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MHRD Govt. of India

An MHRD Project under its National Mission on Education through ICT (NME-ICT)

Subject: **CRIMINOLOGY**

Production of Courseware
e- Content for Post Graduate Courses

Paper : **Criminal Psychology**

Module : **Psychological assessment and criminal profiling**

Component - I - Personal Details

Role	Name	Affiliation
Principal Investigator	Prof(Dr) G S Bajpai	Registrar National Law University Delhi
Paper Coordinator	Dr. Navin Kumar, Delhi University	
Content Writer/Author	Ms Ashna Gupta	Delhi University
Content Reviewer		

Component - I (B) Description of Module

	Description of Module
Subject Name	Criminology
Paper Name	Criminology
Module No.	Criminal Psychology
Module Name/Title	**Psychological assessment and criminal profiling**
Pre-requisites	
Objectives	Psychological Assessment, criminal profiling
Keywords	Learn the introduction to criminal profiling, Know about the fundamentals and techniques of criminal profiling and Learn about the criminal generating process
	Criminal Psychology, Criminal Profiling, Psychological assessment, Criminal Behavior

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Learning Objectives

1. Learning Objective

   - After studying this module you shall be able to

   - Learn the introduction to criminal profiling

   - Know about the fundamentals and techniques of criminal profiling

   - Learn about the criminal generating process

2. Introduction

Criminal profiling is a sub discipline of forensic criminology. It is, a discipline within criminology, rooted in the behavioral sciences and forensic sciences alike. Thus it is vital that students seeking to develop the skill of profiling educate themselves properly, and thoroughly, in scientific methodology and the behavioral sciences.

Criminal profiling involves making inferences about the habitual, physical, emotional, psychological, and even vocational characteristics of criminals. However, there are many different methods of criminal profiling, and all vary with respect to the soundness of underlying theory, logic, and insight. Some methods are general, abstract, and trait predictive; others are specific, concrete, and state descriptive. Some rely on offender group statistics; some rely solely on experience; and some rely on examining case-specific behavioral evidence.

Criminal psychological profiling is the technique of analyzing the behavioral patterns of a crime or series of crimes in order to primarily construct a descriptive pattern of the probable offender. Criminal profiling has been used successfully by law enforcement in several areas and is a valuable tool to narrow the field of investigation. Profiling does not provide the specific identity of the offender. Rather, it indicates the description of the probable offender by focusing on certain behavioral and personality characteristics (e.g. age, sex, marital status, and employment status). As used by the FBI profilers, the criminal-profile generating process is defined as a technique for identifying the major personality and behavioral characteristics of an individual based upon an analysis of the crimes he or she has committed. The profiler's skill is in

recognizing the crime scene dynamics that link various criminal personality types who commit similar crimes.

Profiling techniques have been used in various settings such as hostage taking (Reiser. 1982). Law enforcement officers need to learn as much as possible about the hostage taker in order to protect the lives of the hostages. In such cases, police are aided by verbal contact (although often limited) with the offender and possibly by access to his family and friends. They must be able to assess the subject in terms of what course of action he is likely to take and what his reactions to various stimuli might be.

Profiling has been used also in identifying anonymous letter writers and persons who make spoken or written threats of violence. In cases of the latter psycholinguistic techniques have been used to create a "threat dictionary." whereby every word in a message is assigned by computer, to a specific category. Words as they are used in the threat message are then compared with those words as they are used in ordinary speech or writings. The vocabulary usage in the message may yield "signature" words unique to the offender. In this way, police may not only be able to determine that several letters were written by the same individual, but also to learn about the background and psychology of the offender.

Rapists and firebombers also lend themselves to profiling techniques. Through careful interview of the rape victim about the rapist's behaviour investigator begins to build a profile of the offender (Hazelwood. 1983). The rationale behind this approach is that behavior reflects personality, and by examining behavior the investigator may be able to determine what type of person is responsible for the offense. Knowledge of these characteristics can help the investigator in identifying possible suspects and in developing techniques and strategies for interviewing them. However, studies in this area have focused on specific categories of offenders and are not yet generalizable to all offenders.

