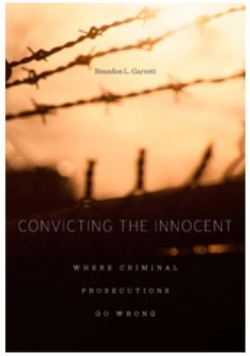
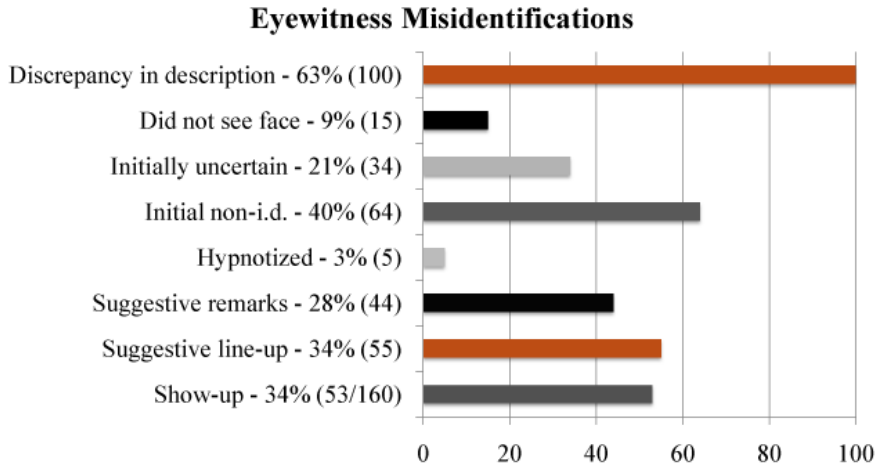


"Convicting the Innocent": Data and Materials

This library collection contains data and materials concerning the trials of the first 250 people exonerated by post-conviction DNA testing in the United States. This research collection was compiled in conjunction with a book by Brandon Garrett, "Convicting the Innocent: Where Criminal Prosecutions Go Wrong (2011), reporting the results of a study of these materials. The research pages contain data, research appendices and resources arranged by subject:

- Confessions
- Eyewitness Misidentifications
- Forensics
- Jailhouse Informants
- Defense Case at Trial
- Judging Innocence Post-Conviction
- Exoneration

Videos Related to This Research (Innocence Project Website)



The Innocence Project works to free the innocent, prevent wrongful convictions, and create fair, compassionate, and equitable systems of justice for everyone. Founded in 1992 by Barry C. Scheck and Peter J. Neufeld at the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University, the organization is now an independent nonprofit. Our work is guided by science and grounded in anti-racism.

