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The Analysis of the Crime Scene



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Obviously, some crimes are more appropriate for profiling than others. We have listed these crimes in Chapter 1: sadistic torture in sexual assault, evisceration, postmortem slashing and cutting, motiveless fire setting, lust and mutilation murder, and rape (stranger rape, not date or acquaintance rape). Such crimes as check forgery, bank robbery, and kidnapping, in contrast, are usually not appropriate candidates for profiling, nor are “smoking gun” or “dripping knife”

murders. In this chapter we focus on those crimes to which the process of profiling is directly applicable.

❖ BEYOND THE PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

Perhaps one of the most difficult things for investigators to accept is the need to look beyond the physical evidence. Homicide detectives are generally trained to reconstruct a crime based on the physical evidence found at the scene, such as blood spatters, fingerprints, and semen. This kind of evidence is often mistakenly thought to hold the key to the successful resolution of any criminal case.

While lecturing in classrooms and across the country on psychological profiling we repeated tell our students that when they begin to profile a case, they should disregard the physical evidence and concentrate on nonphysical factors. Often times, students and law enforcement officials are reluctant to do so. We say this, however, because it helps the investigator tie the nonphysical evidence with the physical evidence, once introduced, to produce a total picture of a crime scene. We have found that many people become too caught up in the physical evidence and it limits their ability to think outside the box to reconstruct the totality of a crime scene. However, once they are able to ignore the physical evidence, they can oftentimes deduce information about a suspect, including race, sex, employment status, residence, and so on. Thus from our point of view, it is the interrelationship of physical evidence and nonphysical evidence that is the key to the profiling process.

❖ PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILING TYPOLOGY

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has developed a typology of lust offenders that many profilers find particularly useful; it divides offenders into two categories—disorganized asocial offenders and organized nonsocial offenders. In their book *Sexual Homicide*, Ressler, Burgess, and Douglas (1988) delete the labels “asocial” and “nonsocial” in describing this typology. (We believe this is unfortunate, because the descriptive nature of these words is useful. There is a fundamental difference between nonsocial and asocial behaviors, and these adjectives add valuable information that can help clarify the differences between organized and disorganized offenders. For the purposes of this text, we use the full original label to identify each type of offender. (The FBI also

has dropped the words *nonsocial* and *asocial* from the labels in its typology, but, as explained, we retain both terms here because we believe they have important meanings.)

This typology can be useful when the crimes at issue involve sex as a primary motive. The offenders who commit such crimes as rape, sexual assault, mutilation, necrophilia, and picquerism are particularly amenable to categorization as organized nonsocial or disorganized asocial offenders.

❖ The Disorganized Asocial Offender

Personal Characteristics

As the list of characteristics in Table 5.1 shows, the personality of this kind of offender is reflected in the label. The disorganized asocial offender, who is almost always male, is disorganized in his daily activities as well as in his general surroundings, including home, employment (if he is employed), car or truck, clothing, and demeanor. In other words, he is a totally disorganized person in all areas—appearance, lifestyle, and psychological state. We should note that this is a general description, and it has not been empirically validated. Nonetheless, in the cases where a “pure” such personality has been found, these general characteristics have proven to be amazingly accurate.

According to the FBI’s research data, the typical offender with a disorganized asocial personality tends to be a nonathletic, introverted White male. As children, many of these offenders have been victims of physical or emotional abuse. Their fathers were often absent; if the fathers were present and employed, their work was unstable. During their childhoods, these offenders had few real playmates; they tended to have solitary hobbies, to have imaginary and secret playmates, and to take part in few social activities. The disorganized asocial offender is a loner. The reason for this aloneness, however, is fundamentally different from that behind the aloneness of the organized nonsocial offender. The disorganized asocial offender is a loner because he is perceived by others to be “weird” or strange—his neighbors are often aware of his strangeness.