Criminal profiling has been found to be useful in crimes such as serial sexual homicides. These crimes create a great deal of fear because of their apparently motiveless and random nature, and they are also given high publicity. Consequently the investigators are under immense public pressure to apprehend the criminal as quickly as possible. At the same time, these crimes may be the most difficult to solve, precisely because of their apparent randomness.

An analysis of the similarities and differences among victims of a particular serial murderer provides an important information concerning the "motive" in an apparently motiveless crime. This may yield information about the criminal himself/herself. For example the murder may be the result of a sadistic fantasy in the mind of the murderer

and a particular victim may be targeted because of a symbolic aspect of the fantasy (Ressler et al, 1985).

In this context, criminal profiling has been productive, particularly in those crimes where the offender has demonstrated repeated patterns at the crime scene.
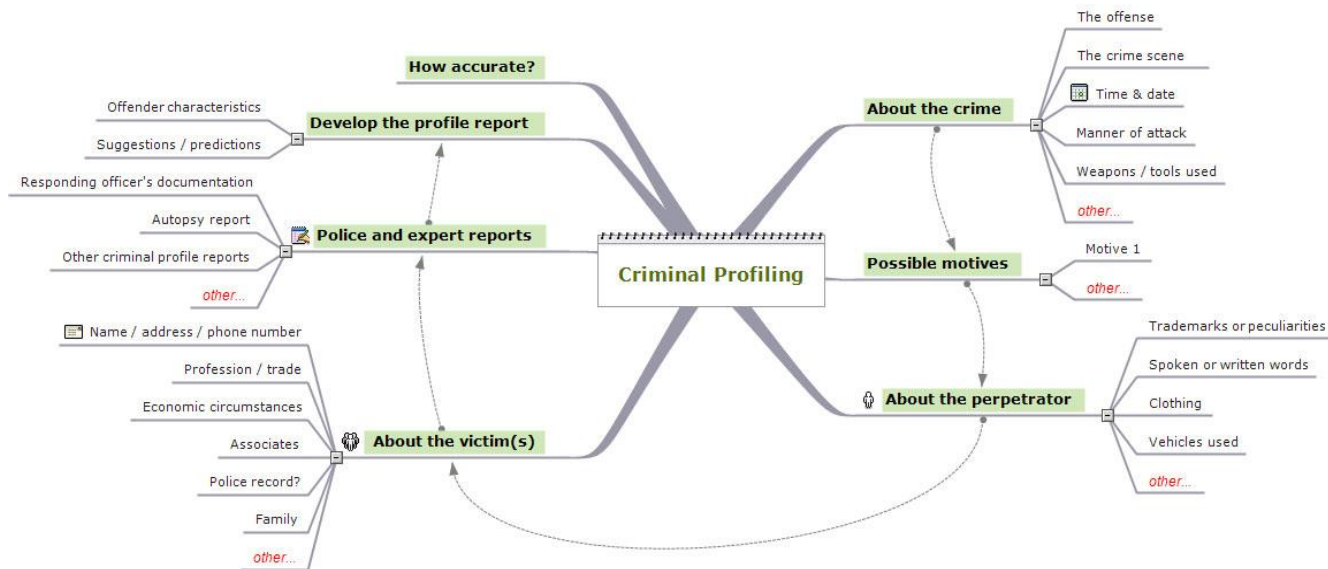
2.1 Methodology

The method of criminal profiling that one claims to use will dictate the education necessary to use it. This methodology must be clearly and unambiguously defined. If a profiler does not know or cannot explain the method he/she is using to perform his/her examinations and reach his/her conclusions, then those conclusions can hardly be considered professional, reliable, or even acceptable.

The professional criminal profiler deals with facts and evidence, not assumptions and emotional magnification. A profiler's method of choice will therefore be objective and necessarily rooted in the tenets of the scientific method.

The best criminal profiling texts are those that provide insight into criminal investigation and behavioral evidence by fusing real-world case experience, relevant behavioral and forensic science scholarship, and the scientific method. They provide tools, set limits, and don't leave the reader with the impression that criminal profiling is the domain of a select few.

