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PERSKE'S LIST: False Confessions from 75 Persons with "Intellectual Disabilities"

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This list names 75 "persons with "intellectual disabilities" who were coerced into confessing to major felonies they did not commit.

65 of them have been exonerated.

29 of them have been exonerated by DNA tests.

5 are now headed for court hearings, thanks to "Innocence Project" groups.

5 of them (Joe Arridy, Jerome Bowden, Earl Correll, Girvies Davis, Barry Fairchild) were so wrongly convicted and executed they will always be painful to justice-loving lawyers when they think about them.

This list keeps growing, thanks to:

Richard Leo who years ago compared notes on early cases with me

Steve Drizin who never ceases to pepper many of us with current cases

Innocence Project workers springing up everywhere due to Barry Scheck's inspiration

Kate Germond's constant sharing from Centurion Ministries, the First Innocence Project.

All 75 are listed alphabetically along with the date and state in which the confessions were made. All statements voiced about disabilities are placed between quotation marks.

Joe Arridy (Colorado, 1936): The Happiest Man Who Ever Lived on Death Row

Two girls, 13 and 15, were bludgeoned while sleeping in the same bed in their Pueblo, Colorado home. The older girl was raped and killed. Three days later, the Pueblo police caught the killer and recovered the murder weapon, but he refused to confess. Shortly after that, a sheriff in Wyoming picked up "a vagrant," Joe Arridy, 21, who was loitering in the Cheyenne railroad yards--and got him to confess to the Pueblo crime. The police then announced that the crime had been carried out by two men. Arridy was identified as "an imbecile with an IQ of 47, who had recently wandered away from the Grand Junction State School for Mental Defectives. He had climbed into a railroad boxcar and disappeared. After the conviction, Warden Roy Best found Arridy to be a soft, five-foot-three, 130-pound totally nonviolent man. He chose to look after him like a father would to a son. He introduced Arridy to reporters as the happiest man in his care. He joined with Attorney Gail Ireland who managed to get nine stays in a little over one year. Even so, the governor ordered the execution of Arridy on January 6, 1939. On October 19, a plea for a posthumous pardon was delivered to Colorado Governor Bill Ritter, Jr. (Perske, 1995, Ritter, 2010).

Gabriel Baddeley (Washington, 2001): Cleared When Real Perpetrator Confesses

Baddeley, Age 19, "with fetal alcohol effect" was coerced into confessing to setting fire to the high school where he was a student. Two years after his conviction, a young woman in therapy voluntarily came forward with evidence showing that she was the true arsonist (Courtney, 2004).

Eunice Baker (New York, 1999): Murder by Thermostat

A 23-year-old woman "with IQ tests in the 70s," was hired to baby sit a 3-year-old child on a hot summer night. The sleeping child died in her bedroom from hyperthermia. A state trooper coerced Baker into confessing that she willfully turned up the thermostat to kill the child. At trial, Baker could not describe or even show the jury how to adjust a thermostat. Also, a technician described a malfunction in the home's heating system that caused it to rise excessively higher than normal. Even so, Baker was convicted of second-degree murder, apparently for failing to react properly to the overheated environment. After Baker spent nearly 5 years behind bars, the conviction was thrown out (Chittum, 2000; Nogas, 2000a, 2000b).

Medill Banks, Victoria Banks, Diane Tucker (Alabama, 1999): Murder of an Infant Who Never Existed

While in jail awaiting trial for an unrelated crime, Victoria Banks claimed to be pregnant. She did it to garner sympathy and get out of jail. The ploy worked. Later, when a sheriff asked her about the baby, she told him that the baby had died. She, her husband, Medill, and her sister, Diane Tucker, "all with mental retardation," underwent intensive questioning over 5 days until they confessed to murdering the infant. Later, it was discovered that Victoria had undergone a tubal ligation 4 years earlier and was unable to have children (Luo, 2002).

Leonard Barco (New Jersey, 1985): A Murder That Never Occurred

Barco's girlfriend was found dead in her car. Bruising on the victim's neck and chest led investigators to believe she had been strangled. During interrogation, Barco, "with IQ 57," confessed to beating her to death with a stick. He spent 8 months in jail awaiting his trial. His public defender finally called for a reexamination of the woman's body and found she had actually died from a lethal level of alcohol. The bruising was consistent with injuries typical of alcoholics. The murder charges were dropped (Associated Press, 1986).

Jesse Barnes (Maryland, 1972): Innocence Project Wins Freedom After 38-Year Imprisonment

Barnes, at age 17 and labeled "mentally defective and dropout special education student," was convicted for a rape as well as the bloody neck and throat slashing of his 15-year-old girl friend. Interrogators received two dissimilar confessions. The conviction was based only on the one that was typed by an interrogator. Witnesses who could have provided Barnes with an alibi did not testify. New investigations show that the victim had not been raped and it appears that the interrogators concocted this belief in order to provide a stronger motive for murder. Barnes has been described as "very timid, shy, very quiet, mannerly and respectful." Also records now show that the victim had not been raped. Since DNA testing was not an option in 1972, the Innocence Project lawyers are asking the court to review the case "in the interests of justice" (Kiehl, 2009)

Corinthian Bell (Illinois, 2000): Saved by DNA

After his mother was murdered, Bell, "a man with mild retardation," endured over 50 hours of questioning before he finally confessed. DNA evidence exonerated the man after spending 17 months in jail (Scharnberg & Mills, 2002).

Melvin Bennett (North Carolina, 1990): Saved by DNA

A 7-year-old girl was raped and murdered. Bennett, "diagnosed as mentally retarded," confessed to both crimes. DNA evidence excluded him as the killer. Bennett spent 2 years in jail before a jury acquitted him (Aheran, 1998).

Jerome Bowden (Georgia, 1986): Too Early To Save

On October 11, 1976, a 55-year-old woman was brutally beaten with a pellet rifle and stabbed to death in her Columbus home. The next day, the police arrested a 16-year-old next-door neighbor. They found the pellet gun, the knife, a wig the killer wore as well as coins and jewelry that the teenager had taken. They also recovered the victim's TV that had been sold by the teenager to a pawnbroker. The teenager confessed to the crime. Then he told interrogators that Jerome Bowden, 24, committed the crime with him. Bowden was an easy-going, neighborhood-wandering person who had been expelled from school many years earlier after being given a "Wechsler Intelligence test that showed him to have a full-scale IQ of 59." No evidence linked Bowden to the crime, and he could not have read or understood the confession drafted for him by police. The teenager, being a minor, was sentenced to life without parole. Bowden was executed (Perske, 1991A).

