

Typical and Atypical Homicide: Investigative Differences and Cold Case Profiling
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ABSTRACT

This article addresses the difference between typical homicides and atypical homicides. Homicide investigators, even those in large agencies with dozens of homicides each year, spend the majority of their career investigating typical homicides. These include homicides where the perpetrator has a relationship with the victim, the victim is engaged in drug activity, or the victim is a target, bystander, or participant in other illegal activity. Atypical homicides are those that do not fall into one of these areas and they include serial crimes. This article addresses how the recognition of these two types of homicide, as well as how investigative differences between the two, can assist the cold case profiler and what profilers need for a cold case profiling.

Key Words: profiling, atypical homicide, typical homicide, investigation, cold case

Learning objectives:

1. To identify the distinction between typical and atypical homicide.
2. To identify the different methods of homicide investigation between typical and atypical homicide.
3. To identify the needs of a profiler for cold case investigation.

Introduction

Veteran investigators spend their careers in agencies like Detroit, Baltimore, New Orleans, and other departments that investigate literally hundreds of homicides each year. For example, Detroit had over 340 homicides in 2008 (Smith, 2008), Baltimore had 234 in 2008 (Unger, 2009), and New Orleans had just over 200 in 2007 (New Orleans Has Highest U.S. City Crime Rate, 2009). These are highly experienced officers in the field. Routine homicides are to police work what diagnosing and treating the flu is to a physician. General practice physicians can diagnose the flu efficiently and quickly, but most physicians rarely see exotic disease. For atypical diagnoses, doctors often refer to a specialist. Homicides are similar. Most of the homicides these investigators see are the equivalent of the flu. The typical homicide often involves people with a history of violence and when detectives arrive on the scene, it isn't uncommon for them to know the victim as well as the perpetrator. As an Atlanta homicide detective once told me, "The difference between the dead guy and the perpetrator is that the dead guy was a bad guy who was slower on the draw."

The difference between the homicides investigators are accustomed to seeing and the ones that stump them is the difference between typical and atypical homicides. The way homicides are routinely investigated is

missing something that cold case profilers need. Many investigators take shortcuts when investigating typical homicides. These shortcuts help quickly expedite the process and can save money and time. To thoroughly investigate every homicide would be a waste of resources for a seasoned investigator, but shortcuts leave cases lacking when they reach the desk of the cold case profiler.

Typical and Atypical homicide. Most homicides are committed by one of three major types of perpetrators – (1) the victim has a relationship with the perpetrator - lovers, spouses, children, neighbors, or co-workers, (2) the victim is engaged in the use, purchase, sale, storage, or distribution of illegal drugs, or (3) the victim is either an innocent target (i.e. a convenience store clerk) or is engaged in socially marginal activities (i.e. prostitution, gang behavior). For example, the FBI reports that of 14,000 homicides in 2007, over 6,000 of those murder victims were family members, friends, co-workers, or acquaintances (Crime in the United States, 2007) and another study reported that between 1976 and 2005, of the 594,276 homicides, over 50% of the victims were killed by someone they knew (U.S. Department of Justice, 2007). These are typical homicides. The cases that befuddle investigators are those that don't fit into the investigative model by which they have been trained. Once they run out of suspects and follow leads to their logical ends, they don't know what else to do. The reason they don't know what else to do is because their training and experience doesn't prepared them for investigating homicides that don't fit into one of the typical categories.

Homicides committed by serial killers, psychotic killers, and perpetrators who do not fit into one of the three major types listed above are atypical homicides. These homicides make up a minority of the homicides that are committed, but when investigators approach atypical homicides in the same way they do typical homicides, they run into a dead end. By this point their cases have grown cold and it is difficult or impossible to acquire needed evidence that could have been easily collected from the start.

Why cases grow cold. Cases grow cold for several reasons, but the major reasons are these:

- inability to identify the victim
- lack of manpower, funding, or motivation to close the case
- perpetrators who are known, but insufficient evidence exists to convict
- errors by investigators
- poorly investigated cases make closing the case difficult or impossible

These cases will remain inactive until new evidence comes to light and they might never be closed. But cases also grow cold when investigators simply run out of leads. In typical homicides, investigations are more like the movies. There is a finite set of suspects and the perpetrator is likely to be one of them. Unfortunately, those rules don't work with atypical homicides. There are an infinite number of possible suspects as well as an infinite number of motives. If investigators don't recognize this difference at the beginning of the investigation, they will soon find themselves spinning their wheels.

With typical homicides it would be a waste of manpower and effort to pursue extensive interviews with tangential witnesses or relatives, establish string trajectories, and other time-consuming and expensive processes. The pursuit of the case can be focused much more efficiently on a likely suspect. Most investigators don't have the luxury of time, money, and manpower. They are balancing several homicides or other cases at once. Therefore, shortcuts and heuristics work pretty well and often lead to successful convictions. However, when an atypical homicide is investigated in this way, by the time investigators realize they have been following the wrong trail, witnesses have vanished and valuable evidence is gone

that can't be recreated. Likewise, neighbors have forgotten what they might have seen or heard and memories are tainted by media coverage. These are the cases that end up in cold case storage and eventually on the desk of the cold case profiler.

