Race, Interrogation, and the Perception of Guilt

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Race remains a socially powerful characteristic that can often influence people’s perception, judgment, and decision-making. Recent research on the influence of race in the area of criminal justice indicates that, contrary to any assumption that the criminal justice has become color blind, race can still influence decision-making (Banks, Eberhad, & Ross, 2008). Well-entrenched beliefs about race continue to influence decision-making by jurors and judges.

The stereotype of African-American criminality would certainly qualify as well-entrenched, and promote racial biases. Eberhad, Goff, Purdie, and Davies (2004) examined the psychological association between race and criminality. In the study, the researchers randomly exposed participants to either the condition with only Black faces or the condition with only White faces and asked simply, “Who looks more criminal?” The results confirmed the existence of the relevant stereotype. The participants viewed more Black faces than White faces as criminal, and in addition viewed Black faces rated as most stereotypically or prototypically black (e.g., faces with thick lips, dark skin, or wide nose) as the most criminal of all.

Eberhad and his colleagues (2004) also examined how the stereotypic association between African-Americans and criminality would operate within the context of the criminal justice system. Specifically, the researchers examined whether prompting people to think about crime makes them more likely to visually attend to or focus on Black people. Eberhad and colleagues prompted half of the participants to think about crime by subjecting them to a “subliminal priming” procedure that involved the presentation of line drawings of objects associated with violent crime (e.g., knives, handcuffs, and guns). These participants, all of whom were White, were exposed to the crime images so quickly that they were not able to consciously
recognize them. The other half of the participants, who were in the control condition, were subliminally exposed to a “dummy” image that consisted of jumbled patches from each crime-relevant line drawing. All participants were then shown a Black face and a White face simultaneously. As predicted, the participants who had been primed to think about crime looked at the Black face more than those participants in the control condition.

To study the potential effect of race on decision-making, social psychological researchers have conducted research examining the potential influence of race on research participants’ decisions about whether to “shoot” and whether a person can be deemed as a potential “suspect” (Correll, Park, Judd, & Wittenbrink, 2002; Greenwald, Oakes, & Hoffman, 2003; Plant & Peruche, 2005). The studies typically use a videogame simulation in which study participants are presented with a series of Black or White men who are either “armed” (holding a gun) or “unarmed” (holding a harmless object such as a wallet or cell phone). The participants were instructed to shoot only if the man in the image is armed. Participants made the fastest and most accurate decisions when deciding to shoot armed Black men and unarmed White men (Correll et al., 2002). More specifically, the decision to shoot an armed target was made more quickly and accurately if that target happened to be African-American rather than White, and the decision not to shoot an unarmed target was made more quickly and accurately if the target happened to be White rather than African-American. These results attest to the potential consequences of racial stereotypes that associate Black people with threats of violence.

From the studies mentioned heretofore, it is can be inferred that more likely than not, the race of a defendant is likely to affect how he or she is perceived. Specifically, Black defendants, more than White defendants, are likely to start out with a disadvantage at trial because of the
racial stereotypes that associate Black people with criminality. It is conceivable that this stereotype can influence the perception of guilt of a defendant.

Most research on the topic of race and law enforcement examines the race of the criminal defendant and tends to overlook the race of the police investigators. Black male officers may face unique challenges in their profession because of racial stereotypes regarding aggression. In other words, their professional conduct and interactions with criminals are likely to be judged through the lens of these stereotypes. For example, it is possible that the stereotype that Black men are more likely to be violent and hostile may affect people’s views about socially appropriate conduct for a Black officer.

In the context of interrogations, the race of both the investigator and the suspect may influence how an independent juror perceives guilt of the suspect. Specifically, Black and White interrogators may be perceived differently when they are behaving in an angry as opposed to a more cooperative manner. For example, during a harsh interrogation session where both the Black and the White interrogator exhibit angry behavior, it is likely that the perception of the Black interrogator would be more negative than the perception of the White Interrogator. Because of the racial stereotype regarding hostility, people have greater expectations for hostility in a Black interrogator than in a White interrogator. Therefore, the same harsh interrogation techniques are more likely to be interpreted as hostile, unprofessional, and “over the top” when they are performed by a Black interrogator than when they are performed by a White interrogator. We term this as “the angry Black man” phenomenon. This refers to the idea that racially sensitive people are more likely to perceive a Black person as behaving too angry and over the top when engaged in a confrontational situation. It follows then that a Black officer’s
race may more likely play a dominant role in how people perceive his/her professional conduct and interactions with criminal suspects compared to a White officer.