Floyd Lee Brown (North Carolina, 1993): In Custody 14 Years With No Trial

Brown, a man "with an IQ of 50," was arrested and questioned for the beating death of an 80-year-old woman. Two detectives wrote a "full confession" in perfect English grammar that Brown could not read. In no way did it match Brown's halting, sparsely worded repetitive speech. He was placed in custody in a state mental hospital because he was not competent to stand trial. No physical evidence connected Brown to the murder (Thompson, 2007).

Keith Brown (North Carolina, 1991): Saved by DNA

A woman was raped. Brown, a man "who is mentally retarded," confessed and was given 35 years in exchange for pleading guilty. After spending 6 years in custody, he was exonerated through DNA, which identified the true perpetrator (Associated Press, 1997).

Timothy Brown (Florida, 1991): Beaten Into Confessing

A sheriff's deputy was murdered in his patrol car. Brown, age 15, "with an IQ of 57," was arrested, shackled, beaten, and threatened with the electric chair until he confessed. No physical evidence tied him to the crime. A confidential informant led investigators to focus on a sheriff's deputy, who later admitted that it was he who killed his fellow officer (de Vise & De Marzo, 2002; McMahon & Friedberg, 2002).

Albert Ronnie Burrell (Louisiana, 1986): Spends 14 Years on Death Row Due to Confused Prosecutorial Efforts

Burrell, "an illiterate man with mild retardation" was actually one of two persons in different settings who were convicted of murdering the same elderly couple. Both ended up on death row. After officials reexamined the case, they agreed that it should never have been brought to a grand jury. Scattered bits of evidence complicated the case. For example, Burrell's ex-wife told an officer that her ex-husband did the crime. She said it to gain full custody of their son. In addition, an obscure affidavit from an earlier prosecutor stated that he moved the cases along "to avoid embarrassing the sheriff." (Barrouquere, 2003; Baughman & Guarisco, 2001).

Anthony Caravella (Florida, 1983): Saved by DNA

A 58-year-old woman was raped and murdered in Miramar, Florida. Detectives picked up Anthony Caravella, a 15-year-old "with an IQ of 67." Witnesses observed interrogators grabbing a phone book and taking Caravella into another room. They also heard what sounded like phonebook slaps and yelling. After repeated sessions, the detectives came out with five statements. During the sentencing, the judge exclaimed, "I will tell you, Anthony, if the jury had recommended death, I would have executed you." Later, when found innocent, another judge spoke more tenderly: "Let me take the opportunity to apologize to you for the criminal justice system of the State of Florida (McMahon, 2010).

Allen Jacob Chestnut (Maryland, 1998): Saved by DNA

A man was stabbed to death in Baltimore, Maryland. Police arrested 16-year old Chestnut after observing a fresh cut on his hand and blood on his clothes. After 15 grueling hours of questioning, the teenager confessed to the murder. After 6 months in jail, Chestnut was excluded as the killer by DNA (Richissin, 1998).

Antwon Coleman (Missouri, 1990): Cleared When Real Killer Confessed

A homeless man was beaten to death. Coleman, 17, later confessed to the murder. According to his lawyer, this teenager "with learning disabilities" would have "confessed to anything." Five teenagers in all were charged and held in custody for 6 weeks before one of them, the true perpetrator, confessed and pled guilty (Sorkin, 1990).

Earl Correll (Virginia, 1985): Appointed Lawyers Fumble the Case

In a drug sale that went bad, two buyers admitted killing the dealer. Then they claimed that Earl Correll was with them as the overpowering "ringleader." Correll was small (5'6" and 130 pounds). He possessed "an IQ of 68" and was known as "a wimp." The victim was over 6-foot-tall and he had been choked and stabbed from behind. The trial judge appointed two defense lawyers who turned out to be wimps, too. They conducted no investigation. They claimed that communicating with Correll was impossible. When the attorneys asked Correll about the crime, he curled up in a corner and cried. The lawyers testified in court that after that, they threw up their hands and gave up. Correll was executed for being named as the ringleader. The other two received lesser sentences (Perske, 1991).

Ricky Cullipher (Virginia 1996): Russian Roulette Goes Wrong

Cullipher was hanging out with friends when one of them was crippled by a gunshot wound to the head. After hours of intense questioning, the 16-year-old "learning disabled" teenager confessed and was convicted at trial. Later, the victim was caught on videotape saying

he actually shot himself during a game of Russian roulette. A judge threw out the conviction and prosecutors refused to retry the case (Roberson & Lenz, 2001).

Anthony Dansberry (Illinois, 1991): Signs Confession When Told It Was a "Release"

An Oak Park woman was getting off a bus when a man knocker her to the payment, grabbed her purse and fled. The victim died later from a head injury. A woman in a car saw the attack and pursued the robber in her car. She claimed that he touched her car twice with his hands. She described the attacker as a black man about 18 to 20 years old and she helped police draw a composite sketch. Anthony Dansberry was not involved until the police received an anonymous tip and he was placed in a lineup before six eye witnesses. The woman in the car was the only one who identified Dansberry--even though he is 29-years-old and had a mustache and beard--which did not appear in the composite drawing. Dansberry is also a man with "a verbal IQ of 58 and the reading comprehension of a 1st or 2nd grader." He was interrogated until he signed a confession written by a detective. He said he signed the paper because the police told him it was "his release." He was convicted and given a 75-year prison term. Innocence Project members are now interested in the case. (Possley, 2006, Drizin, 2006).

Girvies Davis (Illinois, 1978): Confess or Get Shot

Three days before Christmas 1978, in Belleville, Illinois, an 89-year-old retired farmer was shot to death in his wheelchair in his trailer home. There were no witnesses, no weapon, no fingerprints and no motives. Eight months later, in August, 1979, Girvies Davis, a 20-year-old black man was arrested after a theft in an auto supply store. He possessed a severe "organic brain disfunction since childbirth" that kept him close to being illiterate. While in jail, police said he passed a note to them through a guard confessing to 11 crimes--including "the old man in the trailer." After that the police checked him out of jail at 10 p.m. (the logs at the jail confirmed this) and drove him to a deserted road outside of town. The police, Davis said, took off his handcuffs and leg shackles, drew their guns and produced a stack of already written confessions. The told him if he didn't sign all of them they would shoot him and then testify that he died trying to escape. Davis signed everything they had. He was only tried for the shooting of the aging farmer which he vehemently denied. No blacks were allowed to serve on the jury. He was sentenced to death. He died saying, "I have done many bad things, but I'm no murderer" (Schwartz, 2006).

