**Handout #2: Police Interview/Interrogation**

**1. Examples of Implicature** (Something meant, implied, or suggested distinct from what is said.)

Q. Police: Can you think of any reason whatsoever that somebody may have seen you touch Amanda?

Q. Police: Would there be any reason why any of your DNA would’ve been on Amanda or on her clothing or on her bed sheets? And I want you to think about that for a moment.

**2. Examples of implicature, plus semantic framing** (stating conjecture as fact to suggest guilt)

Q. Police: Everything in this investigation clearly shows that you did, in fact, sexually abuse Amanda. Okay, we know that for a fact. That’s not even, that’s, that is not even open to dispute at this point, okay. We need to figure out if it was something you did to harm her, to scare her? Did you threaten her? I mean, did you force her down when you did this? Because kids kind of explain things a little bit differently, okay. They, you know, their version of being threatened or hurt is different than what our version is, or if somebody held them down. So, I need to hear from you exactly how it happened.

(This example uses semantic framing to suggest guilt—the section about ‘we know for a fact you did it.’ If that were true, the suspect would be under arrest.)

**3. Examples of hypothetical** (conjectural question with imbedded implicature)

**Example 1:**

Q. What do you think should happen to a person that sexually abuses a child?

Q. Let’s just say that someone sexually abused Amanda, what should happen to them when they’re caught? Do you think they deserve a second change?

**Example 2:**

Imagine you have two guys. They both see a bicycle. They steal the bicycle. They both get caught and go to court. The judge is like, “Why did you steal this bicycle?” And, the one guy’s like, “You know what, I’m sorry. I knew it was wrong. I was running late for work. If I was late one more time, I was gonna get fired. I planned to return the bike and I am really sorry—what can I do to fix it?” OK. The other guy is like, “No, man. I don’t know what you are talking about. I didn’t steal that bike. That was my bike—I didn’t steal anything’!” How do you think the judge is going to view these two guys—one lied and the other told the truth? Which one looks better to the judge?

**4. Examples of semantic framing and smuggling** (embeds suggestive content into questions)

**Example 1**

Q: Police: You told me earlier you were on the game or had been on the game.

A: Victim: I’ve never been on the game.

Q: Police: Never been on the game?

A: Victim: No, I have never taken money for sex, ever!

**Example 2**

Q: Police: I am going to suggest to you, that you and he had passionate, steamy casual sex—both of you consenting.

A: Victim: No, I did not consent to have sex.

Q: Police: Have you ever done anything like that with anyone else before?

A: Victim: No

Q: Police: So, that was your first sexual encounter?

A. Victim: No, but…

These questions suggest the victim is very familiar with impersonal sex and therefore, not a typical rape victim (Aldridge and Luchjenbroers, 2007, p.94).