[Need a transition to the research on interrogation, perhaps starting with the distinction between harsh and mild interrogation (“As mentioned above, police interrogations vary in their severity and are often classified into two types: mild and severe…”). Maybe also use a section heading (“Interrogations”)?] Many criminal cases have the probability of resolution either by means of confession from the guilty individual, or upon the basis of solid information derived from interrogation sessions (Inbau, Reid & Buckley, 1986). During legal proceedings, jurors may be presented with audio or video tapes of interrogation sessions as part of evidence, especially when there was a confession. Although they share the common objective of information gathering, interrogations differ tremendously in style. Considering the stakes, it is very important that information obtained by the police during interrogations is legal and accurate to the largest extent possible. [This last paragraph may not be necessary. Could delete it.]

Harshness of Interrogation

Over the last hundred years, the techniques used in interrogations to elicit a confession have become less physical and more psychological in nature (Kassin & McNall, 1991). In the early decades of the 20th century, the rules of interrogation were relatively simple: if you could force it out of the suspect, you can use it against him. The infamous “third degree” prevalent in the era’s interrogation sessions represented an epitome of cop brutality in the name of eliciting confession. In Brown v. Mississippi (February 17, 1936), a White planter was murdered and three Black men were charged with the murder. The primary evidence for the murder was the confessions of the suspects. Later in the case the defense argued that the suspects only confessed
under police brutality and torture. Even though there was evidence that police brutalized the suspects in order to elicit confessions, the evidence was still allowed in the courtroom, and the jury convicted the three men of murder and sentenced them to be hanged. The Supreme Court soon reversed the sentence as it violated the Fourteenth Amendment’s guarantee of due process. As a result of Brown v. Mississippi, the police saw that it was necessary to change interrogation style. The Supreme Court’s landmark ruling in Brown v. Mississippi (February 17, 1936) was the first in a line of decisions that gradually mapped the legal terrain in the interrogation room (Leo, 2004). The ruling stated that any confession the police elicited from the suspect through excessive force was inadmissible in the court room, as it violated the Due Process Clause of the U.S. Constitution. The change to more psychological interrogation strategies is reflected in contemporary police interrogation training manuals, such as the popular Criminal Interrogation and Confessions (Inbau, Reid, Buckley, & Jayne, 2001), which offers a variety of recommendations for obtaining legally admissible confessions.

Confessions play an important role in the criminal justice system. They often lead to plea bargains or convictions in cases that would otherwise be difficult to prosecute. Accordingly, they can save courts, and prosecutor's offices, a lot of time and money (Gudjonsson, 1992). Because many confessions occur during interrogation, most states now require that interrogation sessions are recorded. For example, in 1985, in Stephan v. State of Alaska, the Alaska Supreme Court required that, in places of detention, all custodial interrogations of individuals suspected of any major crime be electronically recorded. In the court room, an audiotape of an interrogation can be tendered as evidence in cases where the defendant has confessed, and then changes his mind to argue his innocence. Conversely, the audiotape can exonerate a suspect if the session appeared overtly harsh and the suspect appears to have been placed under undue pressure to confess, thus
leading to doubts concerning the authenticity of the confession. It also allows judges and jurors to see for themselves what actually transpired, thus rendering them more confident in reaching a decision. The accuracy and courtroom admissibility of a confession can be influenced by several factors including the interrogation technique or style of the interrogator.