Selwyn Days (New York, 2001): Saved by DNA

In 1996, a man, 79, and his 35-year-old companion were stabbed to death in their Eastchester, New York home. After the case had been unsolved for four years, the police picked up and interrogated Selwyn Days, 36, a "man with brain damage and a low IQ." After long hours of questioning, he confessed to the crime in front of a TV camera. He received a sentence of "50 years to life." Innocence Project lawyers presented DNA test findings to the court that excluded Days. Also, four witnesses placed Days in Goldsboro, NC at the time the crime was committed. Even so, this man still spent the last 10 years in prison for a crime he did not commit (Stashenko, 2010).

Gerald Delay (Kansas, 1992): Bystander Speaks Up

The victim was shot with an antique ball-and-cap pistol. The killers pulled out the victim's teeth, sliced off his tattoos, lashed him to a steel beam, and threw him into the river.

After his body was recovered, Delay, "a man with mental retardation," was questioned and he confessed to the crime. A bystander who witnessed the crime finally overcame his fear and told police what really happened. Charges against Delay were dismissed (Fry, 1993).

Edward Lee Elmore (South Carolina, 1982): After 38 Years in Prison, Innocence Project Groups Enter the Case

A 75-year-old widow was murdered in her Greenwood, South Carolina home. She had been raped, stabbed 32 times and her body was dumped in a bedroom closet. A neighbor suggested that the police check the stubs in the white woman's checkbook. They found a record in the victim's checkbook showing that she paid Edward Elmore, a 23-year-old black man for doing yard work a few days earlier. He was picked up and questioned within 48 hours of the crime. Four months later, Elmore "a man with mental retardation, with IQ scores of 72 and 58." was sentenced to death. After the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Atkins v. Virginia*, it was changed to a life sentence. During the last 38 years of incarceration, numerous questions have emerged. The autopsy report had been botched. Hairs found on the body disappeared--and were found later in an investigator's filing cabinet. The DNA on the hairs proved to be from a white man. An FBI expert who studied the state's earlier forensic report against Elmore called it a "fraud." (Bonner, 2002).

Barry Lee Fairchild (Arkansas, 1983): Beaten into False Confession?

Acting on information given by a "confidential source," Barry Fairchild was arrested and questioned regarding the rape and murder of a 20-year-old white U.S. Army nurse in a field outside of Little Rock, Arkansas. Fairchild was black and "a man with retardation--a full scale IQ of 63, a verbal of 69 and a performance of 61." With his head bandaged, he was placed in front of a video camera. Investigators said the bandages covered a "bite on the top of the skull by a police dog." During the videotaping, Fairchild kept looking toward an off-camera person for guidance. Later, Fairchild recanted, saying that the confession was beaten out of him. No evidence connected him to the crime. Testing of the semen in the victim's body showed that the rapist had type O blood and Fairchild's was type A. On March 29, 1991, ABC TV's *20/20* described how 13 black men signed affidavits stating that the police tried to beat confessions out of them for the murder of the nurse--and failed. Fairchild was the 14th and the only one to give in. He was executed in 1995 (The Encyclopedia of Arkansas History and Culture, 2010).

Michael Fitzpatrick, (New York, 1999): Man Describes Own Arrest and Interrogation

This man "with autism" was questioned about a bank robbery. He signed a confession, but no record was made of the actual interrogation. Interestingly, Fitzpatrick, a man with remarkable weaknesses and strengths, possessed an uncanny knack for recall. He wrote a detailed 6-page summary of what went on between him and the interrogating police chief. In his summary, Fitzpatrick said that the chief "told me that he would talk to me like a father to a son. So I said, 'Okay, Dad.'" Five months later, the real bank robber confessed. He stated that he could not stand seeing a person with an intellectual disability go to prison for a crime he, a serial bank robber, committed (O'Brien, 1999).

John Floyd (Louisiana, 1981): Innocence Project Finds Exculpatory DNA

On Thanksgiving day, 1980, two men were murdered in New Orleans in different locations. The crimes were remarkably similar. Both men were white and had been involved in

homosexual acts at the time of their deaths. Both were stabbed in the neck and torso. Two months after the crime, the lead detective happened to visit with John Floyd, a black man, in a bar. Then he took Floyd for questioning and got him to confess to both murders. He has been in prison for 30 years. Recently, The Innocent Project of New Orleans began looking into the case. They found that Floyd possessed "an IQ of 59." Their psychological tests showed Floyd to be "highly suggestible and highly compliant," making him particularly susceptible to the sort of pressure applied by police when they interrogate. Mitochondrial DNA testing now shows that Floyd did not commit either crime. Consequently, the case is back in the courts and the Innocence Project has vowed to never give up until Floyd walks out of the penitentiary a free man (IPNO, 2010).

Michael Gayles (2001, Michigan): Saved by DNA

Gayles, 18, with "an IQ of 71," underwent 36 hours of interrogation before finally confessing to the rape and murder of a 12-year-old girl. He signed a typed confession that he could not read. Two weeks after his arrest, DNA evidence exonerated Gayles and he was released (Kresnak, 2001).

Ozem Goldwire (2006, New York): Tries to Give Right Answer Even When It Is Wrong

Goldwire, 28, "a man with a developmental disability with autistic features," was battered by questions from three high-pressure detectives, and he worked and worked on his answers until each one was precisely what the officers wanted to hear. After 21 hours in such a confessional pressure cooker, Goldwire was charged with strangling his sister to death and was jailed for a year and 11 days. By then, both the prosecutors and defenders saw that the confessions were so "preposterous" that a state supreme court judge released the man "because he was innocent." "Here we had the ingredients of the perfect storm for false confessions," said the judge. Goldwire's lawyer claimed that the detectives "lacked the necessary training for questioning suspects with special needs and are too eager for an arrest" (Dwyer, 2007; Marzulli, 2008).

Robert Gonzales (2005, New Mexico): Saved by DNA

This 19-year-old man "with mental retardation and an IQ range of 51–65," was interrogated for the rape and murder of an 11-year-old girl on Halloween night. Although no physical evidence connected the man to the murder, he confessed to raping and slaying the young girl in her trailer home. Fortunately, DNA found on the victim was run through the FBI's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). It excluded Gonzales and identified the real killer (Sandlin, 2008).

