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It is well-documented that when they are interrogated, adolescents are significantly more likely than adults to give false confessions and coerced confessions. This comprehensive guidebook, with contributions from the field's leading experts, is an indispensable resource for scholars interested in adolescence and the law and for attorneys who represent young defendants. I recommend it with great enthusiasm.

—Laurence Steinberg, PhD, Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA, and coauthor of *Rethinking Juvenile Justice*

Confessions and Guilty Pleas of Youth is a groundbreaking must-read from the leading experts on youth, development, and the law. Blending cutting-edge science with real-world implications, the authors reveal how adolescent immaturity shapes decision making in the justice system—often leading young people to confess or plead guilty without fully understanding the stakes. Both powerful and illuminating, this book redefines what it means to achieve justice for youth.

—Elizabeth Cauffman, PhD, Distinguished Professor of Psychology, Education & Law; Director, Center for Psychology & Law; and Director, Master of Legal & Forensic Psychology, University of California, Irvine

Youth decision making is fundamentally different from that of adults, yet young people in the criminal system are often subjected to the same coercive pressures to confess and plead guilty. This is true for everyone caught in the system's web, including the innocent. This work contains a compelling and comprehensive collection of science, data, and insights into how youth think, making this a must-read for policymakers and anyone working with youth in the system.

—Lucian E. Dervan, JD, Professor of Law and Director of Criminal Justice Studies, Belmont University College of Law, Nashville, TN, and Founding Director, Plea Bargaining Institute

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Understanding Youth Confessions and Guilty Pleas

An Introduction

Lindsay C. Malloy, Tina M. Zottoli, and Rebecca K. Helm

I thought I was going home . . . I didn't understand the—the seriousness of what was going on. I didn't understand exactly what I was getting myself into once I signed that statement.

—CALVIN OLLINS, DESCRIBING THE FALSE CONFESSION HE GAVE AT AGE 14 (INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE, 2012)

It's like having an 18-wheeler driving on your chest and you believe that the only way to get that weight off your chest is to tell the police whatever they want to hear . . . even admitting to a murder.

—MARTY TANKLEFF, DESCRIBING THE FALSE CONFESSION HE GAVE AT AGE 17 (INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE, 2012)

I had a 13-year-old charged with an offence. Now he was adamant, absolutely adamant, he was not involved. . . . But at the first appearance he said I want to plead guilty. "Why do you want to plead guilty?" "Cause I don't want to come back here. This is very stressful. This is very long."

—LAWYER, DESCRIBING A CASE IN WHICH A 13-YEAR-OLD DEFENDANT WHO WAS LIKELY INNOCENT DECIDED TO PLEAD GUILTY (EVIDENCE BASED JUSTICE LAB, 2021)

'Cause I was hungry and I did not want to go back to jail. They made me throw away a huge donut I had at the court.

—14-YEAR-OLD BOY DESCRIBING WHY HE DECIDED TO PLEAD GUILTY DESPITE CLAIMING INNOCENCE (ZOTTOLI & DAFTARY-KAPUR, 2019)

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Confessions and Guilty Pleas of Youth: Developmental Science and Practical Implications,
L. C. Malloy, R. K. Helm, and T. M. Zottoli (Editors)
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In their own words, these youth describe doing what, for many, is simply unimaginable: confessing or pleading guilty to a crime that they did not commit. Although only a handful of such cases ever reach the airwaves, many youths' stories are as compelling as those that have garnered extensive media coverage, such as the case of the Central Park Five (now "The Exonerated Five"). What all these youth have in common is that their convictions were determined largely or entirely by their own words. Their own words led them to conviction and the serious legal and collateral consequences that attached. And it was their developmental limitations as young people—and policies and practices that do not account for these limitations—that made them more vulnerable to such negative outcomes in the interrogation room and in the courtroom.

In many modern legal systems, a significant proportion of defendants are convicted at least partly as the result of their own decisions to self-incriminate, either through confessions or guilty pleas. Although adults are not immune to coerced and false confessions and guilty pleas, a robust body of research suggests that, as a result of cognitive and psychosocial immaturities, youth are at disproportionate risk. The factors that influence youth when deciding whether to confess or plead guilty are likely to be different from those that influence adults making the same decisions. Peer influence, for instance, is more likely to play a role in the confession and guilty plea decisions of youth compared with those of adults due to the increased salience of peer relationships and sensitivity to peers' expectations and norms during adolescence (see Chapter 2, this volume). Additionally, incentives and pressures to confess or plead guilty that might not be coercive for adults can be so for youth. For example, interrogations and courtroom procedures are extremely stressful, and youth may be more susceptible than adults to confessing or pleading guilty to escape from or limit the length of further proceedings (Chapter 7, this volume; Chapter 16, this volume). Youth may also struggle to understand legal proceedings or the elements of a criminal offense that would need to be proven to sustain a charge at trial, and they may fail to appreciate the importance of innocence (Chapter 15, this volume). Unfortunately, these developmental realities are not sufficiently taken into account (if they are at all) when youth are arrested and prosecuted for crimes.