Observational studies of police interrogations have revealed that psychologically manipulative tactics, termed maximization and minimization techniques, are commonly used in modern-day police practice (Leo, 2004). Kassin and McNall (1991) summarized interrogation strategies as falling into two general categories: maximization and minimization. Maximization strategies are usually harsh and meant to intimidate the suspect by using tactics such as making false claims about evidence and exaggerating the seriousness of the charges. The techniques include harsh rhetoric and verbal abuses and gestures that are aimed at putting the suspect under pressure to confess. Maximization techniques are used when an interrogator intends to use a harsh interrogation style with the suspect. Minimization strategies give the suspect a false sense of security using sympathy, flattery, offering legal or moral face-saving excuses for actions, conceptualizing actions as accidental, blaming the victim and underplaying the seriousness of the charges. Research demonstrates that minimization techniques cajole individuals into believing that they will receive leniency for confessing, even when it is not explicitly promised (Kassin & McNall, 1991). Minimization techniques are not harsh physically or verbally and are used when the interrogator does want to use a harsh style with the suspect.

In general, maximization techniques are more likely to lead to false confessions as compared to minimization techniques (Klaver, Lee & Rose, 2008). It is plausible that confessions obtained using minimization techniques are more likely to be perceived as genuine because the suspect chose to tell the truth on his own despite being aware of the consequences.
Interrogation techniques therefore can determine whether a confession is perceived as believable and the suspect is deemed either guilty or not guilty based on this perception.

The interrogation technique will dictate the type of behavior that is exhibited by the interrogator. During harsh interrogations, interrogators are likely to exhibit angry behavior, which in turn brings racial stereotypes regarding aggression into play. For example, jurors who perceive the interrogator as being too angry and over the top may sympathize with the suspect or distrust the interrogator, finding the suspect less guilty. In mild interrogation sessions, interrogators deliberately avoid angry behavior, thereby minimizing the effects of racial stereotypes on aggression. Because the interaction is less confrontational in the mild interrogation session, there is little risk that the interrogator will be perceived as being too angry. We expect therefore that the perception of a suspect’s guilt would differ in both conditions.

Present Study

For this study, race is confined to only Black and White. Subjects are presented with an audiotape of a murder suspect being interrogated, as well as a picture of either a White or Black interrogator and a White or Black suspect. There are eight interrogation session conditions which cross the race of the interrogator (Black or White) with the race of the suspect (Black or White) and interrogation style (mild or harsh). These three variables are the independent variables. The main dependent variable is degree of guilt perceived about the suspect by the subject. We hypothesized that the race of the interrogator (Black or White) and the interrogation style (mild or harsh) will influence an independent juror’s perception of guilt of a suspect. In the Black interrogator - harsh interrogation condition, we expect that perceived guilt of the suspect to be lowest. In the white interrogator – mild interrogation condition, we expect that perceived
guilt of the suspect to be highest. In both the White interrogator – harsh interrogation condition and the Black interrogator – mild interrogation condition we expect that perceived guilt of the suspect will be medium in comparison to the highest and lowest perceptions of guilt.

Method

Participants

There were a total of 90 participants included in the study. All of the participants volunteered for this experiment. Ages ranged from 18-61, the mean age of participants was 25.4 years old. In the study were 35 men and 55 women. Races of participants included; White, African American, Hispanic, Afro-Caribbean, Italian, and Native-American. All participants in the study had at least a high school diploma.

Materials

Audio taped interrogation sessions were used in this experiment. There were eight different audio passages. All audio passages used approximately the same script and were 2 minutes in length. The script used was developed by the researchers based on actual interrogations from the television series “The First 48.” Audio passages were read by two actors playing the roles of the interrogator and the suspect and recorded on a Sony Digital tape recorder. The eight different audio tapes included crossing the race of the interrogators with the race of the suspects and interrogation styles. Also used in the experiment were neutral facial photos of both black and white men.

In the experiment, two questionnaires were used. The first questionnaire included demographic information; sex, race, age, and educational background. The second questionnaire included questions centered on the issues of trust of suspect, suspiciousness of suspect, how
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intimidating the interrogator was, anger of interrogator, aggressiveness of interrogator, and fear levels of the suspect. The second questionnaire included questions that were used as manipulation checks. One question required the participant to answer whether the suspect was perceived as guilty or not guilty, which was a scaled answer. Other manipulation checks included questions that were designed to measure whether participants correctly perceived the level of harshness. Included on the second questionnaire were questions that were based upon perceptions of interrogator and suspect in order to determine why the participants answered the way that they did in the questionnaires. Four questions were used to assess the perception of the interrogator: how harsh was the interrogator, how angry was the interrogator, how out of control was the interrogator, and how intimidating was the interrogator. Four questions were used to assess the perception of the suspect: how guilty was the suspect, how suspicious was the suspect, how trustworthy was the suspect, and how scared was the suspect.