Anthony Gray, Jr. (1991, Maryland) Freed After Real Perpetrator Confessed

Police interrogators convinced this man "with learning disabilities and borderline mental retardation" that two other suspects implicated him in a woman's rape and murder. In his compliant way, Gray confessed to being their "look out." He spent 6 years in prison before the real perpetrator confessed to the crime (Richissin, 1999).

Paula Gray (1978, Illinois): Saved by DNA

Police picked up this 17-year-old "with mental retardation" for questioning based on a tip. After 2 nights of intense questioning, Gray confessed that she was with four men who had

abducted a man and woman, raped the woman, and killed them both. Under pressure, she fingered four men as perpetrators. All were convicted. Seventeen years later, DNA revealed that Gray and the four men were innocent. The same evidence implicated the real perpetrators who eventually confessed (Frievoegel, 2000).

Travis Hayes (1997, Louisiana): Saved by DNA

A grocer was shot four times for refusing to turn over the day's cash receipts to a bandit wearing a ski mask. The perpetrator threw away the mask after leaving the crime scene and dived into an open window of a fleeing car. Two 17-year-olds "with mild retardation," Ryan Matthews and Travis Hayes, were interrogated for the crime. Matthews refused to confess. Hayes, on the other hand, caved in after 6 hours of intensive pressure and trickery and told the detectives that he only drove the car while Matthews went into the store. Matthews received a death sentence. Hayes received life without parole. Many months later, the discarded ski mask was tested for DNA, and saliva incriminated another man. Both men have now been freed (Innocence Project, 2008).

Alejandro "Alex" Hernandez (1984, Illinois): Saved by DNA

This 20-year-old man was questioned about a break-in, kidnapping, rape, and murder of a 10-year-old girl. Hernandez, "whose IQ had been measured at various times in the mid-and-low 70s," under tremendous pressure by interrogators, finally exclaimed, "All I did was hold her down." After 12 years on death row, Hernandez was freed when DNA identified the real perpetrator. *Postscript:* After the confession was given, one of the top interrogators in Illinois decided to go out on his own and corroborate it. He found solid evidence showing that Hernandez was elsewhere when the crime was committed. After giving his report, his superiors ordered him to keep quiet. In addition, one of the top assistant attorney generals refused to defend the conviction and was rebuked for it. Consequently, both resigned and Illinois lost two of its most dedicated and honest crime fighters (Frisbie & Garrett, 1998; Perske, 2005).

Charles "Chucky" Hickman (2005, Indiana): Saved by DNA

On January 25, 2005, in Crothersville, Indiana, a 10-year-old girl disappeared while walking to a local store. She was found later in a local lake. She had been sexually molested and drowned. Later, Hickman, 20, was questioned and he immediately blurted out that he was the murderer. Although it was clear that he was "a vulnerable, malleable and disabled person" who was "very slow with the mental capacity of a 15-year-old," he was submitted to numerous interrogation sessions. In them, his story kept changing according to the leading questions he was being asked. This wild, interrogational spree ended for good, after DNA on the body of the girl was matched with the real perpetrator (Adams, 2006).

Tommy Lee Hines (1978, Alabama): Innocent but in a Legal Limbo

On May 23, 1978, Tommy Lee Hines, a 25-year-old black man, wandered away from a day program center for developmentally disabled persons in Decatur, Alabama. He walked up to a window of a building, looked in and scared an office secretary. The secretary called the police who took him away for questioning. According to investigators, Hines confessed to raping three white women. In each case, the women claimed that the perpetrator overpowered them in their own cars, drove them to the outskirts of town and raped them. Records show that Hines possessed "an IQ of 35 and the mental functioning of a six year old." His father testified that

"They had Tommy driving a car. That boy can't even ride a bicycle." Members of the local association for persons with disabilities rose up in indignation. Then a contingent of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference marched onto the scene. Finally, they were confronted with members of the Ku Klux Klan. Four men were shot but not killed in the clash that followed. Somehow, Hines' case became so cluttered by pressure from outside forces, true justice was ignored. He was sentenced to a prison where he was attacked. Later, he was judged to be incompetent to stand trial and was sent to a mental health hospital that expelled him as not being one of theirs. So he was sent to an institution for persons with intellectual disabilities where he was rejected as well. Hines was placed in a small group home in a small Alabama town while all legal forces apparently looked the other way (Perske, 1991).

Ladell Hughes (2003, Illinois): Saved by DNA

Hughes, age 15, was brought to the police station and questioned regarding a prostitute who was raped and beaten into a coma so severe that she could not recall the incident later. Hughes signed a confession that was written out by detectives. Although Hughes was "a severely developmentally disabled boy" who could not read or write, the confession was very detailed. Finally, DNA proved his innocence and he was released (Ferguson, 2008).

Harold Israel (1924, Connecticut): Saved by a Daring State Attorney

A beloved priest was gunned down on the main street of Bridgeport, and a chorus of citizens cried out for the capture and punishment of the killer. Eight days later, the police captured "a transient indigent and a person of low mentality of the moron type." In a 10-point report, law officers identified seven witnesses, a pistol, an empty shell, and a signed confession. The county state's attorney took the report, read it thoroughly, and then announced that he would speak for his whole department at the man's arraignment. At the arraignment, he announced that he was dropping the case. He spoke without notes for 90 minutes, discrediting every piece of evidence against Israel. Afterward, the audience in the courtroom applauded. Subsequently, this attorney was shunned severely by his own political party. Even so, in 1933, the president-elect of the United States appointed him as his first attorney general. Thirty years later, a witness to the shooting, who had been threatened to death if he ever spoke out about it, finally stepped forward. He named the real killer (Perske 2005; Zeldes, 1994).

Terrie Jeffrey (2003, Florida): Judge Attacks Shoddy Confession and Suppresses It in Pretrial Hearing

Jeffrey, a "mentally retarded" 18-year-old, was brought to the police station and accused of beating to death his girlfriend's 13-month-old son. The baby was the grandson of a police officer in the same city. After his forced confession was signed, a public defender viciously attacked it line by line and finally got the judge to do the same. The officers coached Jeffrey about what to say. They led him to believe he could go home if he said he hit the child by accident. On the witness stand, the officers failed to agree as to who said what. The judge found that Jeffrey merely "parroted" what the officers told him to say. The judge called the whole investigation a "shameful embarrassment." He suppressed the confession and declared strongly that it was not voluntary. Because the investigating officers had little or no corroboration, the case was dropped. After 3 years in jail waiting for trial, Jeffrey was a free man. Even so, the judge made one final statement that the police department is now taking to heart. He said, "Prior to this hearing, I was not convinced that it might be good police practice to videotape the entirety

of a defendant's interrogation." After listening to those investigators on the stand, he changed his mind (Nesmith, 2006).