This edited volume is focused on confessions and guilty pleas of youth. At the outset, we must clearly define what we mean by *confessions* and *guilty pleas*. First, although confessions are an element in many common contexts (e.g., religious practice, mental health therapy; Kassin & Gudjonsson, 2004), the chapters in this volume concern confessions made to police in the context of investigations, which can be used as evidence in criminal or juvenile/youth court prosecutions. Moreover, to distinguish a formal confession from other incriminating statements that might be made, we adhere to Kassin and Gudjonsson's (2004, p. 35) definition of confession as "a detailed written or oral statement in which a person admits to having committed some transgression, often acknowledging guilt for a crime." Thus, a confession, at least in legal contexts, is more than a simple statement of "I did it."

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The term *guilty plea* is unlikely to be heard outside the context of a legal proceeding; nevertheless, in this volume, guilty plea refers to a defendant's formal (and presumed voluntary) decision, made in open court, to waive their right to a trial and accept conviction for the crime(s) charged. Usually, the defendant must also admit to their guilt.[1] Defendants who plead guilty usually receive lesser punishment than those who are convicted at trial and, at least in the United States, a significant proportion of guilty pleas follow a negotiation with the prosecutor (i.e., plea bargaining; Bibas, 2012). Guilty pleas are the primary mechanism by which criminal cases are resolved in the United States and in the other jurisdictions discussed in this volume, although each jurisdiction uses different incentive systems to encourage guilty pleas (Helm, 2019; see Chapter 1, this volume).

Confessions and guilty pleas have much in common—for example, either may be the result of a suspect's or defendant's belief that they will achieve a better legal outcome, and guilty people are more likely than innocent people to make a confession or to plead guilty. However, confessions and guilty pleas are also notably different, both with respect to their legal implications and the psychosocial factors that may compel them. Most crucially, a confession is a statement that may or may or may not be successfully used against a defendant to secure their conviction, whereas a guilty plea is a statement that leads directly to a criminal conviction. Additionally, confessions are typically produced in the context of a police interview or interrogation, often before an individual is advised by counsel and before a decision has been made to prosecute. Guilty pleas, in contrast, happen after a person has been formally charged and typically follow after some exchange between prosecution and defense. As such, although both involve self-incrimination, confessions and guilty pleas must be understood and discussed independently, as authors do in Parts II and III of this volume.

The overarching goal of this edited volume is to provide unique, integrated coverage of the developmental science relevant to decisions to self-incriminate, and the implications of that science for practices and policies related to both confessions and guilty pleas. We believe that the time is ripe for such a volume and are thrilled to have assembled an international group of experts to write these 27 brief and highly focused chapters that review the research and theory that should inform policy and procedure in these areas, examine current practice and procedure in light of this research, and provide suggestions for empirically based reform. We also believe in "giving psychology away" (Miller, 1969)[2] and sharing knowledge in accessible ways; thus, the chapters are intended to be

[1]In the United States, a defendant may be permitted to enter a *nolo contendere* (no contest) plea, which avoids an admission of guilt, or an *Alford* plea, which allows a defendant to maintain their innocence while acknowledging that the state would likely prevail at trial (*North Carolina v. Alford*, 1970; known as a Kennedy plea in West Virginia, *Kennedy v. Frazier*, 1987).

[2]In 1969, George Miller (who was then president of the American Psychological Association) encouraged psychologists to give psychological knowledge away in an accessible manner to "the people who really need it" (Miller, 1969, p. 1071).

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informative and easily digestible for a broad range of readers. Written intentionally for a mixed audience of academics, practitioners, and students in multiple fields (e.g., psychology, law, criminal justice, social work, law enforcement), the chapters should intrigue anyone who has an interest in understanding self-incrimination in the interrogation room and in the courtroom, especially those who are interested in how self-incrimination plays out among some of the most vulnerable suspects and defendants—youth.