Also used in the experiment was McConahay’s Modern Racism Scale (1986) that originally included 6 questions. The Modern Racism Scale was developed to measure subtle racism as well as overt racism. Although recent research has found the modern racism scale measures explicit attitudes toward races; and this scale is not designed to measure implicit or unconscious attitudes (Migetz, 2004). Due to this inadequacy, researchers have added additional questions to the questionnaire in order to gain data regarding implicit attitudes. The scale is used to measure participant racism.

Procedure

The experiment was conducted online. Participants visiting a popular site of online psychology experiments who selected this study were first directed to an informed consent page
and were then prompted to run a test audio file so that their volume could be adjusted accordingly. Once the test trial was complete, the participant clicked a link to begin the experiment. The participant was to first answer a questionnaire of basic demographic information.

After the participant filled out the first questionnaire, they were to proceed to the next phase of the experiment by clicking on the button labeled “next.” The directions on screen then explained they would be listening to an interrogation session. Each participant was randomly assigned to listen to one of the eight possible interrogation sessions, which lasted for approximately two minutes. After listening to the audio, participants completed a second questionnaire created by the researchers. After filling out the second questionnaire the participant completed the Modern Racism Scale. After completing the modern racism scale the participants were directed to a debriefing page.

Results

*Interrogator Hostility and Reliability*

Researchers defined hostility as a combination of the four questions measuring the participant’s perception of the interrogator’s demeanor. The four questions consisted of items measuring the participant’s perception of how harsh the interrogator came across, how angry he seemed, how out of control his behavior appeared, and how intimidating he came across. To test the reliability of questions used to assess interrogator hostility, researchers used the Cronbach’s α statistic. The four questions measuring interrogator hostility produced $\alpha = .89$. 

Figure 1 represents the predicted results regarding the participant’s perception of the interrogator’s hostility. In line with the hypothesis of the study, the researchers predicted that in the harsh condition, the Black interrogator would be rated as being more hostile than the White interrogator. Researchers predicted that there would be little or no difference across race in the mild condition. The actual results, as Figure 2 shows, diverge from the predicted pattern the researchers expected.

Figure 1: Expected ratings of interrogator hostility across race and interrogation style conditions.

Figure 2: Actual ratings of interrogator hostility across race and interrogation style conditions.
A 2 X 2 X 2 between subjects ANOVA was used to test for main effects and interactions across race of interrogator, race of suspect, and harshness. As evident from Figure 2, a 2 X 2 ANOVA of interrogator race by harshness yielded a significant main effect for harshness. There was a main effect of harshness on interrogator hostility such that participants who were exposed to the harsh condition rated the interrogator as more hostile than those exposed to the mild condition, \( F(1,81)=51.31, p<.001 \). The interaction between harshness and race of interrogator was not significant \((p>.6)\).

Researchers also ran a regression with dummy-coded variables for interrogator race, suspect race, and harshness, also added was the Modern Racism Scale and all interactions. The only significant term in that regression was for harshness, \( p < .01 \). Therefore, the results did not vary by the Modern Racism of respondents.