This perpetrator has usually experienced a great deal of difficulty in educational pursuits. While in high school, he participated little in extracurricular activities, and he probably dropped out of school as soon as legally possible. He is possibly below average in IQ (the FBI estimates the IQ of the typical disorganized asocial offender to be

Table 5.1 Profile Characteristics of Disorganized Asocial Offenders

<i>Personal Characteristics</i>	<i>Post-offense Behavior</i>	<i>Interview Techniques</i>
Below-average intelligence	Returns to crime scene	Show empathy
Socially inadequate	May attend victim's funeral/burial	Introduce information indirectly
Unskilled worker	May place "in memoriam" in newspaper	Use counselor approach
Low birth-order status	May turn to religion	Interview at night
Father's work unstable	May keep diary or news clippings	
Received harsh/inconsistent discipline in childhood	May change residence	
Anxious mood during crime	May change job	
Minimal use of alcohol	May have a personality change	
Lives alone		
Lives/works near crime scene		
Minimal interest in news media		
Significant behavioral change		
Nocturnal		
Poor personal hygiene		
Secret hiding places		
Usually does not date		
High school dropout		

between 80 and 95), but this may be more a product of his social and cultural experiences than his native intelligence.

His status in his community is the product of several components of his personality. Limited intelligence, involvement in unskilled work (often as a menial laborer), and few dates or other social contacts with women all reflect a person who is alone not by choice but because of societal segregation.

Because of the combination of components described above, the disorganized asocial offender lacks the ability to plan out his crimes efficiently, and the crimes tend to be spontaneous acts. This kind of offender does not feel comfortable venturing far from his home or work, so he often commits crimes in his own neighborhood. He may walk or ride a bicycle to his crime sites ("Crime Scene," 1985). Generally, this kind of offender does not feel the need to follow his crimes in the news media.

The disorganized asocial offender normally lacks the initiative to practice good personal hygiene. This same characteristic carries over to his domicile, as well as to any car or truck he may own. This trait, then, may theoretically carry over into the crime scene. Finally, as with all lust offenders, he will repeat his crimes.

Post-offense Behavior

According to the researchers at the Behavioral Science Unit (BSU) of the FBI, the disorganized asocial offender will tend to exhibit certain behavior patterns after he has committed a crime. First, he will need to return to the scene of the crime relatively soon afterward, to envision and relive what has taken place. He may attend the funeral services of his victim, even the burial ceremony. It is not unheard of for such an offender to place an "in memoriam" message in the newspaper for his victim.

This offender may keep a diary in which he records his activities and victims. With the widespread availability of instant photography and videotape equipment, this type of offender will often keep visual collection collage of his criminal events. Included in collage may be pictures or videos he took of the victim before, during, or after the crime. A part of this type of offender's diary, in addition to accounts of his acts, may be devoted to stories of his fantasies. One serial rapist related the following fantasy:

My preference is for tight teenage girls—the tighter the better.
[Talking with another rapist] We've got to do this the right way.

You really blew it, but you were inexperienced. The first thing is to get a house with a windowless, underground basement. Equip it with steel cages [for holding victims], and make sure to sound-proof it. Only then will we go out and hunt.

But not just for anyone. Take your time, and find exactly what you want—you don't want to be attracting attention by snatching up a

new one every little while. Find one that's perfect. Then we'll keep her locked up before you kill her and grab another. But if we torture, we'd best grab two so that we will always have one recovering while we're busy on the other. (Author's files)

After an offense, the disorganized asocial offender may change his address, but it would be unusual for him to move to a far different environment, because he feels comfortable only with the familiar. If he moves to an area that is drastically different, he may suffer great feelings of anomie. He may therefore move to a similar domicile in a similar area. He may even change jobs. Some may try to enlist in the military, but this is usually unsuccessful, because they either cannot pass the physical or psychological tests or, once enlisted, receive a general discharge.

