Investigative Psychology: Offender Profiling and the Analysis of Criminal Action

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1. Why Investigative Psychology is Necessary
Why Investigative Psychology is Necessary

- Beyond the single case and informed opinion

- Beyond Offender Profiling
  (No more hit-and-run ‘experts’)

- To become part of investigative practise

- Focus on criminal actions relevant to treatment and assessment
Investigative Psychology has its origins in contributing to investigations since 1986:

- contributions to over 150 Enquiries
  - Murder
  - Rape
  - Arson
  - Robbery
  - Extortion
- Evidence in Court
- Government Enquiries
- Expert Evidence for the Defence
Moving beyond the speculative quick fix
Young Mum Stabbed to Death on Wimbledon Common

Psychologist set Honeytrap for Stagg
“I am afraid this behaviour betrays not merely an excess of zeal but a substantial attempt to incriminate a suspect by positive and deceptive conduct of the grossest kind”
Murders of 5 Females –
Fairbanks, Alaska

Profiles can be wrong!

But… a profile can be wrong!
FBI PROFILE:

- Single
- Around 40
- NOT in armed services

ACTUAL – BUNDAY:

- Married (2 Children)
- 34 years old
- Airforce instructor

The profiles slowed down the investigation because Bunday was excluded from computer searches due to the ‘profile’

Two psychics were no use either!
2. What Investigative Psychology is
Investigative Psychology Support for Investigations
The Investigative Cycle*

* Simplified ideal
The Broadening Reach of Investigative Psychology

The Investigative Cycle*

* Simplified ideal
Investigative Psychology is

The systematic, scientific study of

a) Investigative information, its retrieval, evaluation and utilisation,

b) Investigative actions and decisions, their improvement and support, and

c) The inferences that can be made about criminal activity, its development, differentiation and prediction,
Some Inference Questions

1. Linking – which crimes are the same offender?
2. Salience – what distinguishes the offender?
3. Characteristics – How might we indentify him?
4. Location – where might he be based?
5. Prediction – what might he do next?
3. Conceptual Development of Investigative Psychology
The Significance of Inference
The ‘Profiling Equations’

Criminal Actions

Inference

Offender Characteristics
INFERENECETHROUGH
NARRATIVE CONSISTENCY

The roles and relationships a person lives reflect an unfolding process of setting-specific interpersonal transactions.

- Settings
- Personal Narratives
- Patterns of Criminal Action
- Social Networks
Settings
Geographical Profiling
The Series of Rapes and Murders Carried Out across London 1982-1986
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development in Crimes:</th>
<th>Profile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More determined</td>
<td>Lived in area of early offence in 1983</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More planned</td>
<td>Arrested after October 1983, for violence not necessarily sexual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekday from weekend</td>
<td>Lived with wife/girlfriend – childless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo from Duo</td>
<td>Mid to Late 20’s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Light Hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5’9”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Right Handed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘A’ secretor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semi-skilled, no public contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keeps to himself, with one or two close friends.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Unfolding Crime Series Across London
The ‘Railway Rapist’

JOHN DUFFY: THE RAILWAY RAPIST
Duffy Eventually Said in Court:

“To begin with it was in areas we knew well. We would plan it quite meticulously. We would have balaclavas and knives. We used to call it hunting. We did it as a bit of a joke, a bit of a game. It added to the excitement.”

“You get into the pattern of offending - it is very difficult to stop.”
An Offender’s ‘Mental Map’ of his crimes

From
Canter and Hodge 2000
Comparison of actual and ‘mental’ map
‘Bob’ The Burglar
Modeling Offence Location Choice

‘MARAUDERS’
Modeling Offence Location Choice - MARAUDERS

The ‘Circle Hypothesis’

- Serial Killers 76%
- Serial Rapists 72%
- Serial Arsonists 62%
- Serial Burglars 49%
An interactive system designed for use on a PC with minimal training, allowing context sensitive modification.

Developed as a support tool to indicate the likelihood of the offender living at any given location and the implications of linking local crimes.
General relationship between search area in Dragnet and proportion of offenders.
Personal Narratives
An explanatory model for criminal actions
Approaches to the Causes of Criminality

- **LEGAL**
  - Agency
  - Responsibility
  - Intention
  - Conscious control
  - Planning
  - Control

- **BIO-SOCIAL**
  - Genes
  - Hormones
  - Brain dysfunction
  - ‘Personality
  - Upbringing
  - Social inequality

- **The Person**

- **The Organism**
The Facet Structure of Criminal Narratives

presented by Susan Giles
Northrop Frye’s *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957)
• John McLeod ‘Narrative and Psychotherapy’ (2001) Challenge to dynamic therapies

Emergence of a ‘Narrative Perspective’
The world is constructed by our understanding not there to be discovered.