WHY PUBLISH THIS BOOK NOW?

The past two decades have seen a surge in empirical research on and interest in confessions and guilty pleas generally, and among youth specifically (for reviews, see Edkins & Redlich, 2019; Kassin et al., 2025). The field's momentum in the areas of confessions and guilty pleas rests on decades of research and a conceptual foundation laid by pioneering scholars calling for developmental science to inform youth justice policy and practice (e.g., Grisso & Schwartz, 2000; Scott & Steinberg, 2008). The present volume continues this trajectory, synthesizing contemporary research to inform developmentally appropriate practice and policy concerning confessions and guilty pleas. A number of reforms have been proposed, and some have been adopted (e.g., some U.S. states have banned police use of deception in interrogations of youth, a practice long abandoned by other jurisdictions; see Chapter 6, this volume; for a summary of some relevant U.S. law, see American Law Institute, 2024). In many ways, however, youth continue to be treated either the same as adults or with well-intended, but often misguided, youth-specific procedures based on "common sense" rather than robust developmental science. Because of the growing interest in this topic, the sheer volume of related research that has accumulated relatively quickly, and the fact that much of this research is not yet reflected in policy, we felt that there was an urgent need to summarize the developmental science relevant to confessions and guilty pleas and share it in an accessible way. By gathering pieces from renowned and respected scholars and practitioners across multiple fields, including psychology, law, and criminology, the book links underlying developmental science with applied scholarship and analysis, in a way that has not been done to date. The knowledge contained herein can inform the practice of psychologists, lawyers, and allied professionals and facilitate the development of empirically supported policy and law at the local, national, and international levels that takes appropriate account of the developmental capabilities and limitations of youth suspects and defendants.

A FEW NOTES ON FORMAT, COVERAGE, AND TERMINOLOGY IN THIS BOOK

The intersection of psychology and law thrives on collaboration and requires interdisciplinary expertise, especially when it comes to applied issues such as the challenges and potential solutions concerning confessions and guilty pleas.

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Chapter authors (and we three editors) represent disciplinary (e.g., developmental psychology, forensic psychology, clinical psychology, law, criminology) and geographic (i.e., United States, Canada, United Kingdom) diversity. We chose to compile an edited volume, rather than a solo or coauthored volume, so that the reader would benefit from the insights of researchers and practitioners who are subject-matter experts at the forefront of their specific subfields and who could write laser-focused chapters on their areas of expertise. The issues covered in this volume are interdisciplinary, challenging, and rapidly evolving. By bringing together renowned experts on each of the topics covered, we are able to provide the reader with a richer, more nuanced understanding of complex issues from multiple angles and viewpoints, thereby fostering critical thinking and scholarly dialogue. Moreover, an edited volume is consistent with the way effective solutions to challenging issues are typically developed in the real world—collaboratively, by drawing on the collective wisdom and diverse perspectives of multiple subject-matter experts.

We recognize that practices surrounding interrogations, confessions, and guilty pleas vary globally. We did not attempt to include information about all legal jurisdictions in one volume, nor do we think that such an approach is necessary. The developmental characteristics, trajectories, and vulnerabilities of youth discussed in this volume are relevant regardless of geographic location or jurisdiction. However, policies and practices in different jurisdictions may exacerbate or mitigate youths' vulnerabilities. If legal professionals and fact-finders understand the underlying developmental psychology and principles covered in this volume, then they can apply these to their own systems.

Much of the volume focuses on research conducted within the United States, and therefore on the policies and practices that are found there. This is partly because the United States presents a particularly rich and influential landscape when it comes to confession and guilty plea research. Since the first Innocence Project DNA exoneration in 1989, the United States has been at the forefront of research as well as scientific and policy debates about the reliability of confessions; likewise, the robust psycholegal literature on guilty pleas in the United States reflects the ubiquity of plea bargaining in the United States and the growing recognition that this practice has an innocence problem (Dervan, 2012). Although the U.S. context is compelling for understanding how developmental psychology and the law intersect regarding confessions and guilty pleas, we did not want the book to focus solely on the United States. We intentionally solicited several chapters that focused on jurisdictions outside the United States and also encouraged all authors to incorporate content from other jurisdictions when it was relevant and in line with their expertise.

