the get-away driver. But they're usually not the one going in brandishing the gun, jumping over the counter, grabbing the money out of the till. That's usually the boys. So my sense is they talk more because they're [thinking] "I'm not going down. He's the one that did all that." My sense is they would talk more.

---

225. Id. at 65–66.
226. See generally Margaret Baines & Christine Adler, Are Girls More Difficult to Work With? Youth Workers' Perspective in Juvenile Justice and Related Areas, 42 CRIME & DELINQ. 467, 481 (1996) (reporting that youth workers described young women as "devious, 'full of bullshit,' and 'dramatic' contrasted with their understanding of young men as 'open' and 'honest' and therefore easier to engage.").
227. Id. at 286.
228. Feld, Kids, Cops, Confessions, supra note 8, at 286.
229. Id.
230. Id.
231. Id.
232. Id.
Justice system actors attributed girls’ cooperation to their desire to explain and justify their behavior. One officer observed as follows:

They feel like they had some justification in doing what they did because the person who they directed their violence toward had mistreated them somehow. So their explanation always had the tone of ‘if you just hear what I have to say, you’ll understand that I was the one that was in the right.’

A prosecutor agreed that girls tended to be more self-justifying. For example, he explained that in fights between girls, “My sense is that they would also try to assert self-defense more. When girls fight, they’re much more likely to say, ‘I was just defending myself.'”

A public defender offered a similar contrast between how male and female delinquents respond. “Girls are more likely to spin a story of self-justification. Boys are more likely to deny or to admit their involvement and try to minimize that way. Girls are more likely to tell why what they did wasn’t wrong.”

Other research describes boys as straightforward and girls as manipulative or conniving. Some officers described girls’ use of gender roles to try to manipulate them: “I think attractive young females think they are going to get more of a break with the system and not be treated as harshly, because they’ve learned that some where socially. They think they can talk their way through it because they’ve done it in other circumstances.” Similarly, another officer opined that “girls are little bit more adept at being charming when they’re lying.”

In addition to describing girls as cooperative or self-justifying, justice system actors proffered two contradictory views of girls as either emotional or confrontational—themes reflected in other studies. On the one hand, police described girls as more emotional than boys when questioned about their crimes. One officer said, “Girls are usually more emotional. They cry more often.”

---

233. Id. at 287.
234. Interview with Assistant County Attorney, Juvenile Division, in St. Paul, Minn. (Jan. 25, 2011) (on file with the author).
235. Id.
236. See Gaarder et al., supra note 61, at 556–58. This type of characterization appears in other studies. See, e.g., Bond-Maupin et al., supra note 44, at 65–66.
237. Interview with Juvenile Division Police Officer, in St. Paul, Minn. (Dec. 20, 2010) (on file with the author); see also Bond-Maupin et al., supra note 44, at 66 (attributing girls’ manipulation to their sexuality: “If you aren’t careful with girls, they pull the wool over your eyes. They come in here, put some perfume on, cosmetics, lipstick, and you know”).
239. Feld, Kids, Cops, Confessions, supra note 8, at 286.
suburban officer noted, “You get a lot more crying, a lot more emotion from juvenile females than you do from juvenile males—emotions and attitude.”\textsuperscript{240} A public defender opined, “Girls in general tend to be much more emotional at the scene and disclose information right then and there. . . . They kind of like just tell it like it is. And usually they’re quite emotional about it.”\textsuperscript{241} A police officer contrasted his experience questioning adolescent and adult women: “[A]dult women are different from adolescent girls. It’s really striking: [girls are] so quick to start screaming at you—much more emotional.”\textsuperscript{242}

On the other hand, police officers described girls as much more confrontational than boys. Officers described questioning girls as an unpleasant experience: “The toughest to interview, by the way, is a 16-year-old female. They don’t care. They’ll lie [to you] like their [sic] talking to you.”\textsuperscript{243} Police felt that boys were more straightforward, whereas girls used verbal aggression as a defense. Officers felt that girls had a sense of being impervious. “They have an attitude of arrogance, a naïve belief that they’re untouchable. They tend to be more noncompliant.”\textsuperscript{244} One female police officer observed that “dealing with young female offenders is much more miserable than dealing with young males. They just tend to be great big attitudes and playing the victim card and just all kinds of difficult things to wade through before you can get to the situation you’re trying to deal with.”\textsuperscript{245} Several more police officers expressed negative opinions about questioning girls:

When we’re dealing with a lot of girls, they have a tendency to be more loud—bitchy, for lack of a better word. Boys are boys. They’re tough guys to begin with. Girls that want to be the tough guys, they’re kind of a pain in the ass to deal with. They’re not afraid to yap at you. They’re less apt to be afraid of you than guys are.\textsuperscript{246}

Several officers described the girls they interrogated as more verbally aggressive and confrontational than the boys:

\textsuperscript{240} Id. at 287.  
\textsuperscript{241} Id.  
\textsuperscript{242} Id.  
\textsuperscript{243} Id. at 288.  
\textsuperscript{244} Id.  
\textsuperscript{245} Interview with Police Detective, in St. Paul, Minn. (Dec. 6, 2010) (on file with the author).  
\textsuperscript{246} Id.
Especially the hard-core girls, they come off real harsh with a real attitude. It's kind of interesting sometimes, when you see—they're not meek or timid. The girls I talk to have always been very abrasive. A lot of them do not like to admit they did anything wrong. I get boys saying "Hey, I screwed up. I did it," and the girls deny until they turn blue in the face.