If a criminal profiler is using a heuristic method of his or her own, without clear and consistent terms, definitions, and practice standards, it signals a lack of professionalism and accountability. It also demonstrates the absence of scientific education and training. This is not desirable, as the mandates of good science (e.g., objectivity, the scientific method, and transparency) are also crucial to professionalization.

2.2. Skill identification and development

Given a clear and identifiable profiling methodology, the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for competent performance should become evident. This information can then be used to identify the necessary course of education, training, and experiences required to develop those skills and abilities. It will also allow for the development of professional competency tests, to assess whether basic thresholds of knowledge have been achieved and are being maintained.

Regardless of the method being used, the following knowledge, skills, and abilities are generally of benefit to every criminal profiler:

1. Knowledge of the criminal justice system in general
2. Knowledge of the various methods of criminal investigation
3. Knowledge of the scientific method
4. Knowledge of the science of logic
5. Knowledge of forensic science and the various methods of physical evidence collection and examination
6. Knowledge of victims, crime, and criminals
7. Knowledge of human sociology in relation to the study and examination of victims, crime, and criminals
8. Knowledge of human psychology in relation to the study and examination of victims, crime, and criminals
9. Knowledge of mental illness in relation to the study and examination of victims, crime, and criminals
10. Knowledge of drugs and alcohol in relation to the study and examination of victims, crime, and criminals
11. Knowledge of human anatomy and physiology
12. Knowledge of human sexuality in all of its contexts and incarnations
13. The skill and ability to perform competent research
14. The skill and ability to write competently and professionally
15. The skill and ability to make valid arguments based on sound logic and reasoning
16. The skill and ability to write reports that meet judicial standards
17. The skill and ability to give effective courtroom testimony
18. The ability to travel

19. The ability to examine evidence relating to the violent, the sexually graphic, the bizarre, and the grotesque without becoming overwhelmed by personal feelings
20. The ability to meet deadlines
21. The ability to recognize bias and work toward maintaining objectivity
22. The ability to keep a confidence and to maintain confidential information
23. The ability to remain honest and ethical despite the short-term rewards for professional dishonesty and unethical practice

2.3 Education

The development of a firm base of theoretical knowledge, and its practical application, can often be found in a formal college or university education. Successful completion of a degree program demonstrates the ability to commit to a long-term course of study and to see it through to completion. It is evidence to others regarding one's professional dedication and personal determinations. Therefore, less formal education is not better. However, too much college or university education of low quality can be worse, especially when it is not honed by actual experience with crime, criminals, and victims.

It should go without saying that criminal profiling involves the application of the behavioral sciences to criminology. Given this fundamental intersection of applied knowledge, it is hard to argue that one can be a qualified behavioral analyst if one does not possess a formal education in at least one of the behavioral sciences (e.g., psychology, sociology, criminology, social work). Too many criminal profilers still fail this basic litmus test, yet offer their services as though such a foundation is irrelevant.

A criminal profiler's final educational path should be dictated by the method that she or he intends to use. If the profiler intends to use a method that involves statistical analysis, she or he must have a formal education that involves mathematics and statistics. If she or he intends to engage in scientific practice, he or she must have a formal education that features understanding and applying the scientific method. If the profiler wishes to examine and reconstruct crime scene behavior, he or she must study forensic science. Formal education provides the theoretical foundation required to give their eventual internships and work experience meaning.

2.4 Experience

Experience is important to the development of knowledge, skills, and abilities. Criminal profilers must gain experience being correct, being incorrect, and being corrected. In this way they learn how to recognize when they are wrong, how to self-

correct, and how to express scientific humility. Experience is accumulated from formal internships, mentoring, on-the-job training, and, of course, from life in general. However, the experiences accumulated must be relevant, and, for them to have any value, they must be informed by outside knowledge and sound theory. This is why formal education must come first. For example, police officers often stand watch over crime scene security. This does not mean that they have knowledge and experience related to investigating crime, unless they are performing the duties of a detective. More experience standing watch over scene security will not teach them to be a good investigators. Detectives, on the other hand, often attend and witness the autopsy in cases of homicide. However, this does not mean that they are qualified to perform the autopsy, as they do not have the same education, training, and background as a forensic pathologist. Their job as witnesses to the autopsy is not the same as the forensic pathologist's job in performing it, and each is educated and trained to take different things away from the experience.

