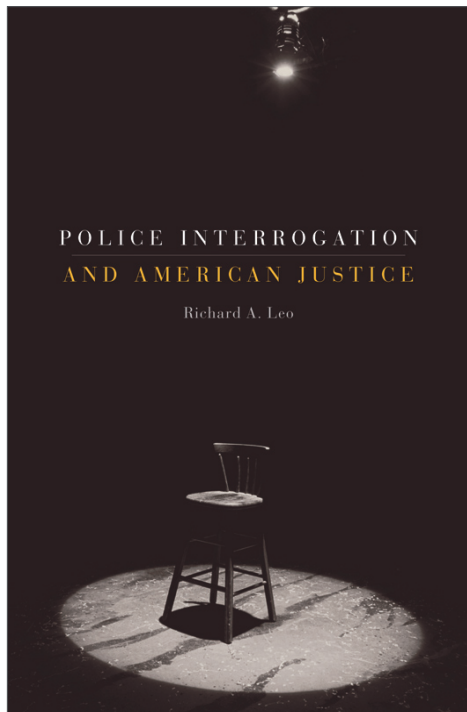


# POLICE INTERROGATION AND AMERICAN JUSTICE

Richard A. Leo



**Richard A. Leo is  
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Incriminating statements are necessary to solve crimes, but suspects almost never have reason to provide them. Therefore, as Leo shows, crime units have developed sophisticated interrogation methods that rely on persuasion, manipulation, and deception to move a subject from denial to admission, serving to shore up the case against him. Ostensibly aimed at uncovering truth, the structure of interrogation requires that officers act as an arm of the prosecution.

Skillful and fair interrogation allows authorities to capture criminals and deter future crime. But Leo draws on extensive research to argue that confessions are inherently suspect and that coercive interrogation has led to false confession and wrongful conviction. He looks at police evidence in the court, the nature and disappearance of the brutal “third degree,” the reforms of the mid-twentieth century, and how police can persuade suspects to waive their Miranda rights.

“The ‘third degree’ is long gone. But as Richard Leo shows, trickery, manipulation, and deceit are still basic tools of police interrogation of suspects. His unsettling and brilliant book gives a bird’s-eye view of systematic coercion that undermines basic rights at the entrance to the legal system.”

—Elizabeth Loftus, author of *Eyewitness Testimony*

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