Canada and England and Wales were the most frequently discussed non-U.S. jurisdictions. The shared legal foundations of these three countries, and the similarities and differences in their approaches to confessions and guilty pleas, make them particularly interesting jurisdictions to cover, including for comparative purposes (e.g., see Chapter 16, this volume). In light of this, the youth justice systems of the United States, Canada, and England and Wales are introduced in Part I of this volume to provide the reader with a foundation for understanding procedures relating to confessions and guilty pleas in these jurisdictions

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(see Chapter 1, this volume). In sum, the volume highlights universal concerns (e.g., developmental vulnerabilities) and context-specific practices that shape how youth experience the legal process.

Finally, for consistency across chapters and to avoid differences in the definitions readers may use for the words child/children and adolescent, we asked all authors to use the term *youth*, to refer, generally, to children and adolescents under 18 years when precise ages or age ranges are not specified or when another term is not obligated (e.g., "youthful offender" statute; "juvenile" court procedure). However, although legal "adulthood" is recognized at 18 in many jurisdictions, age-related restrictions—on the purchase and use of alcohol or tobacco in the United States (age 21), for instance—arguably reflect recognition of ongoing psychological development and concerns about maturity and decision making beyond age 18.

Thus, we wish to make three related points. First, we recognize that "youth" are not a monolith and our use of "youth" to refer generally to individuals under age 18 should not obscure the fact that there are large differences within this relatively broad age range. As highlighted in the chapters that follow, certain developmental vulnerabilities of relevance to confessions and guilty pleas will be more or less pronounced and meaningful at different ages. Second, as the volume unfolds, it will be evident that some of these vulnerabilities extend beyond the bright-line legal determination of when adulthood begins (age 18), and in some chapters, authors consider vulnerability extending into young adulthood. The bottom line is that while the law typically draws a bright line, developmental boundaries are not so cut and dry. Finally, by focusing on youth, we do not intend to suggest that concerns related to interrogations, confessions, or guilty pleas are confined to those who are considered minors under the law. Our emphasis on youth should not be read as minimizing the broader systemic concerns that extend to defendants of all ages. Fully mature adults, too, can misunderstand their legal rights, succumb to psychologically manipulative interrogation tactics and give false or coerced confessions, misjudge the consequences of waiving their rights or entering guilty pleas, and make poor legal decisions under stress. Yet, developmental science makes clear that youth occupy a particularly precarious position in the interrogation room and the courtroom. Among other characteristics, their immature cognitive control, heightened socioemotional reactivity, impulsivity, susceptibility to social influence, sensitivity to reward, and limited life experience converge to make youth especially ill-equipped to navigate high-stakes legal decision making.

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS BOOK

The 26 chapters of this volume are organized into four distinct sections. For all chapters, we asked authors to avoid jargon, extensive statistical and methodological details, and highly technical information. Readers may notice some repetition or redundancy across chapters. This is intentional and arguably inevitable in an edited volume that includes many brief chapters. Because

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each chapter is written by a different expert or team of experts, authors may reintroduce key concepts, policies, case studies, or empirical research findings to help ensure that their chapter can stand on its own. This format is useful for readers who engage with individual chapters selectively, rather than reading the book cover to cover. It is also helpful for instructors who may wish to assign particular chapters and have them be accessible to students as stand-alone documents. Moreover, overlapping coverage of landmark studies, significant cases, and key ideas (e.g., characteristics of youth that affect their legal decision making) reflects and reinforces crucial knowledge in different domains in the field and highlights points of convergence. It also encourages readers to draw connections across the volume as a whole.

Part I: Developmental and Legal Foundations

First, Chapter 1 provides the legal foundations for understanding confessions and guilty pleas in youth by outlining how policy and procedure relating to youth have evolved in the United States, Canada, and England and Wales—the jurisdictions that feature most prominently in this volume—and the key protections provided for youth accused of criminal offending in these jurisdictions. In the following chapters, authors provide essential overviews of the basic developmental science relevant to confessions and guilty pleas in the domains of socioemotional development (Chapter 2), neurocognitive development (Chapter 3), and memory and suggestibility (Chapter 4). This developmental science should inform how youth are treated in the legal system. However, in reality, legal practice and policy relating to youth is often informed by lay perceptions of youth rather than developmental science.