We *actively* make sense of the world rather than being pushed by internal or external forces.

Our notion of our ‘self’ is fundamental to how we act on the world.
The Narrative Approach in a Criminal Context

- Katz (1988): a condition necessary for an offence to take place is the requirement of a line of interpretation in which the individual understands himself and how he is perceived by others. This relates to the role that an individual plays;

- Narrative data consist of stories people tell about their life episodes or about their lives as a whole. Those stories relate to how people understand the significance of things that have happened to them and of the things they have done.
Total 161 offenders (aged 16 – 77 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of offence</th>
<th>No. of offenders</th>
<th>Type of offence</th>
<th>No. of offenders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Burglary</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>Indecent exposure</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robbery</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Affray</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drugs offences</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>Arson</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indecent assault</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Assist move body</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Attempted rape</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>GBH</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assault</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Kidnapping</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Manslaughter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABH</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Firearms possession</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>UTMV</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theft</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Driving offences</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of offenders interviewed for each offence type
Mean Experience Score for each Offence Type

Type of Offence

- Fraud Offences
- Drug Offences
- Property Offences
- Driving Offences
- Robbery
- Sexual Offences
- Murder
- Violence
Narratives of Murder

A DAD yesterday told a court that killing his daughter was like "Romeo and Juliet".

Gavin Hall, 31, hugged Millie, three, gave her pills to make her drowsy then suffocated her with chloroform. He tried to kill himself but survived.

Hall, stuttering and his voice barely heard, said: "We talked about heaven and we talked about no more crying, no more sadness. It seemed very Romeo and Juliet. We were distraught. We were distressed."

He claimed wife Joanne, 31, had destroyed their lives by cheating again with a married judge she met on the internet. Millie came downstairs as he prepared to kill himself and he decided to take her on his "journey". Northampton crown court heard.

He gave her anti-depressants. He said: "She was one on my knee and she fed them to me and I fed her one."

Radiographer Hall said he told Millie that her parents' marriage was over and claims she said she wanted to stay with him.

 Asked if he had made Millie agree to something she did not understand, he told the court: "At the time it all must have been clear."

In letters written that November night to Joanne, Hall, who also has a one-year-old daughter Lucy, said: "I only took them (the children) because they would be loved, cherished and adored."

But he said yesterday: "There was no conscious decision made to take Millie just like there was no conscious decision made not to take Lucy."

He claimed he was not in control. He said: "I never intended to kill anybody but myself. I don't know what I was thinking."

Hall, of Exeter, Northants, denies murder but admits manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility.

The trial continues.

By VICTORIA WARD

SUFFOCATED: Millie
Role statements

1. It was like being a professional
2. I was doing it because I had to
3. It seemed fun
4. It seemed right
5. I found it interesting
6. It was like being on an adventure
7. It seemed routine
8. I found I couldn't help myself
9. I was acting like I wasn't part of it
10. It was like being in control
11. It seemed like the manly thing to do
12. I was acting like a criminal
13. It was like being a victim
14. I was acting like a hero
15. I found that I didn't care
16. I was acting out of revenge
17. I was doing a job
18. I found that I knew what I was doing
19. It seemed like the only thing to do
20. I was doing harm
Professional
I had to
Fun
Right
Interesting
Adventure
Routine
Couldn't help myself
Wasn't part of it
Being in control
Manly thing
Criminal
Victim
Hero
Didn't care
Revenge
Job
Routine
Professional
Knew what was doing
Only thing to do
Harm
Victim
Revenger
Adventurer
Interesting
Adventure
Fun
Indifferent
Didn't care
Couldnt help myself
Manly thing
Revenge
Being in control
Right
Victim
SSA of Roles with regional interpretation
(Coefficient of Alienation 0.12 in 36 iterations)
• It seemed like fun.
• I was acting like a hero.
• I found it interesting.
• It was like being on an adventure.
• Significant event –
  ◦ Kids using his house to doss, so I threw them out, battered them all

• Murder
  ◦ To let him know he just couldn’t do that. ("That was my night ruined").

• Life as Film
  ◦ Brave Heart or Rob Roy, dishing out punishment for wrongdoing.

28 year old convicted of Murder
• It seemed right.
• I found I couldn’t help myself.
• I was acting out of revenge.
• It was like being in control.
• It seemed like the manly thing to do.
• Significant event –
  ◦ Fell on concrete because showing off to girls but did not indicate he was hurt.
• Murder
  ◦ Angry because he could not be the bread-winner. Hit his son because he would not listen to him.
• Life as Film
  ◦ Cub turns into a full grown man. Would win the Oscars.