Research Article

Sleep Deprivation and False Memories

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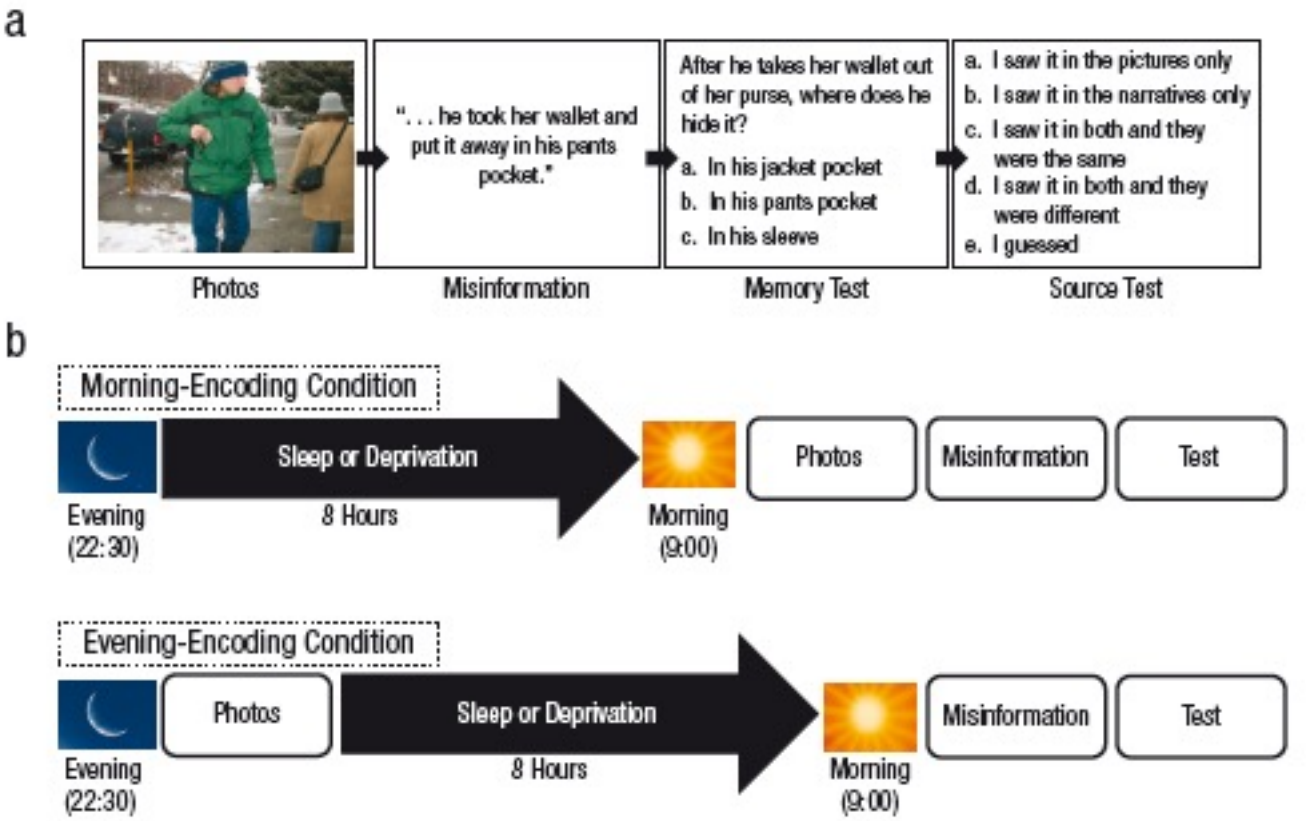

Fig. 1. Experimental procedure and design. The misinformation procedure in Experiments 1 and 2 is illustrated in (a). After viewing two sets of photographs depicting events, participants read narratives that included misinformation about the events. Later, participants took a three-alternative forced-choice test of their memory for the photographs and a source test on which they indicated where they had acquired the information they used to answer each question. In Experiment 2 (b), participants arrived at the lab in the evening to perform the misinformation procedure. Some participants completed the encoding phase (viewing photos) of the procedure in the evening, and others completed it the following morning. Within each encoding condition, some participants remained awake overnight, and others were allowed to sleep for 8 hr.

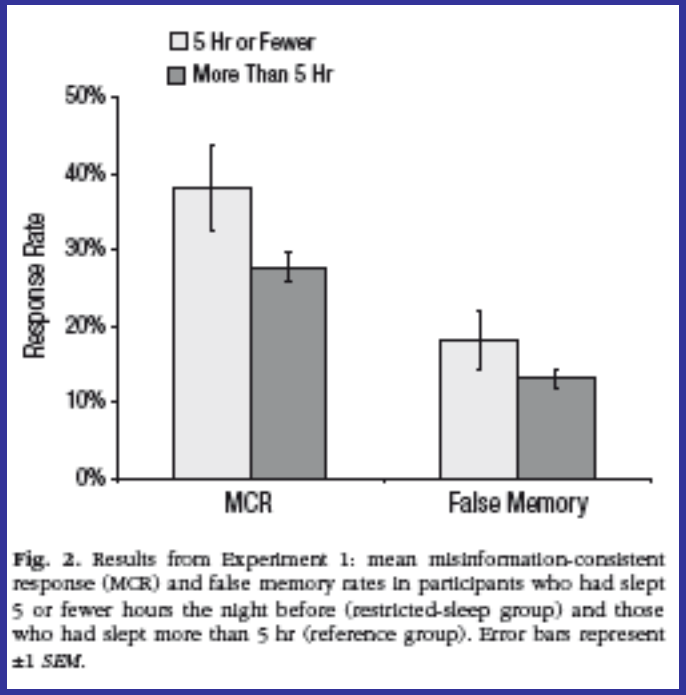

Fig. 2. Results from Experiment 1: mean misinformation-consistent response (MCR) and false memory rates in participants who had slept 5 or fewer hours the night before (restricted-sleep group) and those who had slept more than 5 hr (reference group). Error bars represent ±1 *SEM*.

