

Osamwonyi Noyiagbon

November 5, 2023

ENG1101

Word Count: 2,747

U2 Reflective Annotated Bibliography

Introduction

195. Just a single number without any context could be tied to anything until you learn that since 1973, 195 innocent lives have been lost to the death penalty due to faulty evidence, false confessions, racial bias, and various other reasons. Many of these people went through interrogations with officers resulting in "truthful confessions", in which only years after their subsequent trial and enviable death would these interrogations be released where the officers look more like criminals than the suspects. For this I pose a question, Is it morally just for police investigators to use various psychological techniques and coercion to prey possible information out of suspects and even confessions whether they be true or not? Prior to this I have always been interested in false convictions as people would be jailed losing years of their life sometimes living their entire youth in prison for a crime they didn't commit all for information to come out which points to them being completely innocent and all they're given is an apology, a lousy amount of money, and told to be on their way. This being something which took years of suffering of always denying the crimes that had nothing to do it all due to being "identified" as the suspect. Moreover various times online interrogations videos are uploaded which so first hand with a detailed analysis of officers interrogating suspects while using subtle but noticeable advances in an attempt to make the suspect feel more comfortable with telling the truth until

breaking down and confessing. It's always interesting to see how another human can pick and probe valuable information out of another all due to being more knowledgeable of how the human mind works. What I expect to find in my research is various other cases of false confessions, what psychology and physical techniques officers use in an attempt to probe a suspect for a confessions, and lastly just how many cases have been overlooked over the years due to not meeting mainstream knowledge. If possible I would also like to first hand experiences from those who have been wrongfully convicted and just what type of psychological trauma they have faced after such an event.

Citation 1:

Flannagan, S. "The Shady Side of Police Psychology and False Confessions." *Grunge*, Grunge,

26 Mar. 2021,

www.grunge.com/366284/the-shady-side-of-police-psychology-and-false-confessions/.

Accessed 25 Oct. 2023.

Summary:

According to this article false confessions are not only the product of the accused not knowing what they have and haven't done but also the accusers aka the police investigators intelligence use of psychological techniques to force a confession. Police officers in the integration rooms use a plethora of procedures to get as much information out of someone. Saying someone has failed

a light detector exam or even saying they have false evidence is completely legal and something the justice department has been doing for decades now. This is all so officers can hope to force a confession out of the possible suspect whether they are truly the person they think they're or not.

Reflection:

Do you agree or disagree with the text? Why or why not? Be specific!

- I agree with this text, it really goes to show how the justice system which is setup to protect everyday people can easily be turned on them if they unfortunately ever find themselves in a situation like a police interrogation.

Quote the text.

- “Lying to suspects with the intention of extracting a confession is, surprisingly, an accepted practice in most American police forces”

What questions do you have about what the text is saying? What don't you understand?

- Why is this text completely putting out the idea that lie detector systems are false and shouldn't be trusted?

What other information do you need to look up to better understand this article?

- Just how many people have been affected by false accusations.

If you could say something to this author, what would you say?

- Have you ever been or known anyone who has been in a police interrogation because there is really passion that can be seen in this text.

What does this document tell you about your research question?

- This document tells me the tactics which officers use and also a gauge of how long they have been doing it for.

How do you feel about the author's writing style?

- The author's writing style is perfect for the topic they are speaking about. They keep a serious tone the entire time showing that this is a very serious issue that if trade lightly can easily ruin someone's life.

What is the author's intended audience and purpose (reason for writing)?

- Is to inform and possibly help those who would unfortunately find themselves in police interrogation in which they're innocent but are being treated like a convict.

Is the genre effective? Does the choice of genre make sense for what the author wants to accomplish?

- The genre is non-fiction which fits well for a topic that is also non-fiction and very real.

How do you know this is a credible author and document?

- S. Flannagan not only has a bachelor's in English Language & Literature but also an M.A. in English Literature, Language & Culture, with experience in examining popular music through the lens of literary criticism.