In addition, there is the issue of quantity vs. quality. Dr. Paul L. Kirk (1902–1970), the father of modern forensic science, offered the following thought (1974, p. 16): "The amount of experience is unimportant beside the question of what has been learned from it." If one does not learn from experience, and repeats the same errors time and time again, then experience has little meaning. Someone may have been doing their job for 20 years, but it may also be the same year of errors repeated 20 times.

Another concern regarding experience is that it is used as a shield, to argue the soundness and veracity of conclusions. This is actually a logical fallacy referred to as an appeal to authority. When a purported professional offers a conclusion based solely on the authority or expertise of themselves or others, their logic and reasoning is without solid foundation.

2.5 Behavioral evidence analysis (BAE)

In order to competently and effectively execute the methods of examination and classification provided in this text, in relation to behavioral evidence analysis, the following education and training are required:

1.An undergraduate degree in a behavioral science (psychology, sociology, criminology, social work): This will provide an understanding of human behavior and related behavioral theory and will also provide exposure to the scientific method. A criminal justice degree is not the same as a criminology degree, and most CJ programs will only prepare you for a career in law enforcement or corrections.

2.Undergraduate term papers: Many undergraduate courses allow students to choose term paper research subjects. As much as possible, research and write on subjects related to criminal profiling and related specialized areas of interest.

3.A graduate degree in forensic science or a behavioral science: As just about anyone can get an undergraduate degree, graduate work signals a professional-level commitment to your career. Students should choose a graduate program by seeking to study under someone who both published in their area of interest and also still has a hand in casework. Professional scholars without real-world experience make for poor teachers. They also lack the ability to help students get good internships.

4.Graduate term papers: Many graduate courses allow students to choose term paper research subjects. As much as possible, research and write on subjects related to criminal profiling and related specialized areas of interest.

5.Graduate thesis: It should go without saying that any graduate-level thesis should be written on a subject related to criminal profiling in some fashion—specifically oriented toward the student's specialized areas of interest. This presupposes that the student, by this time, has developed specialized areas of interest.

6.Graduate internships: Seek an internship that exposes you directly to the criminal justice system and its inhabitants. This can include a group home, the public defender's office, an ME or coroner's office, or a law-enforcement agency. Multiple internships are recommended for the broadest exposure. Even when college credit is not available, internships are still recommended. If your college or university program cannot offer you good internship possibilities, you are in the wrong program.

With this formal educational background, the student will be well suited to begin learning and eventually to apply BEA methodology in any career they decide to take up within or related to the criminal justice system. Bear in mind that it is a skill, not a job. The skill may be used in a career as an investigator, paralegal, lawyer, social worker, forensic examiner, or a mental health expert.

3. The Criminal-Profile-Generating Process

PROFILING BASICS

(1) **input**: collecting crime scene information

(2) **decision process**: arranging the input into meaningful patterns and analyzing victim and offender risk

(3) **crime assessment**: reconstructing the crime and the offender motivation

(4) **criminal profile**: developing these specific descriptions of the offender

(5) **investigation**: using the profile as an aid or adjunct in investigation

(6) **apprehension**: checking the accuracy and the description against new info that emerges in the investigation and changing the profile accordingly.

Schlesinger (2009)

The criminal-profile-generating process is styled as having five main stages with a sixth stage or goal being the apprehension of a suspect.

3.1 Profiling Inputs Stage

The profiling inputs stage initiates the criminal-profile-generating process. Comprehensive case resources are essential for accurate profiling. In homicide cases, the required information includes a complete synopsis of the crime and a description of the crime scene, encircling factors indigenous to that area to the time of the incident such as political and social environment and the weather conditions. Complete background information on the victim is also vital in homicide profiles. The data should cover domestic setting, reputation, hobbies, physical condition, employment, habits, fears, , personality, criminal history, family relationships, and social conduct. Forensic information concerning to the crime is also critical to the profiling process, including an autopsy report with toxicology/serology results, autopsy photographs, and photographs of the cleansed

wounds. The report should also comprise of the medical examiner's findings and impressions regarding type of weapon, estimated time and cause of death, and suspected sequence of delivery of wounds. Also useful are crime scene sketches showing distances, directions, and scale, as well as maps of the area (which may cross law enforcement jurisdiction boundaries).