Girls are a lot more hostile in their interviewing. They are more apt to raise the level of the interview in the interrogation into a more aggressive type of environment. They're a lot more hostile, a lot more quick to get into your face. They just don’t seem to appear to feel—they're not afraid of you. I don’t know why. They’re sometimes not afraid of you.247

Justice system personnel speculated that differences in boys’ and girls’ attitudes reflected differences in their delinquent careers.248 For example, a suburban prosecutor suggested that girls evinced more problems—sexual abuse, mental illness, drug involvement—than did their male counterparts.249 The prosecutor attributed girls’ more emotional responses than those of boys to the greater personal difficulties girls faced: “Girls in court are probably struggling more with sex abuse perpetrated on them [and] mental illness. Girls are more likely to be seriously into drugs. They're such a different delinquent than boys.”250

A police officer hypothesized that the justice system did not respond to girls' delinquency until they were further along in their delinquent careers: "They probably get away with a lot more. They probably get further into a life of crime before they get caught.”251

A public defender suggested that police may sometimes evoke the negative responses by the way in which they questioned girls. A lawyer observed as follows:

247. Id.
248. See generally Steffensmeier & Allan, supra note 50, at 475 (articulating theoretical variables that account for females' lesser involvement in crime, especially violent crime: "gender norms, moral development and affiliative concerns, social control, physical strength and aggression, and sexuality. Gender differences in these areas condition gender differences in patterns of motivation and access to criminal opportunities as well as gender differences in the type, frequency, and context of offending").
249. Feld, Kids, Cops, Confessions, supra note 8, at 287.
250. Id.
251. Id. at 287–88.
[Police interrogators] tend to approach girls as [if] they must either be terrible criminals or in abusive relationships with their boyfriends, or being prostituted. The girls are immediately defensive and pissed off at that kind of suggestion and go off at the police officers or anyone else who tries to talk to them about those issues.252

Although the quantitative data indicate that police do not interrogate girls differently than boys, the gender stereotypes held by the officers may still harm the girls they question. How should police question girls about potential abuse without offending, alienating, or stereotyping them? How can officers elicit information without treating the girls as “terrible criminals” or “pissing them off” while questioning them? We do not know whether officers’ attitudes precipitate the hostile reactions of which they complain or whether these attitudes cause officers to fail at serving girls in need of help and protection.

CONCLUSION

The quantitative data revealed very few differences between how police interrogated boys and girls for felony level offenses. Most police are trained to use the Reid Method to interrogate suspects and they use the same techniques with all offenders—younger or older, male or female. Although serious delinquent girls comprise only a small subset of juvenile courts’ caseloads, the boys and girls in this sample are remarkably similar in terms of their present offenses, prior records, and previous juvenile court involvement. In addition, police questioned boys and girls in similar venues and youths waived *Miranda* at statistically similar rates. While police used maximization techniques more when they interrogated boys, they otherwise questioned boys and girls in the same ways. Boys and girls exhibited similar attitudes—cooperative or resistant—and confessed at comparable rates. Gender disparities have long plagued juvenile justice administration. Against the historical backdrop of gender inequalities, police interrogation practices with boys and girls were remarkably even handed.

A substantial disconnect appears, however, between seemingly even-handed interrogation practices, and police and justice system personnel’s characterizations of girls. Consistent with other qualitative research on girls and juvenile justice,253 justice system actors ascribed to girls primarily negative attributes—emotional, manipulative, verbally aggressive, and confrontational. Should juvenile justice personnel be more aware of these differences in

perceptions? Even if girls and boys waive *Miranda* and police question them similarly, do gender stereotypes and implicit attributions elicit the negative behaviors for which justice system personnel criticize girls? Do these negative perceptions affect the quality of services justice personnel provide to young women within the system?

We need more empirical research on interrogations practices in general, in different settings, and with different types of suspects. If police do not need gender-specific interrogation techniques, then do officers require gender-sensitivity training? As more jurisdictions adopt recording requirements, criminologists, lawyers, police, and others can systematically study what happens in the interrogation room. This will increase our fund of knowledge, enable us to develop more effective techniques to elicit true confessions from guilty defendants, reduce the likelihood of extracting false confessions from innocent suspects, and provide a stronger basis for systemic policy prescriptions.