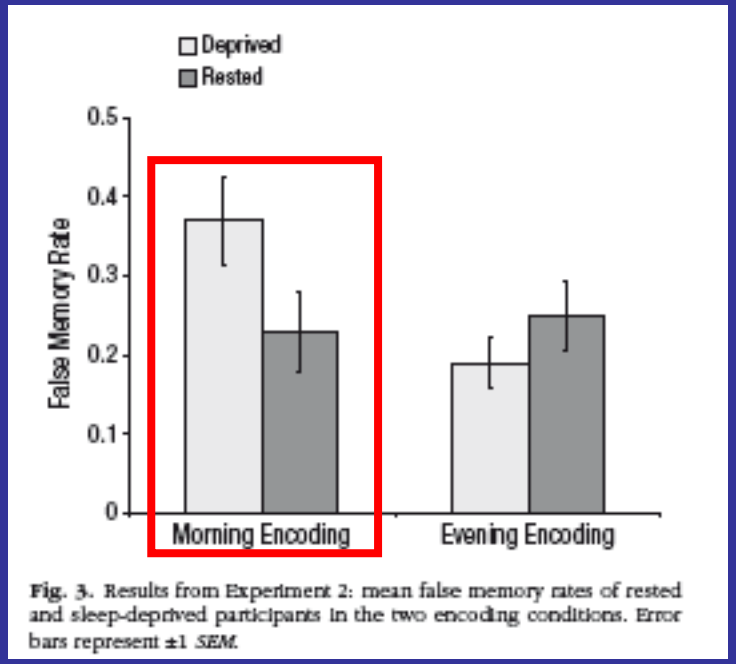

Fig. 3. Results from Experiment 2: mean false memory rates of rested and sleep-deprived participants in the two encoding conditions. Error bars represent ±1 *SEM*.

Experiment 1 provided initial evidence that restricted sleep is associated with increased false memory.

Participants who reported 5 or fewer hours of sleep the night before the experiment were more likely to report that they had witnessed a news event that they did not actually see, compared with rested participants. There was also a trend for these participants to incorporate more misleading information into their memory for visual materials.

In Experiment 2, the sleep-deprived group showed greater susceptibility to false memories relative to the rested group, but only when participants were sleep deprived during all three stages of the misinformation procedure.

Science AAAS

SHARE

Slumber protects the innocent. Researchers found it easy to extract false confessions from the sleep-deprived.

Kimberly Fenn

Feeling sleepy? You may confess to a crime you didn't commit

The New Scientist article notes several cases in which a sleep-deprived suspect was later exonerated, including Damon Thibodeaux, who was wrongly imprisoned in Louisiana for 15 years. There's also Daniel Anderson of Chicago, who spent 25 years in prison for a sleep-deprived confession. Frank Sterling served more than 18 years in a New York prison after falsely confessing to raping and killing a 74-year-old woman in 1988. His confession came after 12 straight hours of interrogation. He tried to explain what he was going through to New York magazine in 2010: "They just wore me down . . . I was just so tired. Remember, I hadn't had any sleep since about 2:30 Tuesday night . . ."It's like, 'Come on, guys, I'm tired—what do you want me to do, just confess to it?' It's like, yeah—I wanted to get it over with, get home, and get some sleep . . . Eighteen years and nine months later, I finally get to go home."

Sleep deprivation and false confessions

Steven J. Frenda[a], Shari R. Berkowitz[b], Elizabeth F. Loftus[c,d,*,1], and Kimberly M. Fenn[e]