The data and photographs can reveal such significant elements as the level of risk of the victim, the degree of control exhibited by the offender, the offender's emotional state, and his criminal cleverness.

3.2. Decision Process Models Stage

The decision process begins by organizing and arranging the inputs into meaningful patterns. Seven key decision points, or models, differentiate and organize the information from Stage 1 and form an underlying decisional structure for profiling.

3.2.1 Homicide Type and Style

Anything beyond three victims is classified as a mass murder; that is, four or more victims in one location, and within one event. There are two types of mass murder: classic and family.

A classic mass murder involves one person operating in one location at one period of time. That period of time could be minutes or hours and might even be days. The classic mass murderer is usually described as a mentally disordered individual whose problems have increased to the point that he acts against groups of people unrelated to these problems. He unleashes his hostility through shootings or stabbings.

One classic mass murderer was Charles Whitman, the man who armed himself with boxes of ammunition, weapons, ropes, a radio, and food; barricaded himself on a tower in Austin, Texas; and opened fire for 90 minutes, killing 16 people and wounding over 30 others. He was stopped only when he was killed during an assault on the tower.

The second type of mass murder is family member murder. If more than three family members are killed and the culprit takes his own life, it is classified as a mass murder/suicide. Without the suicide and with four or more victims, the murder is called a family killing. Examples include John List, an insurance salesman who killed his entire family on November 9, 1972, in Westfield, New Jersey. The bodies of List's wife and three children (ages 16, 15, and 13) were discovered in their front room, lying side by side on top of sleeping bags as if in a mortuary. Their faces were covered and their arms were folded across their bodies. Each had been shot once behind the left ear, except one son who had been

shot multiple times. A further search of the residence discovered the body of List's mother in a third floor closet. She had also been shot once behind the left ear. List disappeared after the crime and his car was found at an airport parking lot.

Two additional types of multiple murder are spree and serial. A spree murder involves killings at two or more locations with no emotional cooling-off time period between murders. For Example, On September 6, 1949, Camden, New Jersey, spree murderer Howard Unruh took a loaded German luger with extra ammunition and randomly fired the handgun while walking through his neighborhood, killing 13 people and wounding 3 in about 20 minutes.

Serial murderers are involved in three or more separate events with an emotional cooling-off period between homicides. This type killer usually premeditates his crimes, often fantasizing and planning the murder in ever, aspect with the possible exception of the specific victim. Then, when the time is right for him and he is cooled off from his last homicide, he selects his next victim and proceeds with his plan. The cool-off period can be days, weeks, or months, and is the main element that separates the serial killer from other multiple killers.

A serial murderer may commit a spree of murders. In 1984, Christopher Wilder, an Australian-born businessman and race car driver, traveled across the United States killing young women. He would target victims at shopping malls or would abduct them after meeting them through a beauty contest setting or dating service. While a fugitive as a serial murderer, Wilder was investigated, identified, and tracked by the FBI and almost every police department in the country. He then went on a longterm killing spree throughout the country and eventually was killed during a shoot-out with police.

3.2.2 Primary lntent of the Murderer

In some cases, murder may be secondary action and not itself the primary intent of the offender. The killer's primary intent could be: (1) criminal enterprise. (2) sexual or (3) emotional, selfish, or cause-specific. When the primary intent is criminal enterprise, the killer may be involved in the business of crime as his livelihood. Sometimes murder becomes part of this business even though there is no personal hatred towards the victim. The primary motive is money. In the 1950s, a young man placed a bomb in his mother's suitcase that was loaded aboard a commercial aircraft. The aircraft exploded, killing 44 people. The young man's motive had been to collect money from the travel insurance he had taken out on his mother prior to the flight. Criminal enterprise killings involving a group include contract murders, gang murders, competition murders, and political murders.

