

When the Innocent Confess: Understanding False Confessions



Did You Know?

- Police interrogation tactics, such as prolonged questioning, can lead suspects to confess falsely?
- Vulnerable individuals, such as young people, those with mental health issues, or those lacking legal representation, are more likely to give false confessions?

What is False Confession?

False Confession is simply a guilty admission of having committed a crime, which you did not do.

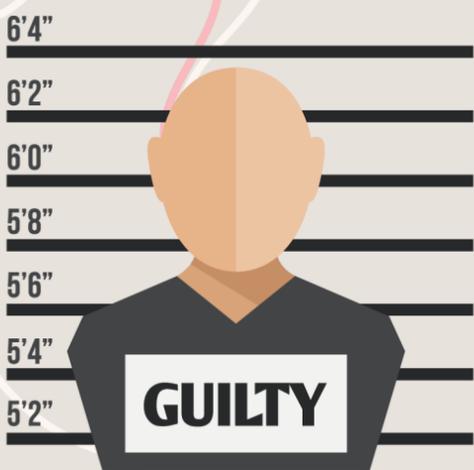
Types of false confessions

1. **Voluntary:** They know they did not commit the crime but confess without a coerced interview.
2. **Coerced-compliant:** they know they did not commit the crime, but due to coerced interrogation, they falsely confess.
3. **Coerced-internalized:** they believe they committed the crime due to a highly suggestive interrogations.



Why Do People Give False Confessions?

1. To protect others.
2. Avoid threatened punishment.
3. Psychological manipulation (highly suggestive interrogations).



Impacts of False Confessions

1. False confessions lead to wrongful convictions, significant emotional distress for innocent individuals, and wastage of resources (Leo, 2009).

Prevention Strategies

1. Improve interviewing
2. Educating and reminding people of their interview rights (i.e. Miranda and Charter rights).
3. Recording all interrogations.
4. Training law enforcement to recognize and prevent coercive practices.
5. Legal reforms to scrutinize confession evidence more critically.