24 year old convicted of Murder
• I was doing it because I had to.
• I was acting like a criminal.
• I was acting like I wasn’t part of it.
• It seemed like the only thing to do.
• I was doing harm.
• It was like being a victim.
• I found that I didn’t care.
• I found that I knew what I was doing.

• I was doing a job.

• It seemed routine.

• It was like being a professional.
Offenders develop implicit narratives

Revealed through their Justifications for Violence
Justifications of Violence from Criminals’ Autobiographies

- Distressed Revenge
- Retribution
- Elated Adventure
- Disrespect
- Accident
- Depressed Victim
- Calm Professional
- Power

Keywords:
- Unusual weapon
- Public place
- Gun
- Indoors
- House
- Car
- Bar
- Innocent victim
- Victim
- Unintended
- >1 victim
- Direct prior
- Street
- Street
- Victim contributed
- Audience
- Alone
- Hands
- Defence
- Prison
- Symbol
- Blade
- >1 victim
- Disrespect
- Victim
- Prior
- House
- Defence
- Symbol
- Accident
- Power
- Calm Professional
- Elated Adventure
- Distressed Revenge
- Depressed Victim
Patterns of Criminal Action
Crime scene as the starting point

Content Analysis Framework
A set of distinct aspects:
- e.g. ligature strangulation
- body covered, etc.

Developing Models from what has happened.
### Categories Assigned to Cases
The ‘Data Matrix’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Blindfold</th>
<th>Clothing</th>
<th>Disguise</th>
<th>etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case 1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case 3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An example from Serial Murder

A Study of 100 murders, each the third crime in a different series.
SSA OF SERIAL MURDER –

N = 100
2d Coa = 0.20
Jaccards coefficient

Frequency Contours

DEPRAVITY
Sexual Control

The Simplex of Sexual Control in Serial Murder
Mutilation

The Simplex of Mutilation in Serial Murder
The Simplex of Plunder in Serial Murder

- Bludgeoned
- Beaten
- Belongings scattered
- Clothing scattered
- Trail of clothing
- Overkill
- Ransacking

Percentages:
- <10%
- 10-20%
- 20-40%
- >50%
Execution

The Simplex of Execution in Serial Murder

- Missing weapon: 3 cases
- Throat cut: 29 cases
- Manual strangulation: 10 cases
- Firearm: 25 cases
- Victim burned: 35 cases

The percentages are as follows:

- >50%: 3 cases
- 20-40%: 10 cases
- 10-20%: 25 cases
- <10%: 35 cases
RADEX OF SERIAL MURDER

SEXUAL CONTROL

MUTILATION

EXECUTION

PARTS MISSING
MUTILATE THORACIC
MUTILATE GENITALIA
MUTILATE ABDOMEN
DECAPITATION
DISEMBOWEL

BITE MARKS
FACE DISFIGUREMENT
STRANGULATION
WEAPON LEFT IN VICTIM
IMPROVISED MURDER
RESTRANTS
VICTIM BURNED
GAGGING
FIREARM

MULTIPLE CRIME SCENES
ISOLATED LOCATION
OVERTLY
BLODGEON
BEATEN
BELONGINGS SCATTERED
TRAIL OF CLOTHING
RANSACKING

MULTIPLE SEX ACTS
MULTIPLE WEAPON ACTIONS
TAMPERED EVIDENCE
OBJECT PENETRATION
MUTILATE GENITALIA
MUTILATE THORACIC
DISEMBOWEL
DECAPITATION

MUTILATE ABDOMEN
MUTILATE GENITALIA
MUTILATE THORACIC
DISEMBOWEL
DECAPITATION

PARTS MISSING
MUTILATE THORACIC
MUTILATE GENITALIA
MUTILATE ABDOMEN
DECAPITATION
DISEMBOWEL

BITE MARKS
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WEAPON LEFT IN VICTIM
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MULTIPLE CRIME SCENES
ISOLATED LOCATION
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BLODGEON
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MULTIPLE SEX ACTS
MULTIPLE WEAPON ACTIONS
TAMPERED EVIDENCE
OBJECT PENETRATION
MUTILATE GENITALIA
MUTILATE THORACIC
DISEMBOWEL
DECAPITATION

MUTILATE ABDOMEN
MUTILATE GENITALIA
MUTILATE THORACIC
DISEMBOWEL
DECAPITATION
Example of one offender

SERIAL MURDER

SEXUAL CONTROL

MUTILATION

EXECUTION

SEXUAL CONTROL

MUTILATION

EXECUTION
The Emergence of Investigative Psychology from Offender Profiling

Professor David Canter