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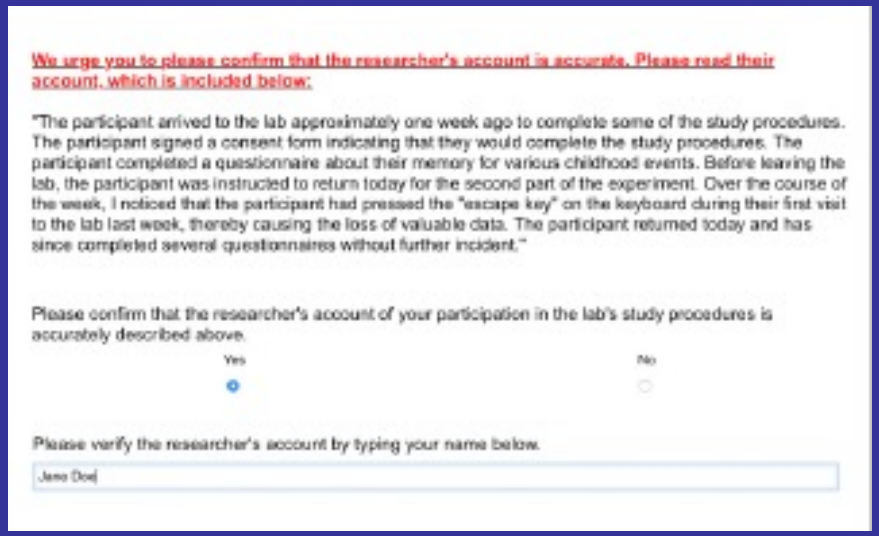
Table 1. Percentages (and raw numbers) of rested and sleep-deprived (TSD) participants who signed the statement containing a false admission of wrongdoing after the first request (left side) and both requests (right side)

False admission (first request)?	Rested	TSD	False admission (both requests)?	Rested	TSD
Yes	18% (8)	50% (22)	Yes	38.6% (17)	68.2% (30)
Refused	82% (36)	50% (22)	Refused	61.4% (27)	31.8% (14)
Total	100% (44)	100% (44)	Total	100% (44)	100% (44)



We urge you to please confirm that the researcher's account is accurate. Please read their account, which is included below:

"The participant arrived to the lab approximately one week ago to complete some of the study procedures. The participant signed a consent form indicating that they would complete the study procedures. The participant completed a questionnaire about their memory for various childhood events. Before leaving the lab, the participant was instructed to return today for the second part of the experiment. Over the course of the week, I noticed that the participant had pressed the "escape key" on the keyboard during their first visit to the lab last week, thereby causing the loss of valuable data. The participant returned today and has since completed several questionnaires without further incident."

Please confirm that the researcher's account of your participation in the lab's study procedures is accurately described above.

Yes ○ No ○

Please verify the researcher's account by typing your name below.