Interviewing Techniques

Once in custody, the disorganized asocial offender may respond differently to questioning than would the organized nonsocial offender. This perpetrator may be more likely to respond to an interrogator who uses a relationship-motivated strategy. It may be a good idea for the interrogator to appear to empathize with him. For example, if an offender says that he has seen a demon and that the demon demanded that he kill, it might be wise for his questioner to tell him that although the questioner has not personally seen this demon, if the killer says it exists, it does indeed exist.

Because this kind of offender is not used to lengthy personal contacts with others, it may be beneficial for interrogators to keep up a constant stream of conversation, perhaps introducing something into the conversation that has to do with the crime scene. The establishment of a positive personal relationship may also prove beneficial in securing some statement concerning the involvement of the suspect in the case.

Another characteristic of the disorganized asocial offender that may be useful for interrogators to know is that he tends to be a night person. Considering this, the interviewer might take the opportunity to interview this person when he is at "his best"—at night.

The Organized Nonsocial Offender

Personal Characteristics

The organized nonsocial offender is the disorganized asocial offender's opposite. He has an organized personality that is reflected in

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his lifestyle, home, automobile, and personal appearance. This kind of offender may suffer from some type of obsessive compulsive disorder in his life, in that there is a place for everything, and everything must be in its place.

Ted Bundy is an example of such an offender. Because of his personality, Bundy would have found it very difficult to deviate from his accustomed way of doing things. As a result, he was connected with at least four murders because he charged his gasoline and signed receipts for his purchases. He was placed in Golden, Colorado, on the day Suzy Cooley was abducted and killed; in Dillon, Colorado, when Julie Cunningham was murdered; and in Grand Junction, Colorado, when Denise Oliverson was reported missing. Michael Fisher was able to secure a murder indictment against Bundy in the Caryn Campbell case when Fisher was able to place Bundy in the immediate vicinity of the Snowmass Ski Lodge because of his gasoline purchases.

As Table 5.2 shows, organized nonsocial offenders are basically organized in everything they do. They are nonsocial because they choose

Table 5.2 Profile Characteristics of the Organized Nonsocial Offender

<i>Personal Characteristics</i>	<i>Post-offense Behavior</i>	<i>Interview Techniques</i>
High intelligence	Returns to crime scene	Use direct strategy
Socially adequate	Volunteers information	Be certain of details
Sexually competent	Police groupie	Be aware that offender will admit only to what he must
Lives with partner	Anticipates questioning	
High birth order	May move body	
Harsh discipline in childhood	May dispose of body to advertise crime	
Controlled mood		
Masculine image		
Charming		
Situational cause		
Geographically mobile		
Occupationally mobile		
Follows media		
Model prisoner		

to be so. These offenders' solitariness is different from that of disorganized asocial offenders, who, as noted above, are loners because they appear to be strange. Organized nonsocial offenders are loners because they often feel that no one else is good enough to be around them.

In addition, there are precipitating factors involved in the crimes of the organized nonsocial personality ("Crime Scene," 1985, p. 19). These precipitating factors may be either real or imagined. As one serial killer told us:

One night I finally got a date with a young woman I had been trying to date for 6 months. We went out for a drink before dinner. We were sitting at the bar when a guy walked by. She watched him as he walked down the bar. I felt that she should not look at him while she was with me. So, what could I do? I killed her.

The young woman who was this killer's victim had challenged his sense of self-importance. The killer believed he "had no choice"—he had to kill to regain his rightful position. Although the damage this offender perceived the woman had done him was only imagined, it was enough.

Another attribute of the organized offender includes average intelligence; some such offenders may have done well in school, and many are at least high school graduates. (Ted Bundy was a college graduate and a law school student.) These offenders are socially competent, have sex partners, and some are married. Many come from middle-class families and are high in the birth order. Their fathers held stable jobs and were often inconsistent about discipline. For many such offenders there is a history of some drug use, especially alcohol and marijuana. Bundy, again as an example, was a heavy user of alcohol and marijuana during his crimes.