David Allen Jones (1992, California): Saved by DNA

Jones, a man with "IQs ranging from 60 to 73 and unable to read words longer than four letters," was picked up and questioned about three murders and a rape. He confessed to all of them and was convicted in 1995. Because he confessed, little attention was paid to the blood and hair samples taken in the case. Later, the samples and DNA connected the crimes to another man. Looking back at the interrogation transcripts, it became clear that Jones merely repeated fictions created by the interrogators. A lawyer selected by the police commission to investigate the case stated that the interrogators "could have convinced Jones he was Spiderman had they chosen to do so." Sadly, while the wrong man was in prison, the real perpetrator succeeded in raping and murdering 10 other women (Blankstein, Gorman, & Larrubia, 2004).

Lebrew Jones (1987, New York): A 20-Hour Interrogation While Physical Evidence is Ignored

Here is a case that can make modern day Innocent Project workers cringe. Two decades ago, A 21-year-old prostitute was savagely murdered at a Times Square building project. A mountain of physical evidence was found. Lebrew Jones, a security guard at the project, was brought in for questioning even though the crime happened six hours after his shift ended and he had gone home. The police interrogated this "soft and gentle man with an IQ of 68" for 20 solid hours. According to reports, Jones was invited to share how the crime happened and he did the best he could. Early on, he suggested that the woman beat herself to death with a rock. As of yet, not a single shred of physical evidence has been tied to this utterly nonviolent man. Even the mother of the murdered girl met with Jones and was convinced that the wrong man was in prison (Young, 2008).

Levon "Bo" Jones (1987, North Carolina): Death Penalty Based on a Single Snitch

A career snitch was paid \$4,000 for her testimony showing that Bo Jones "a black farmhand with a low IQ" murdered a white man. He spent nearly 16 years on death row. The earlier defense attorney was so inept, he failed to raise numerous bits of evidence pointing toward Jones' innocence. Later, another lawyer picked up the case and the scene changed. The snitch recanted her story of Jones involvement in the crime. A massive amount of critical evidence pointing to Bo's innocence was heard, a federal judge overturned the conviction, and in 2006 he walked out of prison a free man (Levingston, 2010).

William M. Kelly, Jr. (1990, Pennsylvania) Saved by DNA

Police claimed that "mildly retarded" Kelly told them things about a rape and murder of a woman that only the killer could know. They also claimed that Kelly led them to the murder site. DNA excluded him and identified the real murderer. Kelly was released after 3 years in prison (Shellem, 2003b).

Charlie King (1992, Illinois) Freed After Real Perpetrator Confessed

After a 9-year-old girl was strangled, King, a man with an "IQ of 57" was picked up and questioned for 3 days. He then signed a confession he could not read. While in jail, he kept asking for his crayons and coloring books. After King spent 13 months in jail, the real killer

confessed and King was released (King, 1998).

Daniel Lackey (New York 2003): Convicted for a Rape and Stabbing That Never Happened

On January 16, 2003, a woman was cut with a knife and raped in Oneida, New York. Dan Lackey, 31, a man with "IQ 73" was brought in for questioning and he "wrote out" a confession. He was charged with first degree aggravated sexual abuse and received an eight-year prison sentence. Three years later, the female victim reported another attack from another man. The attacks were identical right down to the description of the man and the wounds inflicted. By then, the woman suffered serious psychiatric problems, including hearing voices and attempting suicide. She finally admitted that the attack never happened. The knife wounds in both cases were found to be self-inflicted. Lackey's release came after four years in prison. Afterwards, the state attorney general stated in court papers that "Lackey's conviction was brought on by his own conduct including giving a written confession" (O'Brien, 2009).

Richard Lapointe (1989, Connecticut): Centurion Ministries Refuse to Give Up

On March 8, 1987, in Manchester, Connecticut, an 88-year-old woman was raped, strangled, stabbed 11 times and her cottage was set on fire. It was obviously committed by a strong and athletic person. On the 4th of July 1989, the police picked up Richard Lapointe, 46, the step grandson of the victim. After 9 hours, investigators came out with three dissimilar confessions--all written by the police. To all who know Lapointe, he is about as nonathletic as one could be. He lives with Dandy-Walker syndrome and underwent five surgeries to drain excessive fluid from his enlarged head. He is five-foot-four, wears thick glasses, has hearing aids in both ears. He never runs. When he stops short or turns quickly, he gets dizzy. When he grew up, the other kids gave him the nickname "Mr. Magoo." Even so, Lapointe was found guilty, sentenced to "Life plus 60 Years," and has been in prison for 20 years. Currently, all attorneys involved earlier have testified to being inept in their defenses. Now, the case has been picked up by Centurion Ministries who are known nationally as the First Innocence Project organization in the nation (Perske, 2001)

Barry Laughman (1987, Pennsylvania): Saved by DNA

This man, "with an IQ of 70," was convicted of raping and murdering an elderly woman. He confessed after a state trooper convinced him that his fingerprints were found at the murder site. After 16 years in prison, Laughman was excluded by DNA evidence (Shellem, 2003a).

Matthew Livers (2006, Nebraska): Saved by DNA

In April 2006, the sheriff in a rural southeast Nebraska county announced that Livers, 29, confessed to the fatal shooting of a wealthy farm couple in their home. A cousin of Livers was also named as an accomplice. The confession came after 11 hours of tough interrogation and threats of the death penalty. According to a public defender and psychologist, "Livers was tired, hungry, and frightened. By confessing, Livers thought that the interrogation would cease, and he would be allowed to return home." Psychological assessments revealed that Livers was "learning disabled all of his life, had low intellectual functioning and was highly compliant, allowing him to fall prey to overzealous investigative tactics." By June 2006, the sheriff's department announced that two teenagers on a crime spree from Wisconsin turned out to be the real killers; DNA testing connected them to the crime. The public defender and a psychologist for the

defense wrote a brilliant, step-by-step account of all that happened in the case, which has been featured in the monthly magazine of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (Bear & Bresler, 2007).