Part II: Confessions

Part II focuses on interrogations and confessions of youth. This part begins with a U.S. case study, the case of Lee Arthur Hester, to demonstrate the vulnerability of youth to false confessions in practice (Chapter 5). Mr. Hester waited 58 years to be exonerated for a murder and rape that he was wrongfully convicted of at age 14 based on a false confession. In this chapter, we hear directly from a law professor and attorney whose tireless efforts, alongside others, helped to exonerate Mr. Hester. This chapter serves as a detailed narrative account of a young person who falsely confessed to a serious crime, highlighting key psychological and legal phenomena in a way that brings into focus the human causes and costs of these tragic cases. Although much has changed in the more than six decades since Lee Arthur Hester was convicted, including advances in our understanding of child development and increased legal protections (e.g., *Miranda* rights), many of the core issues highlighted in Chapter 5's case study remain relevant today. This historical case provides a poignant example of how flaws and biases in the legal system can persist over time, underscoring the need for continued reform.

Chapter 6 then reviews the current state of the interrogations and confessions field to help readers orient themselves to the history and current body

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of research on interrogations and confessions, and the impact that this research is having on practice and policy in general and with respect to youth specifically. Chapters 8 and 9 concern psycholegal issues surrounding the protection of youth rights in the police interrogation context. Chapter 8 covers what we have learned about youths' understanding and waiving of rights outlined in police cautions (what many U.S.-based readers will recognize as "*Miranda* rights") and the cognitive, psychosocial, and mental health factors known to affect the validity of their rights waivers. In the United States, the *Miranda* rights safeguard is triggered only when a suspect is in a *custodial* interrogation. In Chapter 9, researchers address how custody is determined in the United States, the role of age in the custody inquiry, and the emerging psychological research on perceptions of custody, including differences between youths' and adults' perceptions of custody.

Several chapters in Part II cover coerced or false confessions specifically. Chapter 7 discusses the vulnerabilities of youth to false confessions, including data on the prevalence of false confessions by youth around the world, and demonstrates the utility of the novel five-level disadvantage process model, which is used to illustrate the various factors that can underlie false confessions in youth. Chapters 10 and 11 describe what we know about two important risk factors for coerced and false confessions: trauma and race. In Chapter 10, the authors provide an overview of how youths' exposure to trauma, broadly defined, can interact with accusatory and manipulative interrogation practices to further increase youths' susceptibility to both coerced and false confessions. Chapter 11 explains how stereotypes about Black criminality can alter the psychological experience of police interrogation for Black suspects, resulting in heightened risk for coerced and false confession among Black youth, and makes suggestions for research and intervention that may reduce this risk. Finally, Chapter 12 focuses on how adults, especially mock jurors, *perceive* youth who confess, and the implications of those perceptions for the treatment of youth. The authors pay particular attention to situations in which the perceptions of young suspects and defendants align with—or diverge from—the actual characteristics and tendencies of youth.

Part III: Guilty Pleas

Part III concentrates on guilty pleas of youth. Like Part II, this section begins with a compelling case study to serve as an illustrative example of the topics covered (Chapter 13) followed by a state of the field commentary (Chapter 14). Written by researchers at the Innocence Project whose attorneys worked to clear his name, the case study in Chapter 13 describes the case of Joseph Buffey who, under significant time pressure and in the face of a large perceived sentence reduction, pleaded guilty to crimes that he did not commit. Although Mr. Buffey was 19 when he pleaded guilty, he demonstrates many of the vulnerabilities addressed in this volume, which can extend into late adolescence and emerging adulthood. His case highlights key ways in which these vulnerabilities can interact with significant pressures to self-incriminate. Chapter 14 provides an overview of the use of guilty pleas in modern criminal

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legal systems and describes the history and current directions of research concerning guilty pleas in general and regarding youth specifically. In so doing, the authors offer readers the essential background to understand and interpret the research, theoretical frameworks, and legal policies discussed in Part III of this volume. Chapter 15 examines how cognitive developmental immaturities outlined in Part I of the book manifest specifically in the guilty plea process, and how current legal protections fail to address these immaturities, making youth susceptible to suboptimal plea decision making. Chapter 16 examines the psycholegal abilities of youth and whether existing legal safeguards intended to protect defendants from making plea decisions involuntarily or without requisite understanding are sufficient for youth. This chapter outlines and compares the legal standards governing the guilty plea process in the United States, Canada, and England and Wales, along with the legal competencies that defendants are expected to demonstrate under these standards. In Chapter 17, the authors consider legal procedures specific to youth and identify limitations in the protections provided by those procedures in the context of guilty pleas. They also address ways in which well-intended, tailored procedures for youth may actually exacerbate developmental vulnerabilities. Finally, Chapter 18 examines another way in which guilty plea systems can be harmful for youth: by perpetuating and exacerbating disadvantage in the legal system, with a focus on race and socioeconomic inequality. This chapter explains the impact of cumulative disadvantage on the plea process for youth, which is preceded by other steps in the life cycle of a case (e.g., arrest, charging, detention), each of which are associated with disparate outcomes.