Quotation:

“Richard Leo, associate professor of law at the University of San Francisco, told Frontline: "Most of what police do in interrogations ... is legal: the accusations, yelling; moving in closer, invading one's space; lying about evidence, making it up, pretending to have evidence; telling somebody they failed a polygraph, for example." Most of us are familiar with hardball interrogation techniques from movies and television, but what isn't so widely publicized is the fact that such methods may often lead to false confessions which then come to play a decisive part in a suspect's subsequent conviction.”

Citation 2: (City tech one)

Keatley, David A., et al. “Unmaking a Murderer: Behaviour Sequence Analysis of False Confessions.” *Psychiatry, Psychology and Law*, vol. 25, no. 3, 4 May 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13218719.2018.1463875>. 26 Oct. 2023.

Summary:

According to Unmaking a murderer: behavior sequence analysis of false confessions, when interrogating a possible suspect many officers' confidence gets in the way of their duty thinking

that the individual which they are interrogating is already guilty. Not a suspect but instead a criminal which they try and get a confession out of as opposed to evidence as usual. This overconfidence and lack of justice can result in investigators using the modern reid technique, a technique which works by making the suspect more and more comfortable with the officer causing them to tell the “truth” more and more until they confess. This is a double edged sword though as the technique works the same way against innocent people and actual criminals being non transparent to either.

Reflection:

Do you agree or disagree with the text? Why or why not? Be specific!

- I agree with this text as in the recent year more and more stories come out of investigators saying they’ve presumably found the criminal for a horrendous crime with an overwhelming amount of evidence. This can then even be carried into court just for the judge and jury to realize well after the trial that this suspect had nothing to do with the crime.

Quote the text.

- “police officers have an overconfidence in their own ability to detect deception and presume guilt; therefore, many police wrongly believe they only interrogate guilty suspects”

What questions do you have about what the text is saying? What don’t you understand?

- Why exactly does the author believe that it's not plausible that officers still use violence or threats of violence to enact a false confession? It's very possible as nobody would want to get hurt by someone who's a trained professional at doing just that.

What other information do you need to look up to better understand this article?

- I needed to look up various definitions for words in this article that I didn't understand either due to it being an advanced vocabulary of the author or just criminal justice terms which I didn't know until finding the definition.

If you could say something to this author, what would you say?

- Wouldn't these psychological techniques do the opposite for an actual criminal instead making them lock up and not respond to a officer as opposed to giving a real confession?

What does this document tell you about your research question?

- This document tells me of the victims of these techniques as to how they actually get tricked into a false confession. Why officer used these techniques even against innocent people (There confidence makes them think everyone they investigate is a criminal), and what the reid technique is which ties directly to my research question.

How do you feel about the author's writing style?

- The author's writing style fits perfectly for which they are writing about keeping a serious tone without any humor/jokes to distract readers of this problem. The only problem is the length while not splitting their thoughts into well organized paragraphs instead just being colossal walls of text.

What is the author's intended audience and purpose (reason for writing)?

- The author's purpose is to inform

Is the genre effective? Does the choice of genre make sense for what the author wants to accomplish?

- Yes the genre is effective for what the author is trying to convey in their argument. Using multiple cases as evidence to back up false confessions like the 16 ~ 17 who admitted to committing a first degree homicide, mutilation of a corpse, and sexual assault despite having done none of what was stated instead being trick into a false confession by the reid technique.

How do you know this is a credible author and document?

- The text has been peer reviewed.

Quotation:

“The defendant, though denying involvement to begin with, eventually made a full oral and written confession to the crime. The defendant later recanted the confession; however, the confession was still provided at trial, which resulted in a guilty verdict on the counts of intentional homicide, rape, and mutilation of a corpse.”

Citation 3:

Malloy, Lindsay. "Why Teens Confess to Crimes They Didn't Commit." Ted.com, TED Talks, 2009,

www.ted.com/talks/lindsay_malloy_why_teens_confess_to_crimes_they_didn_t_commit?language=en. 1, November 2023

Summary:

According to Lindsay Malloy in her Ted Talk "Why teens confess to crimes they didn't commit", In the United States teens are allowed to be interrogated the same way as an adult would be without being accommodated for their IQ, mental state, advisory, etc. This is the sad reality of the United States legal system as teens can be lied to the same way as adults are like being told that they'll be tried as an adult, that they already have "evidence" on them, that their friend in the next room already outed them, threats of what will happen to them in prison and even more. All this is to pick at their brains until a confession is obtained whether it be just or not. Teens aren't even entitled to have a parent figure in the room as they are being investigated as officers are even allowed to deny them of this.