Ryan Matthews (1997, Louisiana): Saved by DNA

A grocer was shot four times for refusing to turn over the day's cash receipts to a bandit wearing a ski mask. The perpetrator threw away the mask after leaving the crime scene and dived into an open window of a fleeing car. Two 17-year-olds "with mild retardation," Ryan Matthews and Travis Hayes, were interrogated for the crime. Matthews refused to confess. Hayes, on the other hand, caved in after 6 hours of intensive pressure and trickery and told the detectives that he only drove the car while Matthews went into the store. Matthews received a death sentence. Hayes received life without parole. Many months later, the discarded ski mask was tested for DNA, and saliva incriminated another man. Both men have now been freed (Innocence Project, 2008).

Godfrey G. Miller III,m (2004, Maryland): Eager to Please Police Officers

Twelve days after a man was beaten to death in a rooming house, police officers picked up Miller, a 20-year-old man with "IQ 66–69," who almost immediately confessed to the crime. After Miller spent 269 days in jail, the confession fell apart and the real killer was arrested. Normally, defense lawyers feel a sense of satisfaction from such victories and then go on to other cases—but not Miller's lawyer. He was angry. He went before the city council and castigated the police department's handling of the case. According to the lawyer, Miller had no police record or history of substance abuse. "He had had only good experiences with the police—making him eager to please them, which led to the confession." Even then, Miller's lawyer did not stop. He said that he would like to see "an experienced counselor with the mentally disabled train officers in questioning such suspects." The lawyer then demanded money from the city to help put Miller's life back together again. All this led to a shouting match in the council chambers, with Miller's lawyer threatening to sue. Later, the chief of police promised to conduct an investigation of city officers involved in Miller's case (Chansanchai, 2004; Lyons, 2004).

Jesse Misskelley (1993, Arkansas): False Confession Tactic Dooms Three

Jesse Misskelley, 17, with "Mental Retardation and an IQ of 70" gave in to a classic, old-time ploy. An interrogator told him to testify against two friends, Damien Echols, 19, and Jason Baldwin, 17, for the murder of three Cub Scouts on May 6, 1993 in West Memphis. If he did, the officer promised he would not go to jail. He talked but the promise was not kept. He and Baldwin were sentenced to Life plus 40 years because they were minors. Echols, being an adult, was given the death sentence. The victims were found naked in a drainage ditch. They were tied together with shoe strings. The prosecution hinged on the confession riddled with factual errors and a Satanic cult expert with a mail-order degree while angry citizens gathered and cried out "Burn in Hell." Through the years, fresh facts are emerging. No DNA has connected the three to the crime. What appeared to be a Satanic act was attributed to the animals chewing the dead flesh. A parent of one murdered child who studied the crime now feels the three are factually innocent. Even so, no court has yet ordered a retrial (Dewan, 2007).

Calvin Ollins (1986, Illinois): Saved by DNA:

This 14-year-old “with an IQ between 65 and 70” was one of four teenagers who confessed to raping and murdering a medical student. Investigators said that if he signed the confession he could go home. He signed. After 15 years in prison, Ollins was cleared by DNA and was freed (Possley & Mills, 2001).

Brian Oltmanns (1992, South Dakota): Shortest Confession Ever

Oltmanns, 28, was unconscious when he was rescued from an apartment building fire that killed two elderly apartment residents. This man “with cerebral palsy and mild retardation” was hospitalized for 3 weeks for carbon monoxide poisoning, smoke inhalation, and burns. While he was still in a groggy state, police interrogated him and got him to scrawl a single sentence on a piece of paper: “I accidentally started the fire with lighter fluid and match.” No other evidence tied him to the arson. He was charged with two counts of first-degree murder, two counts of second-degree murder, and arson. Two years later, a court threw out the confession (Trautmann, 1994).

Don Olmetti (1997, Illinois): A Mile From the Crime

A teacher was murdered. Police picked up 16-year-old Olmetti on the basis of a tip. The teenager, “who is borderline mentally retarded,” was questioned by the police for 18 hours before confessing to the crime. Teachers at another school one mile away then certified that Olmetti was with them at the time of the crime. Despite this alibi, he spent 2 full years in jail before the charges were dropped (Rossi & Tucker, 1997).

Ronald Paccagnella (1995, Wisconsin): Saved by DNA

A 78-year-old woman was raped and murdered. Police canvassed the neighborhood and found bloodstained clothing in Paccagnella's boarding house room. This “man with an IQ of 61” was taken in for questioning. As pressure in the interrogation room mounted, the man asked if he could go home if he apologized to the victim. That statement was taken as a confession. He spent 10 months in jail before DNA testing showed that the blood on the clothing was his own. A month after Paccagnella's release, the real killer was identified and convicted (Doege, 1996).

Roland Douglas Phinney (1989, Massachusetts) A Bizarre Confession 9 Years After the Crime

In 1980, a 22-year-old nursing student was viciously bludgeoned to death with a blunt object in her bedroom. Her roommate found her covered with blood. She was rushed to the hospital but died 5 hours later. The case grew cold until a detective reopened it in 1989. Then, he ignored many important leads and focused only on Phinney, then 47, “a man with borderline mental retardation,” who lived in the house next door. The detective conducted a face-to-face interrogation for 12 hours. Of course, there was no videotaping in those days, so no judge or jury actually saw and heard what really went on in that interrogation room. Even so, the confession that was printed by the detective and signed by Phinney was bizarre. According to the confession, Phinney sneaked into the victim's house with his camera and flash attachment and found the woman asleep. He crept up to her, raised her nightgown, pulled down her underwear, and prepared to take pictures of her “private parts.” Then she woke up. He panicked and beat her to death with his camera and flash. It had to be a terrible beating because blood was spattered on the walls and the 10-foot-high ceiling. Although no physical evidence tied him to the crime, his signed confession prompted a jury to find him guilty. Phinney was sentenced to life without

parole. In 2004, a superior court judge overturned the conviction. In 2006, the Supreme Judicial Court upheld the lower court's decision. Phinney was let out on bail to live at home with an electronic monitoring bracelet attached to him at all times. In 2008, the murder was retried. A national expert on false confessions studied the confession. Then, on the witness stand, the expert discussed it line by line and ripped it to shreds. The jury deliberated for 10 hours and then declared Phinney innocent. At 65, and after spending 19 years in prison, he was a free man (Redmond, 2008).