The organized offender feels comfortable venturing away from his home. He is able to work and carry on personal, although superficial, relationships. He also is psychologically able to widen his network of relationships and can travel farther and farther away from his home and work to cruise for victims, and, more important, to hinder his apprehension.

Because of his personality, this type of offender has no trouble making friends. He is also able to change employment as often as he chooses because he makes such a good impression and appears to have qualifications that he may in reality not possess. Many have good positions. John Gacy owned a construction company. Chris Wilder was a race car driver. Ken Bianchi was a "psychologist" and security officer.

The organized nonsocial offender has a masculine personality. He often dresses in a flashy manner and drives a car that reflects his personality. As mentioned above, unlike the disorganized asocial personality offender, he feels comfortable in widening his range when cruising for victims, or when trying to avoid detection. Using Bundy again as a prime example, he was suspected of abducting Roberta Kathy Parks from the campus of Oregon State University. He drove her (apparently still alive) almost 300 miles back to Seattle. This was not an isolated incident. He also was alleged to have driven from Seattle to Ellensburg, Washington, for the abduction and murder of Susan Rancourt. The disorganized offender, in contrast, ranges only within his immediate neighborhood, because this is the only place he feels comfortable.

With a positive self-image bordering on egomania, the organized nonsocial offender may be said to have a character disorder. Commonly, he is termed a full-blown sociopath. He believes that he knows best, not only for himself but for everyone else as well. Because he is always right, he is reluctant to accept criticism, even when it is meant constructively; this offender perceives any kind of criticism to be destructive.

Post-offense Behavior

For the organized nonsocial offender, the crime becomes, at least partially, a game. Such an offender will often return to the scene of the crime for the purpose of reliving the sensations he felt there. Some, like Edmund Kemper, will be tempted to return to the scene but will not because they have "seen one too many stories of one too many people" who have been caught by the police when they did so—a piece of information Kemper picked up from watching television. The organized nonsocial offender often learns many details of police work from television and other sources. He may even associate with police or other law enforcement agencies, because the police talk about the cases that are special to them. As Kemper said of his relationships with police, "I became a friendly nuisance" (Horvath, 1984).

In interviewing one serial killer, we mentioned to him that although the man was suspected of killing scores of young women, only a few of the bodies had ever been found. The killer's reaction was, "You only find the bodies they [the serial killers] want you to find." When asked why a killer would want some bodies to be found and not others, he said, "To let you know he's still there."

Because of his charm and charismatic personality, this person may be the last to be suspected of a crime. Even if suspected, because he often

possesses intelligence and social graces, he may be able to anticipate investigators' questions and prepare responses to suit his own situation.

Interviewing Techniques

The BSU recommends that this kind of offender be confronted directly during the interviewing session. Offenders of this type respect competence, even when it may lead to their arrest and conviction. However, when using such confrontation in the interrogation, the interviewer must be absolutely confident about his or her information. If the interviewer presents "the facts," he or she must be certain that they are true and accurate. This type of offender will know immediately when he is being conned, and he will understand immediately that if false "evidence" is presented to him the police actually have no case. This can close the door on the successful resolution of a case, because the offender will never volunteer any information that can be taken as any kind of admission of guilt. This type of offender will admit to only what he must. The interrogator should not hope that once he is confronted with all the known facts the floodgates of information will open.

Some believe that a single-interviewer strategy is best. In the Ted Bundy case, Donald Patchen and Steven Bodiford (personal communication, 2000) interrogated Bundy frequently during a short period. The interviews took place mostly at night. Finally, after several sessions, Bundy admitted, "There's something deep inside me, something I can't control." However, after he had the chance to sleep and psychologically regroup, Bundy denied having admitted even that.