The murderer may have sexual motives for killing. Individuals may kill as a result of or to engage in sexual activity, dismemberment, mutilation, evisection, or other activities that have sexual meaning only for the offender.

When the primary intent involves emotional, selfish, or cause-specific reasons, the murderer may kill in self-defense or compassion (mercy killings where life support systems are disconnected). Family disputes or violence may lie behind infanticide, patricide, matricide, and spouse and sibling killings. Murders in this category involving groups are committed for a variety of reasons: religious, cult, and fanatical organizations.

3.2.3 Victim Risk

The concept of the victim's risk is involved at several stages of the profiling process and provides information about the suspect in terms of how he/she operates. Risk is determined using such factors as age, occupation, physical stature, lifestyle, resistance ability, and victim's location, and is classified as high, moderate, or low. Murderers seek high-risk victims at locations where people may be vulnerable, such as isolated areas. Low-risk types include those whose occupations and daily lifestyles do not lead them to being targeted as victims. The information on victim risk helps to generate an image of the type of offender being sought. For example, abducting a victim at noon from a busy street is high risk. Thus, a low-risk victim snatched under high-risk circumstances creates ideas about the offender, such as personal stresses he/she is functioning under, his/her beliefs, or the excitement he/she needs in the commission of the crime, or his/her emotional maturity.

3.2.4 Escalation

Information about escalation is derived from an analysis of facts and patterns from the prior decision process stages/models. Investigative profilers are able to assume the sequence of acts committed during the crime. From this deduction, they may be able to make determinations about the potential of the criminal not only to escalate his crimes (e.g., rape, murder, assault etc), but to repeat his crimes in serial fashion.

One case example is David Berkowitz, the Son of Sam killer, who started his criminal acts with the nonfatal stabbing of a teenage girl and who escalated to the subsequent 44-caliber killings.

3.2.5 Time Factors

There are several time factors that need to be considered in producing a criminal profile. These factors include the length of time required: (1) to kill the victim, (2) to commit additional acts with the body, and (3) to dispose off the body. The time of day or night that the crime was committed is also important, as it may provide information on the lifestyle and occupation of the offender (and also relates to the offender risk

factor). In the case of the New York murder of Kitty Genovese, the killer carried on his murderous assault to the point where many people heard or witnessed the crime, leading to his eventual prosecution.

3.2.6 Location Factors

Information about location-where the victim was first approached, where the crime occurred, and if the crime and death scenes differ-provide yet additional data about the offender. For example, such information provides details about whether the murderer used a vehicle to transport the victim from the death scene or if the victim died at her point of kidnapping.

3. 3. Crime Assessment Stage

This stage involves the reconstruction of the sequence of events and the behavior of both the offender and victim. Based on the various decisions of the previous stage, this reconstruction of how things happened, how people behaved, and how they planned and organized the encounter provides information about specific characteristics to be generated for the criminal profile. Assessments are made about the classification of the crime, its organized/disorganized aspects, the offender's selection of a victim, strategies used to control the victim, the sequence of crime, the performance (or not) of the crime, the offender's motivation for the crime, and crime scene dynamics. The classification of the crime is determined through the decision process outlined in the first decision process model.

3.3.1 Motivation

Is a difficult factor to judge because it requires dealing with the inner thoughts and behavior of the offender. Motivation is more easily determined in the organized offender who premeditates, plans, and has the ability to carry out a plan of action that is logical and complete. On the other hand, the disorganized offender carries out his crimes by motivations that frequently are derived from mental illnesses and accompanying distorted thinking (resulting from delusions and hallucinations). Drugs and alcohol, as well as panic and stress resulting from disruptions during the execution of the crime, are factors which must be considered in the overall assessment of the crime scene.

3.3.2 Crime Scene Dynamics

Crime scene dynamics are the numerous elements common to every crime scene which must be interpreted by investigating officers and are at times easily misunderstood. Examples include location of crime scene, cause of death, method of killing, positioning of body, excessive trauma, and location of wounds.