Reflection:

Do you agree or disagree with the text? Why or why not? Be specific!

- I agree with this text as in many interrogation articles and videos you could very clearly see investigators are very unbiased in their methods of interrogation whether it be children or teens, and adults.

Quote the text.

- “But let's not forget that approximately one million or so of his peers are arrested every year in the United States and may be subject to similar interrogation techniques. Techniques that we know increase the risk for false confession”

What questions do you have about what the text is saying? What don't you understand?

- I didn't have any questions pertaining to the video.

What other information do you need to look up to better understand this article?

- I had to look up a little more information on Brendan Dassey and the case overall as I didn't know anything about it until now.

If you could say something to this author, what would you say?

- What would you do if you ever were in a situation where your child was being interrogated alone in a room and the officers said you were not allowed to enter?

What does this document tell you about your research question?

- This ted talk shows me the morality in which my question is asking as for interrogation tactics when used against juveniles is something terrible which nobody would see as correct, especially for someone who is innocent.

How do you feel about the author's writing style?

- The speaker spoke very clearly backing up her points with evidence statistics, video evidence, and more.

What is the author's intended audience and purpose (reason for writing)?

- To inform listeners of the horror that the United States criminal justice is on juveniles and how they hold no punches on them treating all suspects the same despite age which is a very important factor. The intended audience could be teenagers as it specifically speaks to them, parents who have children which are teens or will be in the future, and researchers.

Is the genre effective? Does the choice of genre make sense for what the author wants to accomplish?

- The genre is informative in informing us the audience of teenagers and how they will confess to crimes they haven't done.

How do you know this is a credible author and document?

- Lindsay Malloy is a developmental psychology professor, and researcher. These psychologists specifically focus on human growth and development making her qualified

to speak of the possible mental state these teens are in or put under in this interrogation situations.

Quotation:

“The legal system seems to get that young victims and witnesses should be treated differently than adults. But when it comes to young suspects, it’s like the kids glove comes off. And treating juveniles as though they’re adults in interrogations is a problem, because literally hundreds of psychological and neuroscientific studies tell us that juveniles do not think like adults, they do not behave like adults, and they’re not built like adults”

Conclusion

Upon completing my research I came to the standstill that this iceberg depth submerged much deeper than I could have ever imagined. Coercion and false confessions was just the tip of everything as cases with police brutality, depreciation of various everyday necessities like food and water, claiming to have evidence against a suspect when no such thing is true, enacting a investigation not for information like the purpose but instead a confessions, the insensitive behind many officers for getting confessions are to be promoted, and various more events. As suspects dig themselves deeper into their own graves officers get more and more persistent in making sure the suspect won't lock up stopping them for their awaited goal of a confession.

The Reid technique overall works by officers attempting to act friendly to the suspect, letting them become more comfortable with the officer telling more and more truths as if they were talking to a friend until eventually resulting in their own demise. This in theory sounds fantastic for catching actual criminals but this technique is used on everyone whether it be criminals with overwhelming evidence pointing to them or innocent bystanders who happen to fit the description of the actual suspect.

It was to know that the most susceptible age group to confess to crimes which they have not commit is actually my very own that being teens. (Use evidence from the Ted talk)

Those who need to know of this information the most would be ones which police commonly target that been teens, and young adults who belong to minority groups that being Hispanics, African Americans, and so on. As these people are the most likely to end up in very similar situations for features and circumstances they cannot change. This information would be especially valuable for those who actually find themselves in interrogation rooms with officers to know how to act when speaking to a officer, what techniques are being used against them the moment they walk into the room, and how to conduct themselves as to not be trapped in false accusations from officers in an attempt to pry out a false confession. This information will hopefully have a positive effect to those in the teen age group who are also minorities to help shield them from jail time wrongfully put on them.