❖ CRIME SCENE DIFFERENCES

It has been theorized that the crime scenes of organized nonsocial offenders and disorganized asocial offenders will differ along the same lines as the differences in their personalities (see Table 5.3). That is, those who are organized in their lives in general will also be organized in the perpetration of their crimes, and those who are disorganized in their everyday lives will be disorganized in the perpetration of their crimes, and so differing degrees of organization and disorganization should be evident in crime scenes.

The organized nonsocial offender takes great care in the perpetration of his violence. This offender makes certain that the evidence will be destroyed. Also, in the case of homicide, he will often kill at one site and dispose of the body at another site. The disorganized offender, on

Table 5.3 Comparison of Crime Scenes of Organized Nonsocial and Disorganized Asocial Lust Killers

<i>Organized Nonsocial Killer</i>	<i>Disorganized Asocial Killer</i>
Planned offense	Spontaneous event
Targeted stranger	Victim unknown
Personalizes victim	Depersonalizes victim
Controlled conversation	Minimal conversation
Controlled crime scene	Chaotic crime scene
Submissive victim	Sudden violence
Restraints used	No restraints
Aggressive acts	Sex after death
Body moved	Body not moved
Weapon taken	Weapon left
Little evidence	Physical evidence

the other hand, attacks his victims suddenly, in unplanned or barely planned violence. The surprise, or blitz, attack results in a crime scene that holds a great deal of physical evidence.

The following case provides an example.

Case study: A 75-year-old widow had lived in the same housing project since 1937 and had been living alone since the mid-1960s. On July 4, when her son came to pick her up to spend the holiday with his family, he found his mother's body in her bed. She had been stabbed repeatedly and decapitated. The weapon was a butcher knife that had belonged to the victim. Blood spatter was found on the walls by her bed as well as on the ceiling, showing that the attack had been carried out in a frenzy. The woman had been sexually assaulted, and semen was found in her vaginal vault as well as on the bedspread and in the bedclothes.

There was a great deal of physical evidence at the scene. No other murders similar to this one were known, and a profile was requested.

The profile suggested that the offender was a Black male, early 20s, single, living within the immediate neighborhood, and living

with his mother or alone. He probably had a history of mental illness and probably had been hospitalized or institutionalized for his mental condition. In addition, the profile suggested that once the offender was apprehended, the interrogators might try to establish a personal relationship with him.

Within 6 weeks, three other elderly women were attacked. All had lived within a 1-mile radius of the original attack. Of these three women, the first was 70 years old. She was stabbed 21 times in the neck with such force and rage that a half-inch of the scissors was left lodged in her neck. The next victim, who was also attacked in her home, was stabbed in the neck 11 times. The last victim succeeded in warding off the attacker and called the police. A suspect was apprehended.

In the course of the interrogation, the suspect admitted that he had been in the homes of the victims. In the case of the decapitated victim, he denied stabbing her but did say that he had "killed a demon" that had been chasing him. Elaborating on his story, he stated that the only time he was safe from the demon that had been after him was when he was on a city bus or in jail. On the evening of the first attack he got off a bus, and the demon was there waiting for him. He ran and entered the house at the first door he came to. The demon ran past him and then into the victim's bedroom. The killer grabbed a butcher knife from the kitchen, ran into the bedroom, and repeatedly stabbed the demon.

The profile in this case was accurate. The amount of evidence, the chaos evident in the crime scene, the weapon's belonging to the victim as well as its being left at the crime scene, the violence done to the victim, the lack of restraints, the body left at the death scene—all suggested a profile that did indeed narrow the scope of the investigation. (Author's files)

Organized nonsocial offenders and disorganized asocial offenders also tend to have different relationships to their victims. Both types select "strangers" as victims, but the character of the strangers is different. The disorganized asocial offender may be aware before the crime of the existence of his victim, but he has no personal relationship with that person. In the case related above, for example, the killer lived in the neighborhood and knew the addresses and locations of the apartments in which the murders occurred. For the organized nonsocial

offender, however, the victim is a targeted stranger. One offender told us in an interview about his typical choice for a victim:

If I had made a composite of my "typical" victim, it would read like this: The individual would be White, female, between the ages of 13 and 19, given the adolescent dress and manner. I would say that perhaps 75% of my victims fell under this general description. Obviously there is a pattern of selectivity here, else this large percentage figure would not so closely fit the description I've laid forth. Just as obviously, it wasn't a matter of my victims' "just being there."

