

||| WE ARE ALL ||| ||| CRIMINALS |||

One in four people in the U.S. has a criminal record.
This is the other 75%.

Participants in We Are All Criminals tell stories of crimes they got away with. The stories range from humorous to humbling, but all have one thing in common: they are privately held memories without public stigma. Each shows that often times the only thing separating *clean* from *criminal* is who gets caught.

PRIVATE MEMORY:

I OWN A BUSINESS;
I'VE COMMITTED RETAIL THEFT



When I was 12 we would go to the 7-11 near my parents' house to spend our allowances. I had a decent baseball card collection and wanted more. So I came up with a plan.

I bought as many baseball card packs as my allowance could afford, minus one. I left the store and I gave the eight packs to my little brother and then returned alone to the store. I shoved another eight packs into my pockets before walking up to the counter with one more in my hand. I told the clerk that I had enough money to buy one more pack. She was wary so she blocked me from leaving and called for the manager.

Hey, I was in here five minutes ago. These are the packs I just bought, I said, emptying my pockets.

It was the perfect crime for a 12-year-old.

IN THE NEWS: THEFT

The New York Times [reports](#) on databases used in background checks. Private companies compile lists of retail workers suspected of theft; big-box stores rely on these lists during background checks. **Suspects do not have to be arrested, much less criminally charged or convicted, in order to appear on the blacklists.**

PUBLIC CONFESSION: THEFT

Recently, individuals from wholesome radio host Garrison Keillor to the Holy Pope have confessed to stealing.

Mr. Keillor [confesses](#) that at Macy's (still Dayton's to him), "I shoplifted an unabridged dictionary the size of a suitcase, and 50 years later I still feel the terror of walking out the door with it under my jacket, and I imagine the cops arresting my 20-year-old self and what 30 days in the slammer might've done for me."

"Suddenly, the thief that all of us have inside of us came into my mind," [says](#) Pope Frances of an incident where he used "some force" to detach and steal a cross from the rosary grasped by a deceased priest in his coffin. Patting the pilfered cross kept close to his heart, the Pope said it reminds him of the mercy the priest had shown to others.

ON THE DOCKET:

MN Capitol North Corridor:
3.16 – 3.22

Doane College, Crete, NE:
3.27 + 3.28

Spirit of Peace, Sioux Falls, SD:
3.29 – 4.6; discussion 3.30

College of St. Benedict, St. Cloud, MN:
4.28 – 5.2

PUBLIC RECORD: RETAIL THEFT

She was 16 when she was caught extending her J.C. Penney employee discount to friends, her first illegal act. She was fired, but not before her manager called the police and added her name to a "Do Not Hire" list distributed to big retailers.

She completed all the conditions the prosecutor sought for the theft and the case was dismissed. She couldn't find a job in retail, so she started babysitting.

It wasn't until she was two classes shy of graduating college with a degree in Early Childhood Family Education that she found out that **her juvenile arrest and charge meant that she was barred by the state from getting a childcare provider license for another 3 years.**

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