Discussion

The study by Bargh, Chen, and Burrows (1996) revealed the existence of a stereotype linking Black males with hostility. In line with that finding, the researchers of the present study reasoned that people are more likely to expect hostility from a black man than a white man. The results however suggest that participants perceived the White interrogator as more hostile. There are some plausible explanations for this possibility. Firstly, holding the “Angry black man” phenomenon to be true would mean that participants likely possess pre-existing biases or notions of hostility with regards to race. Assuming this to be correct, it is therefore likely that that the ratings of harshness were in some way influenced by these biases, and may therefore have been non-objective in the truest sense. The point here is that expectations for hostility may differ according to the hostile person’s race. In other words, the threshold required to appear harsh is
likely different for Blacks than it is for Whites. For instance, on a “harshness scale” of 1 to 10 in increasing harshness order, a score of 7 on that scale for a White person may not necessarily be the same as a perceived 7 for a Black person on the same scale. Following that logic, we can postulate that it would take significantly greater show of hostility for the Black man to appear clearly hostile than it would for the White man. For the White man, even a slight show of hostility is likely to stand out due to the inexistence of a similar stereotype linking White men to hostility.

One way future research can tackle the aforementioned issue is to create a third level of hostility, in which both the Black and White interrogators appear extremely hostile in ways clearly distinguishable in intensity from the present study’s harsh interrogation condition. This way, there is a greater likelihood that the hostility of the Black interrogator would be very apparent. Having this new level of harshness would increase the chances that the Black actor would cross that threshold for harshness.

Another possible obstacle to the study could be the possibility that participants may have discovered the hypothesis and goal of the study. If this happened, it is likely that participants with knowledge that researchers were testing these stereotypes would overcompensate harshness ratings against the White interrogator in order not to appear to conform to the stereotypes.

Although the present study did not succeed at demonstrating the influence of race on perceptions of hostility, race is without doubt a prevalent and powerful social characteristic that influence people’s perceptions and actions. In situations where researchers successfully activate racial stereotypes, the likelihood that biases would affect perceptions and actions would not just be due to chance.
References


Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

This research is being conducted by Meredith Elliott and Seyram Kekessie, senior students in Psychology at Hanover College. The experiment in which you are asked to participate is designed to examine how interrogation influences guilt. You will listen to a brief clip of an interrogation session. After the clip, you will be asked to answer some questions about what you heard in the audio clip. After you finish answering questions about the audio clip, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire about the interrogator and the suspect. Finally, you will be asked a few demographic questions. After you have finished answering all the questions, you will be debriefed. The entire experiment will not take more than 30 minutes. There are no known risks involved in being in this study, beyond those of everyday life. The information you provide during the experiment is completely anonymous; at no time will your name be associated with the responses you give. If you have any questions about what you will be doing in the study or about the study itself, feel free to ask researchers.

If you have any questions after the study, please contact Meredith Elliott or Seyram Kekessie at elliottme@hanover.edu or kekessies@hanover.edu. By clicking on the link below, I acknowledge that I am participating in this study of my own free will. I understand that I may refuse to participate or stop participating at any time. If I wish, I may print a copy of this consent form.
Appendix B

Questionnaire

Part 1

Suspect
1. What is the race of the suspect?
2. How guilty is the suspect?
3. How suspicious was the suspect?
4. How trustworthy was the suspect?
5. How scared was the suspect?
6. What age was the suspect?
7. How educated was the suspect?

Interrogator
8. How harsh was the interrogator?
9. What is the race of the interrogator?
10. How angry was the interrogator?
11. How out of control was the interrogator?
12. How intimidating was the interrogator?
13. What is the age of the interrogator?
14. How educated was the interrogator?

Part 2

Please mark the response that most accurately represents your views.

15. Over the past few years, Blacks have gotten more economically than they deserve.

16. Over the past few years, the government and news media have
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<td>17.</td>
<td>It is easy to understand the anger of Black people in America.</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Discrimination against Blacks is no longer a problem in the United States.</td>
</tr>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Blacks are getting too demanding in their push for equal rights.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Blacks should not push themselves where they are not wanted.</td>
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</tbody>
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**Part 3**
21. Are you
22. What is your age in years?
23. What is your ethnicity?
24. What level best describes your education?
25. In what country were you born?
26. In what country do you now reside?
27. How long have you resided in this country?

Thank you for participating in this study.
Please feel free to leave comments for the researchers in the text box below.

When you are satisfied with your answers, please click the "finished" button below.
Appendix C

**Interrogation Session – Harsh Condition**

**Black Interrogator and Black Suspect**

Interrogator: We’re working on a murder that happened out there today

Suspect: I don’t know anything about any murder. I don’t know anything about anything. Only thing I know, the dude who was killed was Mike.

