



# **Suspect Suggestibility During Police Interrogations**

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**Does the threat of  
interrogation mobilize  
suspects ability to  
cope?**

# Stress and Coping Framework

- Stress is adaptive
  - > Signals the presences of a threat
  - > Mobilizes coping response
- Negative effects in long-term

# Mobilization

- A general response to a threat
- Signs of mobilization
  - > Physiological arousal
  - > Defensive emotions
  - > Goal directed behaviors
  - > Attention and Memory
  - > Resistance to Interrogative Influence



**Suggestibility**

# Predictions

- An active stress response mobilizes suspects to resist interrogative influence
- Reduces suspects suggestibility

# Method

- Confederate
- Logic problems: 2 individual, 2 team

	Guilty	Innocent
Accused	73	82
Not Accused	80	81

# Measures

- Mobilization
- Suggestibility



# Suggestibility Measure

- Read a short story about a couple helping a boy with a runaway bike
- 15 leading questions

# Does the treat of police interrogation mobilize suspects ability to cope?

- Yes
- Heart rate, systolic blood pressure, and diastolic blood pressure

# Does the threat increase resistance during the early phases of interrogation?

- Yield 1
- Yield 2
- Shift

# Summary

- Does the threat of interrogation mobilize suspects ability to cope?
- Results support a biphasic pattern

**Questions?**