Melvin Reynolds (1979, Missouri): "I'll Say So if You Want Me To"

On May 26, 1978 in St. Joseph, a 4-year-old child was carried away and murdered. Then came a tip that Reynolds, 25, a man with "mild mental retardation," could be the killer. The police did everything possible to get "the right words" out of Reynolds, including two polygraph tests, hypnosis, and sodium amytal injections. Seven months later, Reynolds was brought in for a marathon interrogation that lasted 14 hours. "Reynolds finally looked up like a dog with his ears pressed against his head and said, 'I'll say so if you want me to.'" The next day, the chief called a press conference and announced that the case was solved. Reynolds was convicted. Four years later, a serial killer confessed to an FBI agent that he killed the child. Reynolds was released, but the police chief was angered by the agent's actions. Being a political power, the chief pressured the FBI to transfer the agent. The agent was transferred from Missouri to Hawaii (Ganey, 1989).

Roberto Rocha (2002, Georgia): Confesses to Murder That Happened in U.S. While Vacationing in Brazil

Rocha, a 20-year-old man with "mental disabilities who reads at the third grade level," confessed to being present during the Cherokee County murder of a 15-year-old girl and helping to dispose of the body. He confessed even though he and his family flew to Brazil 3 days before the girl's murder and returned 8 days after her body was found. Even so, the district attorney refused to drop the charges for 15 months. The legal director of The Center on Wrongful Convictions spoke out on national television about the case: "The interrogation was brutal and all of it was captured on tape. It is a classic example of a mentally disabled suspect's eagerness to comply with the demands of angry, shouting, accusatory interrogators using minimization and maximization, interrupting denials, and other confrontational tactics during a 2 hour plus interrogation" (ABC, 2006; Williams, 2005).

Lafonso Rollins (1993, Illinois): Saved by DNA

After a series of sexual assaults on elderly women in a public housing complex for senior citizens, police arrested this 17-year-old "special education student with seriously limited reading and writing skills." During the interrogation, he signed confessions for three assaults and was charged with four. Police told him he could go home if he signed them. Rollins was sentenced to 75 years. The defense attorney planned to have DNA tests conducted, but he was suspended indefinitely for "multiple acts of neglect" before the tests could be performed. Eleven years later, new DNA tests showed Rollins was innocent of all the crimes and he was freed. The city settled the wrongful conviction by awarding Rollins \$9 million (Washburn, 2006).

Tyler Sanchez (2009, Colorado): "Force-fed" Confession is Only Evidence

In July, 2009, Tyler Sanchez, 19, was picked up and questioned by Parker, Colorado police for a break-in and fondling assault of an 8-year-old girl. There was DNA, but none of it

belonged to Sanchez. Sanchez is a small and slender red head and the victim described her attacker as being much taller, older with dark hair. Most important, Sanchez was a "slow talking, hearing-impaired and intellectually disabled man." The only evidence is "People's Exhibit #1, an 11 sentence confession he gave after a 17-hour interrogation. According to a reporter, "Sentence by sentence, it parrots the detectives, echoing verbatim details they admit they repeatedly fed him during their interrogation." The case is still going to trial (Greene, 2010).

Devontae Sanford (2007, Michigan): Contract Killer Takes Blame

When a four-person killing in a drug den took place in Detroit, Michigan, 14-year-old Devontae Sanford, was home with his mother. Later the "special education student with a developmental disability" was taken in by the police. After numerous hours of questioning, Sanford's final completed confession was videotaped. He pled guilty and was sentenced to a term from 37 to 90 years. A year later, a professional contract killer claimed that he murdered the four persons in the drug den. When evidence was compared, Sanford purportedly told the police that he shot the victims with an M14 rifle. The real killer used an AK47 and a 45-caliber pistol. A police investigator testified that Sanford was innocent (Hunter, 2009).

Antonio Santiago (2009, California): Bomb Threat Fizzles

It was a quick and clean case. A telephone call to a Caltrain customer-service operator claimed that a bomb was on board one of their trains. A bomb squad swung into action, but found no bomb. Later, the call was traced to a Pacifica man, 26-year-old Antonio Santiago, "a man with a mental disability." After being interrogated, officers came out with a solid confession. They reported that Santiago, while bored and sitting around with friends, suddenly decided to make the fateful call. Santiago pleaded "no contest" and faced six months in jail. But a later checking showed that the police traced the wrong phone number. It was off by one digit. (Melvin, 2010).

Donald Shoup (1996, Florida): A Spring Break Misfire

On a Friday in March, a Canadian student on spring break in Daytona Beach was fatally shot in the back of the head. On Saturday, the police picked up odd, loquacious, happy-go-lucky, beach-loving, 18-year-old Shoup. By 3:00 a.m. on Sunday morning, the police received a full confession. When the police gave the confession to the media, it was revealed that Shoup had "an I.Q. of 62." Three weeks later, the real shooter and two accomplices were charged with the murder. Even so, Shoup was not released until August (Ditzler, 1996; Holland, 1996).

Charles Singletary (2005, New York): Federal Judge Vacates Murder Conviction of "Mentally Retarded" Inmate:

A district judge abruptly ruled that Singletary, now 50 and "a retarded man with an IQ of 63," should be freed immediately. The judge claimed that a high-pressure detective tricked Singletary into confessing that he strangled his niece to death in 1995. Although he could not read, Singletary signed a confession and was partially videotaped while he cried and said he wanted to borrow money for drugs and tried to scare her into doing it by putting his hands around her neck. He said he did not mean to kill her. He was convicted for "depraved indifference murder" and sentenced to 20 years to life. None of the lawyers in early hearings mentioned his "mental retardation." Even so, the current attorney's habeas petition argued that

Singletary's mental condition should have been obvious to all who were involved in the case. No physical evidence connected him to the murder. Singletary stated later that the detective said something like, "Who are they going to believe, the white man with the badge or the black man on welfare" (Perrotta, 2005).

Cornelius Singleton (1992, Alabama): Too Early For Modern Forensics to Save

In 1977, Sister Ann Hogan was killed while praying in a Mobile cemetery. Eye witnesses identified a man thought to be the killer as a white man with blonde hair, but Cornelius Singleton, a black man "with an IQ between 55 and 65 and illiterate" was picked up. He was taken to the cemetery, and then to the police station where he was questioned for many hours. Finally an attorney dictated the sentences, one by one, that Singleton parroted back--while another investigator wrote them down. He was led to believe he signed a confession for stealing bed sheets at an earlier time in his life. He unknowingly waived his right to a defense counsel. He never received an independent investigation. His conviction was overturned when the U.S. Supreme Court voted against execution in 1972. In 1981, he was retried and sentenced to death again. He was executed in 1992 (ACLU, 2005).