Thus, the process used by an investigative profiler in developing a criminal profile is quite similar to that used by clinicians to make a diagnosis and treatment plan: data is collected and assessed, the situation reconstructed, hypotheses formulated, a profile is developed and tested, and the results are reported. Investigators traditionally have learned profiling through brainstorming, intuition, and educated guesswork. Their expertise is the result of years of accumulated wisdom, extensive experience in the field, and familiarity with a large number of cases. A profiler brings to the investigation the ability to make hypothetical formulations based on his or her previous experience. A formulation is defined here as a concept, that organizes, explains, or makes investigative sense out of information, and that influences the profile hypotheses. These formulations are based on clusters of information emerging from the crime scene data and from the investigator's experience in understanding criminal actions. A basic premise of criminal profiling is that the way a person thinks that directs the person's behavior. Thus, when the investigative profiler analyzes a crime scene and notes certain critical factors, she or he may be able to determine the motive and type of person who committed the crime.

3.4. Criminal Profile Stage

The fourth stage in generating a criminal profile deals with the type of person who committed the crime and that individual's behavioral organization with relation to the crime. Once this description is generated, the strategy of investigation can be formulated, as this strategy requires a basic understanding of how an individual will respond to a variety of investigative efforts. Included in the criminal profile are background information (demographics), physical characteristics, habits, beliefs and values, pre-offense behavior leading to the crime, and post-offense behavior. It may also include investigative recommendations for interrogating or interviewing, identifying, and apprehending the offender. This fourth stage has an important means of validating the criminal profile - Feedback No. 1. The profile must fit with the earlier reconstruction of the crime, with the evidence, and with the key decision process models. In addition, the investigative procedure developed from the recommendations must make sense in terms of the expected response patterns of the offender. If there is a lack of congruence, the investigative profilers review all available data. As Hercule Poirot observed, "To know is to have all of the evidence and facts fit into place."

3.5. Investigation Stage

Once the congruence of the criminal profile is determined, a written report is provided to the requesting agency and added to its ongoing investigative efforts. The investigative recommendations generated in Stage 4 are applied, and suspects

matching the profile are evaluated. If identification, apprehension, and a confession result, the goal of the profile effort has been met. If new evidence is generated (e.g., by another murder) and/or there is no identification of a suspect, reevaluation occurs via Feedback No. 2. The information is reexamined and the profile revalidated.

3.6. Apprehension Stage Once a suspect is apprehended, the agreement between the outcome and the various stages in the profile-generating-process are examined. When an apprehended suspect admits guilt, it is important to conduct a detailed interview to check the total profiling process for validity.
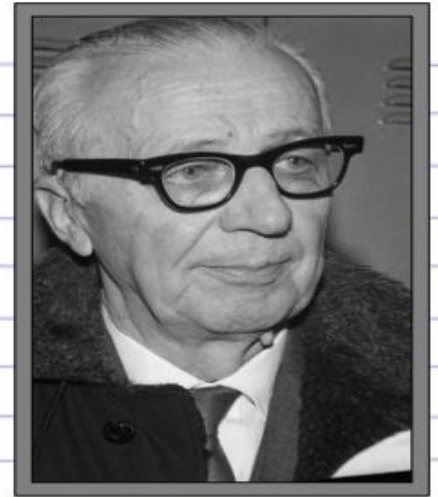

THE MAD BOMBER

MID 1950s, NEW YORK CITY

Set bombs at various landmarks such as Grand Central Station, Radio City Music Hall, as well as theatres and libraries

Planted at least 33 bombs, 22 exploded, injuring 15 people

Planned offenses with a high degree of detail, went undetected for 16 years

Schlesinger (2009)

4. Summary

Criminal personality profiling has proven to be a useful tool to law enforcement in solving violent, apparently motiveless crimes. The process has aided significantly in the solution of many cases over the past decade. It is believed that through the research efforts of personnel in the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime and professionals in other field, the profiling process will continue to be refined and be a viable investigative aid to law enforcement.

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Recommended Further readings:
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2. **Siegel, L. (2004). Criminology: Theories, Patterns, & Typologies, 8e. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning**

3. **Newburn, T (2012). Criminology, 2e. Routledge**