I: When’s the last time you saw Mike?

S: At St. Elmo. I spoke to him, he spoke to me, I left.

I: What were you all arguing about, man?

S: We were not arguing sir.

I: We have it on video. He tells you, “I got my pistol with me. You make sure you got yours (yelling). The person who was last seen in a verbal altercation with the victim prior to his death was you. (banging on the table, also yelling).

S: When Mike pushes the door open and said, “Shit, I got mine,” he didn’t show me no pistol. He was just, “I got mine. You need to have yours.” I don’t know anything about the shooting. I was gone.

I: We saw you there! (Bang on table for emphasis). If you don’t tell us what you know your gonna get locked up as soon as I walk out that door. I got solid evidence that will hold up in court, you are gonna be gone for a long long time.

S: Damn. This is some fucked up shit. (May cut if seems out of place).

**Black Interrogator and White Suspect**
Interrogator: We’re working on a murder that happened out there today.

Suspect: I don’t know anything about a murder. I don’t know anything at all. The only thing I know is the man who was killed was Jacob.

I: When’s the last time you saw Jacob?

S: At St. Elmo. I spoke to him, he spoke to me, and then I left.

I: What were you all arguing about, man?

S: We were not arguing sir.

I: We have it on video. He tells you, “I got my pistol with me. You make sure you got yours (yelling). The person who was last seen in a verbal altercation with the victim prior to his death was you. (banging on the table, also yelling).

S: When Jacob pushed the door open and said, “Shit, I got mine,” he didn’t show me a pistol. He just said, “I got mine. You need to have yours.” I don’t know anything about the shooting. I was gone.

I: We saw you there! (Bang on table for emphasis). If you don’t tell us what you know your gonna get locked up as soon as I walk out that door. I got solid evidence that will hold up in court, you are gonna be gone for a long long time.

S: Damn. This is some fucked up stuff. (May cut if seems out of place).

**White Interrogator and Black Suspect**

Interrogator: We’re working on a murder that happened out there today.

Suspect: I don’t know anything about any murder. I don’t know anything about anything. Only thing I know, the dude who was killed was Mike.

I: When’s the last time you saw Mike?

S: At St. Elmo. I spoke to him, he spoke to me, I left.

I: What were you arguing about?

S: We were not arguing sir.
White Interrogator and White Suspect

Interrogator: We’re working on a murder that happened out there today.

Suspect: I don’t know anything about a murder. I don’t know anything at all. The only thing I know is the man who was killed was Jacob.

I: When’s the last time you saw Jacob?

S: At St. Elmo. I spoke to him, he spoke to me, and then I left.

I: What we you arguing about?

S: We were not arguing sir.

I: We have it on video. He tells you, “I got my pistol with me. You make sure you got yours (yelling). The person who was last seen in a verbal altercation with the victim prior to his death was you. (banging on the table, also yelling).

S: When Jacob pushed the door open and said, “Shit, I got mine,” he didn’t show me a pistol. He just said, “I got mine. You need to have yours.” I don’t know anything about the shooting. I was gone.

I: We saw you there! (Bang on table for emphasis). If you don’t tell us what you know your going to get locked up as soon as I walk out that door. I have solid evidence that will hold up in court, you are going be gone for a long long time.

S: Damn. This is some fucked up shit. (May cut if seems out of place).
Interrogation Session – Mild

Black Interrogator and Black Suspect

Interrogator: We’re working on a murder that happened out there today. Do you know anything about that? If you do you could be really helping us out if you could tell us what you know.

Suspect: I don’t know anything about a murder. I don’t know anything about anything. Only thing I know, the dude who got killed was Mike.

Interrogator: When’s the last time you seen Mike?

S: At St. Elmo. I spoke to him, he spoke to me, I left.

I: What were you all arguing about, man?

S: We were not arguing sir.

I: Well, we have you on video. He tells you, “I got my pistol with me. You make sure you got yours. From this evidence it seems that the person who was last seen in a verbal altercation with the victim prior to his death was you.