Jane Doe

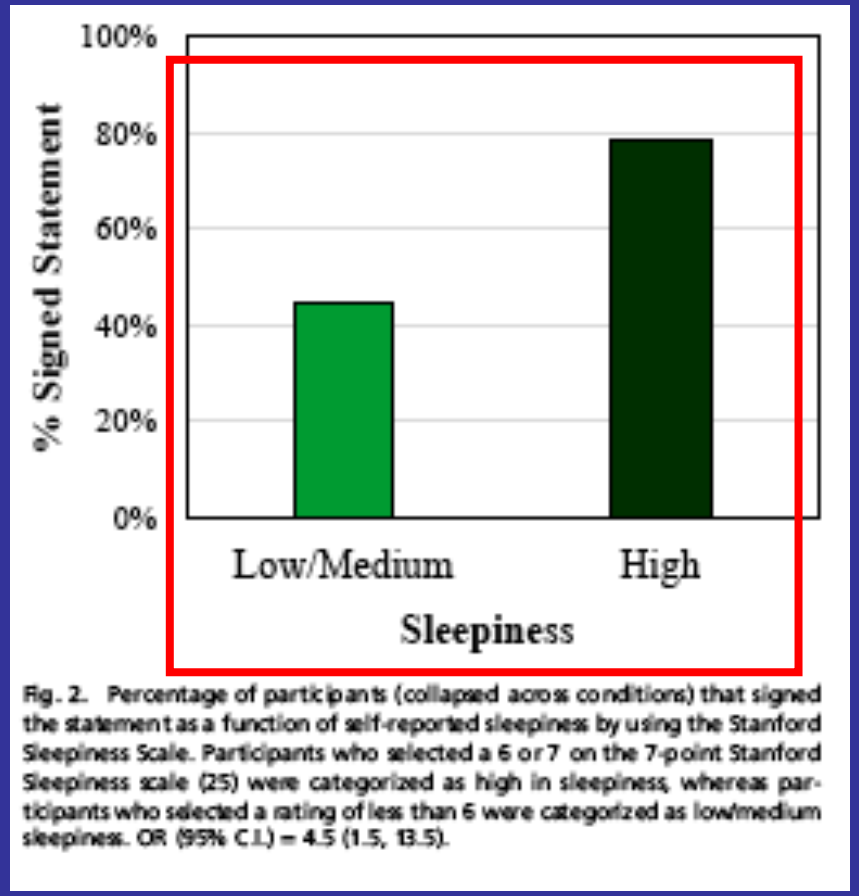


Fig. 2. Percentage of participants (collapsed across conditions) that signed the statement as a function of self-reported sleepiness by using the Stanford Sleepiness Scale. Participants who selected a 6 or 7 on the 7-point Stanford Sleepiness scale (25) were categorized as high in sleepiness, whereas participants who selected a rating of less than 6 were categorized as low/medium sleepiness. OR (95% C.I.) = 4.5 (1.5, 13.5).

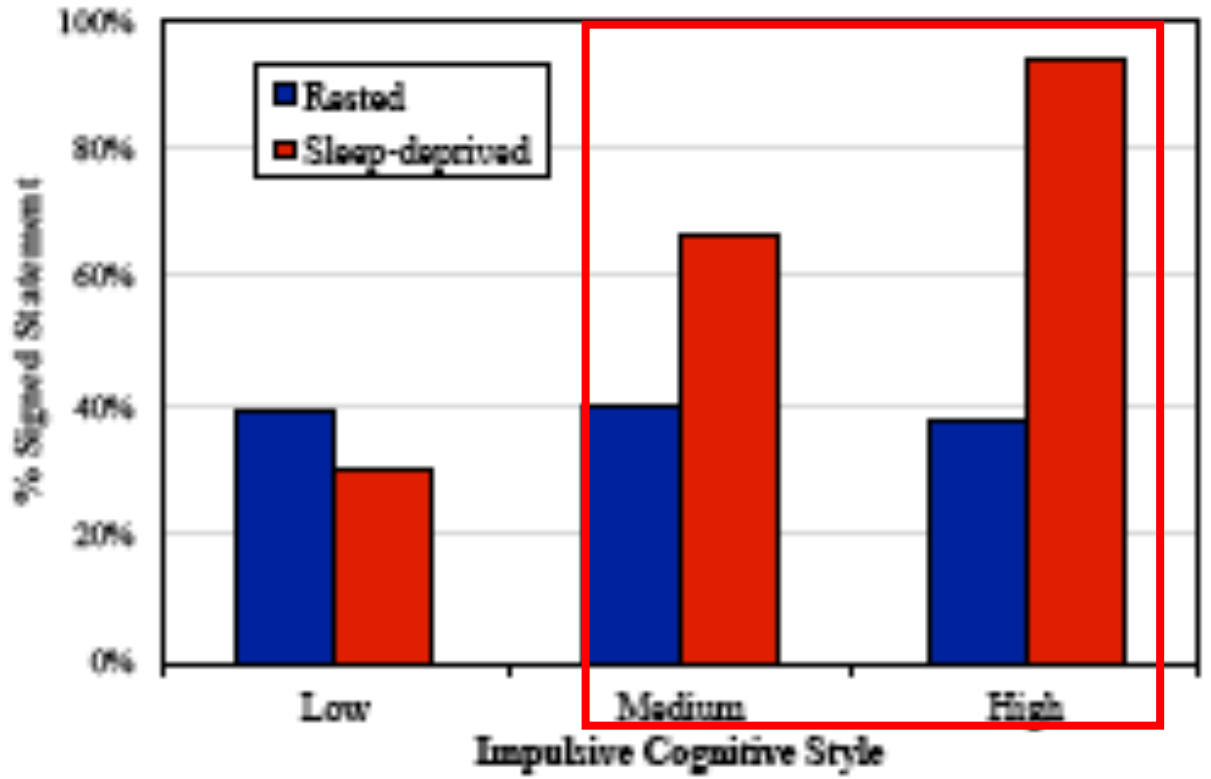
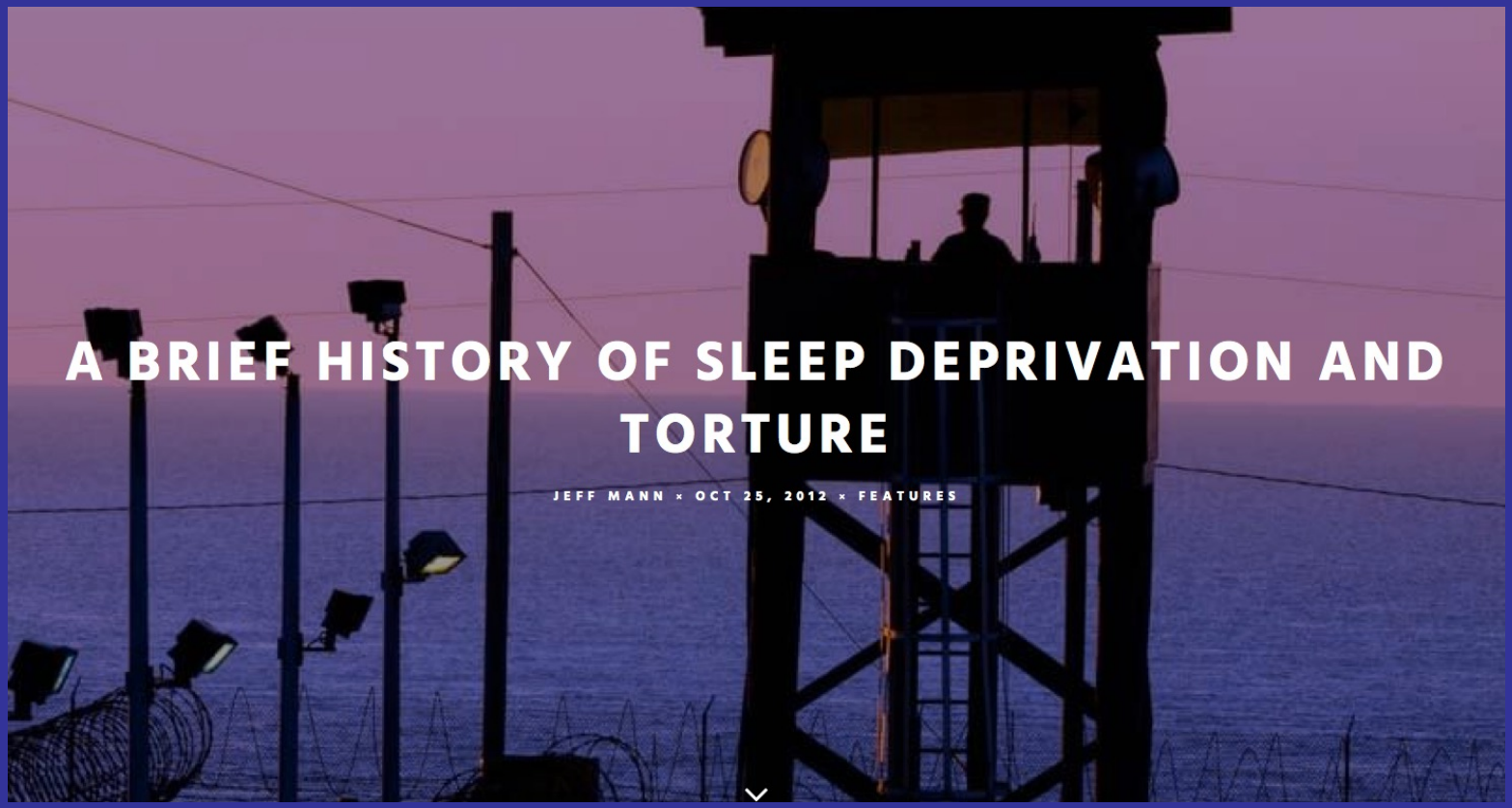


Fig. 1. Percentage of participants that signed the statement following both requests as a function of scores on the CRT.

Comunque, l'effetto della deprivazione venne anche modulato (i.e., influenzato) da aspetti individuali come la tendenza risposte impulsive

Significance

False confessions occur surprisingly frequently in the context of interrogations and criminal investigations. Indeed, false confessions are thought to account for approximately 15–25% of wrongful convictions in the United States. Here we demonstrate that sleep deprivation increases the likelihood that a person will falsely confess to wrongdoing that never occurred. Furthermore, our data suggest that it may be possible to identify certain individuals who are especially likely to falsely confess while sleep deprived. The present research is a crucial step toward understanding the role of sleep deprivation in the problem of false confession and, in turn, raises complex questions about the use of sleep deprivation in the interrogation of innocent and guilty suspects.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION AND TORTURE

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