But just how conscious was this selectivity and why did roughly three-quarters of my victims fit this mold? In answer to the first question, I would have to say that it was not entirely conscious in that I didn't hold a general picture of an 18-year-old adolescent, White female in my mind. Certainly more and more often than not, I was roaming the streets in search of females in general, but with no specific age group in mind. Yet 75% of the time the person who "clicked" and "registered" in my mind was the girl I described above. More accurately, I was reacting to the "click" in my gut, more so than to predetermined, sought-after characteristics. Yet the predisposition toward victims of that general description, subconscious or not, was there. (Author's files)

This violent personal offender seemed to have some understanding of the reason for his selection of young White females. He went on to discuss how very popular female students rejected him in high school. Of another nationality, he was averse to dating young women of his own ethnic group, and he provided some insight into this reluctance, citing some shame about his own background. The slightest resistance to his social overtures met with rage.

Minimal conversation takes place usually between the disorganized offender and his victim. It is a blitz attack, and the establishment of any relationship is not a requirement. In contrast, conversation between the organized offender and his victim is a language of intimidation once the victim is within the offender's "comfort zone." The vehicle for the initial contact now becomes the vehicle for control. The organized nonsocial offender appears able to assay the vulnerability of his stalked victim. One serial killer remarked, "I can tell by the way they walk, the way they tilt their heads. I can tell by the look in their eyes" (author's files).

Victims of organized nonsocial offenders often suffer vicious attacks prior to death. Sometimes these offenders use restraints to render their victims helpless and to heighten victims' fear, which the offenders may need to see to gain full satisfaction. Disorganized offenders, in contrast, usually have no need for restraints, because their purpose is not to intimidate or to instill fear. One organized offender described to us his reaction to one victim's failure to show the fear he wanted to see:

When I sighted the women [his two victims] they meant absolutely nothing to me as human beings. Indicative of the worthlessness they held in my eyes was my extreme rage toward the first woman, who I felt was defying me through her "unwillingness" to "suffer well." Undoubtedly she was instead paralyzed by cold and fear, but, in my own distorted mind, her silence and lack of struggling was a defiant sign against being reduced to brokenness and worthlessness, and therefore, the contempt I felt for her defiance was such that I killed her right away, forgetting her almost instantly as I went to the second woman. (Author's files)

In an organized nonsocial crime scene, normally the weapon not only belongs to the offender but is taken from the crime scene. This is not true of the disorganized asocial offender. This violent personal offender does not think through what he is about to do; the act is spontaneous. Bringing a weapon to a crime scene shows at least some form of rudimentary planning, and this offender does not think ahead.

The moving of a body from the crime scene may be an indication that the unknown suspect is an organized nonsocial type. The disorganized type has no desire or need to move the body. Once the killing has been accomplished, his mission is over.

❖ CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have discussed a typology of offenders that has important implications for law enforcement profiling of lust killers. We have addressed the typical personal characteristics and post-offense behaviors of disorganized asocial and organized nonsocial offenders, as well as the interviewing techniques recommended for use with each type of suspect. We have also discussed the differences that may be found in the crime scenes associated with the two types of offenders.

Investigators will find the guidelines laid out in the typology discussed here to be useful in their profiling of violent crimes, as they take

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into account the chaos or lack of chaos in a crime scene, the presence or absence of a weapon, the presence or absence of mutilation of the victim, and other details. Of course, not all crimes are lust killings. In the next chapter we will address arson and the types of individuals who commit these crimes.

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