Lourdes Torres (2007, New York) Saved by DNA

"Illiterate, mentally retarded," and an illegal immigrant from Mexico, this 31-year-old woman sat in prison for 4 years for confessing to the murder of her former 49-year-old boyfriend in New York City. The confession was received after 14 hours of interrogation. Torres claimed that the police promised to let her go if she confessed. Later, it was clear that there were elements in the confession that did not equate with the way the murder really happened. Then came DNA evidence showing that two men were the killers. Although Torres confessed that the murder took place in the kitchen, the blood of all three men was found in other rooms. On reception of this evidence, prosecutors dropped the case (Dienst, 2007).

James Thompson, Jr (1988, Maryland): Police Reward Leads to Wild Confession (Soon to Be Saved by DNA

When the police offered a \$1000 reward connected with a rape and murder, James Thompson claimed he found the murder weapon. This turned out to be a big mistake, considering that earlier in life, he "suffered a serious head injury and was low functioning." Investigators took him in for questioning and came out with a bizarre confession that led to rape-and-murder convictions for himself and a close friend. Recent DNA tests show that the semen in the victim belonged to a third person. Also, outside of the confession, no forensic evidence linked the two with the crime. Both remain in prison (Tamber, 2007).

Jerry Frank Townsend (1979, Florida): Saved by DNA After 22 Years in Prison

His defenders called him "a human parrot." When he was questioned about the murders of six women, 38-year-old Townsend, a man "with an IQ of 56," confessed to all of them. A judge ordered his release after DNA evidence excluded him from all the murders. His defense lawyers claimed that he confessed to detectives "because he wanted to please them" (Farrington, 2001; Friedberg & Smith, 2001).

Diane Tucker (Alabama, 1999): Murder of an Infant Who Never Existed

See Medill Banks (Alabama 1999): Murder of an Infant Who Never Existed.

David Vasquez (1984, Virginia): Saved by DNA

Detectives approached Vasquez, 37, “a man with mental retardation,” while he was cleaning tables at a McDonald's restaurant in Arlington. They asked him to come to headquarters with them. With a tape recorder running, the detectives described to Vasquez the murder of a woman who had been raped and strangled with a venetian blind cord. They then confronted him and told him they had evidence to show that he was the killer. Too naive to believe that policemen would lie to him, he broke down and cried for his mother. Three intense interrogations took place. During the third one, he went into a dreamlike state. His meek, pleading voice became low pitched and steady as he described how he killed the woman. Later, the police connected the crime to the real perpetrator with the first successful use of DNA testing. Vasquez received a pardon on January 4, 1989, 5 years to the day after the detectives approached him at McDonald's (Mones, 1995; Priest, 1989).

Delbert Ward (1990, New York): Saved by Good Neighbors

The four Ward brothers—William, 67; Delbert, 59; Lyman, 62; and Roscoe, 70—operated their ramshackle farm like their deceased father did for many years. They did it even though they were “illiterate and mentally retarded.” Then William died in his bed. When the police arrived, Delbert was taken to a state trooper barracks and forced to confess to killing him by somehow putting his hand over the mouth and nose of his brother. The neighbors rejected the services of a court-appointed lawyer, took up collections, and gained the services of a skilled criminal trial lawyer. During the trial, the neighbors packed the courtroom. The jury voted to acquit (Perske, 1991).

Douglas Warney (1996, New York): Saved by DNA

At Age 34, Warney confessed to murdering a prominent civil rights activist. His lawyers contended that the admission was “riddled with errors, and was the rambling of a man with an IQ of 68.” Early attempts to gain DNA testing were rebuffed by the state supreme court. In 2004, the court stated that, “Warney's defense had not met the legal threshold to require testing, and that claims that tests could show someone else has committed the killing were too speculative.” Even so, the New York City–based Innocence Project took on the case and produced a DNA test that excluded Warney. It also identified the real killer, who was already in prison for another conviction (Craig, 2006).

Earl Washington, Jr. (1983, Virginia): Saved by DNA

This 23-year-old man “with mental retardation” took the blame for every crime mentioned by police interrogators, including three break-ins, two malicious woundings, an attempted rape, two actual rapes, two robberies, burglary, and capital murder. He was tried for capital murder and was sentenced to death. In 1985, Washington was only days away from execution when a fellow death row inmate sounded the alarm that Washington was about to die without a lawyer. For the next 17 years, a group of lawyers and citizen advocates battled for Washington's life. At long last, a series of DNA tests (some hidden by the state) showed that Washington was innocent (Edds, 2003).

Robert Wilkinson (1975, Pennsylvania): Cleared When Real Killer Confesses

A home was firebombed and five people died. Wilkinson, "a man who is mentally retarded," was picked up and taken to the police station. There, he was stomped and beaten with a blackjack by investigators and told that he would never see his wife and child again if he did not confess. After 15 months in jail, a judge threw out Wilkinson's confession, finding that he signed a confession he could not read. Later, a neighbor confessed to the crime (Radelet, Bedau, & Putnam, 1992).

Johnny Lee Wilson (1986, Missouri): "If You Just Tell Us We Can All Go Home"

A 79-year-old woman was burned alive in her Aurora home. Based on a tip, the police interrogated Wilson, a 20-year-old with "organic brain damage and mental retardation." A tape recording of the interrogation showed how detectives blatantly spoon-fed the words they wanted Wilson to say. They promised that if he confessed, "We could all go home." Later, a judge unwittingly scared Wilson into pleading guilty by telling him that if he went to trial he could be sentenced to death. Wilson pled guilty. Later, the real killer, doing time for a similar murder in Kansas, confessed to the murder of the woman in Missouri. Still later, the governor pardoned Wilson. In his pardon, he said, "It is evident that the only facts this mentally retarded man knew about this hideous crime were the facts given to him by investigators who felt pressure to solve the case quick" (Carnahan, 1995; Perske, 1994).

Dan Young (1990, Illinois) Saved by DNA

After firefighters put out a fire in an abandoned building, they found the burned naked body of a 39-year-old woman. She died from a head wound and was strangled. Later, a 16-year-old was picked up and questioned until he confessed. He said that a 19-year-old man and Young, 31, had been with him. They were coerced into confessing as well. However, it was discovered that the 16 year old was already in police custody at the time of the crime, leaving the other two to answer for the murder of the woman. Young, a man "with IQ 56 who couldn't read or write anything other than his name," spent more than 12 years in prison before DNA tests excluded him. After being released, Young said his years behind bars had been harrowing. Other inmates stole from him and fought with him. The stress, he said, made him want to just stay in his cell and sleep his life away (Mills & Coen, 2005).

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