

Cassidy C. Kirk, B.A. & Kristine M. Jacquin, Ph.D.

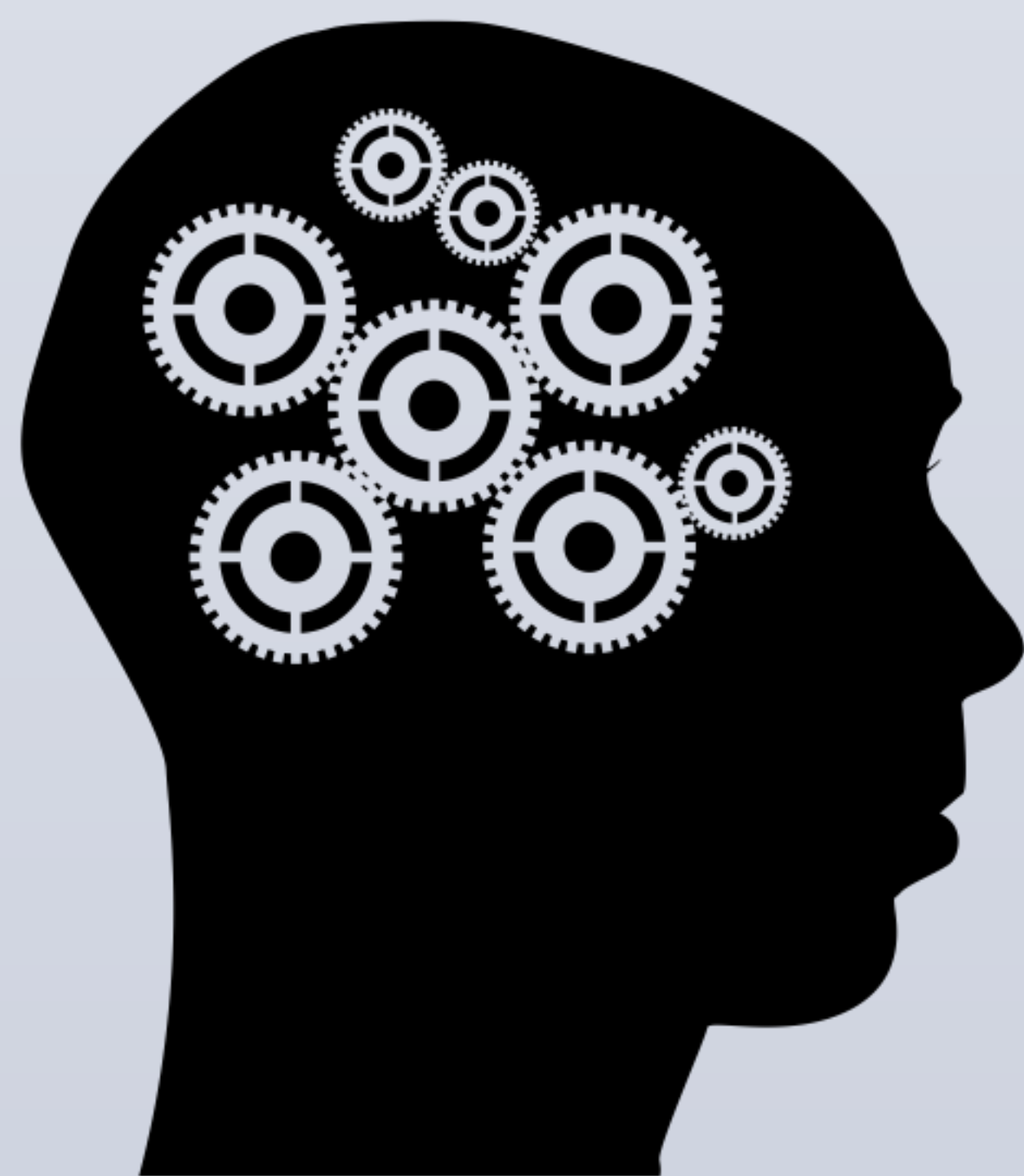
Fielding Graduate University

INTRODUCTION

False confessions have devastating impacts on the lives of diverse groups in our society (Meissner et al., 2015; Vick et al., 2021; Villar et al., 2013). Previous research shows that individuals with intellectual disabilities (ID) have a higher rate of false confessions when compared to other societal groups (Frumkin et al., 2012; Schatz, 2018).

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

- ❖ Individuals with ID have limited mental capacity when it comes to reasoning, problem solving, comprehending complex ideas, and thinking abstractly (Cluley, 2018; Lubs et al., 2012; Nieuwenhuis et al., 2017).
- ❖ These mental functions are essential when combatting psychological techniques used by police to produce a confession.



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FALSE CONFESSIONS

- ❖ Research shows that police use a variety of psychological techniques to produce a confession, including coercion, providing fake evidence, repeating accusations, offering leniency, threats, and implicit threats of physical harm (Kassin et al., 2010; Leo & Lui, 2009; Perillo & Kassin, 2011; Shacked-Schroer et al., 2015).
- ❖ Such techniques produce false confessions from neurotypical people, and they are much more influential on those with ID.
- ❖ Perske (2011) discusses 75 different cases of false confessions from individuals with ID.
- ❖ The cases show low IQ, inability to understand the nature of the crime, inability to understand consequences, illiteracy, brain damage, and communication issues as contributing factors to false confessions.

POLICE TRAINING

- ❖ Research shows that police do not have adequate training regarding individuals with ID (Diamond & Hogue, 2021; Gulati et al., 2020; Henshaw & Thomas, 2012).
- ❖ Lack of police training has led to a considerable number of false confessions from individuals with intellectual disabilities.

MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

- ❖ Although police do not have training necessary to understand ID and how it could lead to a false confession, mental health professionals do.
- ❖ Mental health professionals such as clinical psychologists, social workers, and community care workers are often trained in the nuances of intellectual disabilities.



PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES

- ❖ There is little policy in place to protect those with intellectual disabilities from producing false confessions.
- ❖ Policy change should be implemented that requires a mental health professional be present in the interrogation room during the interview of anyone suspected or known to have an intellectual disability.
- ❖ The presence of mental health professionals in interrogations will greatly reduce the number of false confessions by individuals with ID.

PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES CONT.

- ❖ Legal changes regarding the conviction of individuals with ID is also suggested.
- ❖ With what we now know about ID and false confessions, attorneys should be able to appeal the convictions of ID clients convicted based on confession evidence.
- ❖ Policy change regarding police training on ID should be implemented.
- ❖ Police should be trained to understand how an ID can lead to false confessions
- ❖ Training should also be provided on how to work with ID individuals who are victims or suspects.
- ❖ Trainings should be proctored by mental health professionals who have expertise on intellectual disabilities.

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