S: When Mike pushes the door open and said, “Shit, I got mine,” he didn’t show me no pistol. He was just, “I got mine. You need to have yours.” I don’t know nothing about the shooting. I was gone.

I: We saw you there. You would really be helping yourself out if you just told us what’s up. Think about the family of that dead man, you want his kids to never know what happened to their dad. And listen, I know it’s a rough world out there, you gotta make your own way, and sometimes people foul it up. Everyone makes mistakes, but you gotta man up.

S: Damn. This is some fucked up stuff. (May cut this if seems out of place).

Black Interrogator and White Suspect

Interrogator: We’re working on a murder that happened out there today. Do you know anything about that? If you do you could be really helping us out if you could tell us what you know.

Suspect: I don’t know anything about a murder. I don’t know anything at all. Only thing I do know is the guy who was killed was Jacob.

Interrogator: When’s the last time you saw Jacob?

S: At St. Elmo. I spoke to him, he spoke to me, and I left.
I: What were you all arguing about, man?

S: We were not arguing sir.

I: Well, we have you on video. He tells you, “I got my pistol with me. You make sure you got yours. From this evidence it seems that the person who was last seen in a verbal altercation with the victim prior to his death was you.

S: When Jacob pushed the door open and said, “Shit, I got mine,” he didn’t show me a pistol. He just said, “I got mine. You need to have yours.” I don’t know anything about the shooting. I was gone.

I: We saw you there. You would really be helping yourself out if you just told us what’s up. Think about the family of that dead man, you want his kids to never know what happened to their dad. And listen, I know it’s a rough world out there, you gotta make your own way, and sometimes people foul it up. Everyone makes mistakes, but you gotta man up.

S: Damn. This is some messed up stuff. (May cut if seems out of place).

White Interrogator and Black Suspect

Interrogator: We’re working on a murder that happened out there today. Do you know anything about that? If you do you could be really helping us out if you could tell us what you know.

Suspect: I don’t know anything about any murder. I don’t know anything about anthing. Only thing I know, the dude who was killed was Mike.

Interrogator: When was the last time you saw Mike?

S: At St. Elmo. I spoke to him, he spoke to me, I left.

I: What were you arguing about?

S: We were not arguing sir.

I: Well, we have you on video. He tells you, “I got my pistol with me. You make sure you got yours. From this evidence it seems that the person who was last seen in a verbal altercation with the victim prior to his death was you.

S: When Mike pushes the door open and said, “Shit, I got mine,” he didn’t show me no pistol. He was just, “I got mine. You need to have yours.” I don’t know anything about the shooting. I was gone.
I: We saw you there. You would really be helping yourself out if you just told us what’s up. Think about the family of that dead man, you want his kids to never know what happened to their dad. And listen, I know it’s a rough world out there, you have make your own way, and sometimes people mess up. Everyone makes mistakes, but you need to act like a man.

S: Damn. This is some fucked up shit. (May cut if seems out of place).

White Interrogator and White Suspect

Interrogator: We’re working on a murder that happened today. Do you know anything about that? If you do you could be really helping us out if you could tell us what you know.

Suspect: I don’t know anything about a murder. I don’t know anything at all. Only thing I do know is the guy who was killed was Jacob.

Interrogator: When’s the last time you saw Jacob?

S: At St. Elmo. I spoke to him, he spoke to me, and I left.

I: What were you arguing about?

S: We were not arguing sir.

I: Well, we have you on video. He tells you, “I got my pistol with me. You make sure you got yours. From this evidence it seems that the person who was last seen in a verbal altercation with the victim prior to his death was you.

S: When Jacob pushed the door open and said, “Shit, I got mine,” he didn’t show me a pistol. He just said, “I got mine. You need to have yours.” I don’t know anything about the shooting. I was gone.

I: We saw you there. You would really be helping yourself out if you just told us what you know. Think about the family of that dead man, you want his kids to never know what happened to their dad. And listen, I know it’s a rough world out there, you have to make your own way, and sometimes people mess up. Everyone makes mistakes, but you need to be a man.

S: Damn. This is some messed up stuff. (May cut if seems out of place).