Part IV: Specific Actors and Other Contexts

Once youth have contact with the legal system, a range of actors can potentially shape their experiences and exacerbate or mitigate their vulnerabilities. In Part IV, academics and practitioners consider the interaction between these actors and youth in the legal system and also discuss the potential for specific actors to protect youth more effectively. Although a single section within this volume could not possibly cover all potential actors and contexts, readers will find practical coverage related to clinicians and other expert witnesses (Chapters 19 and 22), lawyers (Chapters 20 and 24), parents and appropriate adults (Chapter 21), and law enforcement (Chapters 23 and 25). Part IV also introduces two new contexts involving self-incrimination that have not been considered in depth in prior work: "admissions" in the police station that allow youth to be diverted from prosecution (Chapter 24) and confessions in schools (Chapter 25). The chapters in Part IV are particularly geared toward the roles of specific actors in youth justice and, whenever possible, offer insights and practical guidance for how youth can be better supported by these actors.

In Chapter 19, two clinical psychologists discuss three common forensic mental health assessments of youth who confess or plead guilty—and the potential impact of development and intersectional identity factors (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender) on forming clinical opinions related to evaluating youth who self-incriminate. Next, in Chapter 20, lawyers with extensive experience

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representing youth at trial and in postconviction proceedings in the United States provide practical guidance and tips for navigating the attorney–client relationship with youth and the unique challenges involved in representing youth who have confessed to crimes. While the authors of Chapter 20 practice law in the United States, the guidance offered in their chapter is intended to be broadly relevant to legal professionals working with youth clients across various legal systems. One potential challenge that attorneys representing youth face is the role that parents do (or do not) play in the legal process and decision making. Chapter 21 homes in on parents and appropriate adults in interrogation and plea contexts, showcasing the challenging and often conflicting roles that they are intended to serve and how their involvement may not meet the intended goals and assumptions of the legal system.

As research on police interrogations and false confessions has mushroomed over the past few decades, the courts have increasingly relied on expert witnesses to educate fact-finders about related phenomena. In Chapter 22, researchers who serve as expert witnesses in this area review risk factors for false confession among youth and what is currently known about the effectiveness of expert testimony in cases in which there is a disputed confession. They also present helpful guidelines on structuring reports and testimony in cases involving disputed confessions by youthful suspects and defendants. Law enforcement practice is covered in Chapter 23 with a focus on the PEACE model, an alternative interrogation approach to the accusatorial model that so commonly presents problems for youth given their developmental limitations. With decades of experience studying and training law enforcement in the PEACE model between them, the authors of this chapter cover the basics of this approach to suspect interviews that has been used for decades in the United Kingdom and the importance of taking a "child-first" approach with youth.

The final two chapters in Part IV discuss "other contexts." Chapter 24 focuses on the importance of legal representation in the police station to protect youth who are deciding whether to make an "admission" of guilt to secure an out-of-court disposal (i.e., diversionary efforts that involve handling criminal offences outside of court rather than through formal prosecution and court proceedings). This chapter draws on insight from practice in six European countries to demonstrate the need for legal representation in the police station and provides insight for legislators and public policymakers who may wish to implement similar policies and practices in their jurisdictions. Chapter 25 presents what we know about school-based interrogations and the factors that make the school context legally and socially unique and that carry specific risks for youth who are questioned as suspects in schools.

We (the three editors) conclude the volume by discussing the key insights presented in this volume and highlighting common themes and areas of consensus in the field (Chapter 26). We also identify crucial gaps in the literature that remain, and, turning to the future, we put forth urgent questions and issues that have emerged from this volume warranting further attention from researchers, practitioners, and policymakers.

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CONCLUSION

The chapters in this volume reveal the extent of the field's current knowledge concerning self-incrimination of youth, highlighting the implications of current knowledge for vulnerable youth and legal practice and policy. We acknowledge that the field has come remarkably far in a relatively short period of time. The chapters also identify significant gaps in knowledge and important avenues for future research, underscoring just how much remains to be done. To make progress, the field requires expertise from a diverse range of researchers and practitioners on a number of interdisciplinary topics, as well as people with lived experience who were involved in the legal system as suspects or defendants as youth. We hope that our present and future colleagues learn from the content these chapters comprise and heed the calls for where to go next.

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