The 48-hour Rule. For years there has been a popular belief that the first 48 hours after the discovery of a homicide were critical. It was said that if a homicide wasn't solved within 48 hours, the chances of solving it diminish quickly (Walton, 2006, p. 21). While it is true that witnesses disappear and memories fade and distort as time goes on, I don't believe the 48 hour rule. For one thing, most homicides are not solved within 48 hours. But I know how this myth evolved. In typical homicides, it is often clear the direction the homicide needs to proceed. Sometimes the perpetrator is still on the scene. In other cases, there is so much available evidence that the direction the investigator needs to pursue is clear. For example, in one homicide a man was murdered by his ex-wife and her accomplices. The victim had actually audio-taped his own murder. The estranged couple was in the midst of a custody dispute involving their five-year-old daughter. The man's lawyer had advised him to secretly tape his conversations with his ex-wife. One day when he went to pick up his daughter, his ex-wife was waiting with three cohorts who brutally killed him in her living room with a baseball bat. (All in front of the child, I am sad to say.) All of it was recorded and the perpetrators could clearly be heard on the tape using each other's names. Months later when his body was found in the trunk of his car, the audiotape was discovered and all four of these killers went to jail.

This audiotape also demonstrated their ineptitude. It took these buffoons over an hour to actually kill the man and they could be heard arguing with each other as to why he wasn't dead yet. Most killers aren't very good at it. They make stupid mistakes that practically leave a trail of breadcrumbs to their homes, offices, or hiding places, as the audiotape in this homicide demonstrated. In another homicide, for example, the perpetrator shot himself while trying to kill the victim. A trail of blood led out of the house and ended where he had parked his vehicle. He was discovered within hours at a local emergency room and arrested. Blood was found in his car and his DNA matched the blood on the scene. He was eventually convicted. In homicides like this, the case may not literally be wrapped up in 48 hours, but it may be clear who the perpetrator is within the first day or two.

Another problem with the 48-hour rule is that it is simply a statistic that gives the wrong impression. By far, typical homicides are usually moving within 48 hours and atypical ones are not. Statistically, more typical homicide cases are solved while fewer atypical cases are solved. Therefore, it would appear that the issue is time when in fact the issue is type of homicide. Likewise, shortcuts in investigations like those cases mentioned above helped quickly send these perpetrators to prison. Mistakes that might have been made in processing the crime scene didn't matter because the evidence against them was overwhelming. However, when atypical homicides are investigated poorly, by the time the investigator realizes her error, it is too late to fix it. This leads to the impression that the issue was the first 48 hours of an investigation when in fact the problem was the method of investigation.

Cold Case Profiling

Nearly every department of any size has cold cases. These are cases (robberies, rapes, murders, etc.) that haven't had any movement in months or years and/or investigators have exhausted all their options. They don't know what else to do and cases that are easier to solve take priority. Even though some large agencies have squads that specialize in cold cases, small departments stow their cold cases and once they go cold, most of them never see the light of day again. Sometimes a new chief will direct detectives to drag out the cold cases and see if anything new has developed, but otherwise it isn't in the detective's best interest to pursue them. Detectives prove their value by closing cases. Time spent on lost causes may make the victims' families feel better, but it doesn't help the detective's career and honestly, most of us probably would prefer that they spend their time on cases they can close. If they invested all of their time and resources on long-shots, they would be neglecting all the cases they could close.

Cold case profilers get cases that everyone in the department has tried to solve. These cases have often gone through the hands of a half dozen different investigators over the years. During that time, material gets lost or important information gets overlooked. For example, I was doing a profile on a cold case involving several homicides that appeared to be the work of a serial killer. In the process of studying the file I found out we had DNA on the perpetrator in one of the homicides and nobody, including the DA and the lead detective knew about it. Material gets lost because not everything fits nicely into a single box. There are carpet samples, axes, baseball bats, and other objects that won't fit in a box. These pieces of evidence may literally be set in a corner somewhere. The investigator knows where they are, but when he/she leaves, is transferred, or the case is reassigned, sometimes those items get misplaced. Even when all the information is there, sometimes it is inadequate. It is nearly impossible to profile the crime ten years after the fact with only had a handful of crime scene photos and poorly written reports.

What Profilers Need For Cold Cases

To profile a cold case, one needs at least cursory skills in several areas of investigation – blood spatter patterns, basic detective work, anatomy, ballistics, psychology, sociology, and even culture – because these are the tools that help us piece the chain of events together. Each piece of data I have is like the piece of a jigsaw puzzle and the more pieces I have, the better I am at constructing a coherent story. Like a puzzle, each piece of evidence not only has to make sense, but it also has to fit with the other pieces of evidence. A well-prepared case file provides the profiler with the data needed to do the job. A good case for a cold-case profiler is thorough. It should include photographs, diagrams, measurements, reports, interviews, and information from the medical examiner. When I work a cold case, I want everything available. While many of the following sections are important for both typical and atypical homicides, they are critical for profiling atypical homicides and cold cases.

On the scene. Nothing on the scene should be moved before the crime scene has been thoroughly photographed and measured. I want to know what was on the ground around the victim. Little things might mean nothing, but I won't know that until I recreate the scene. I want to know the time of day the victim died, the weather conditions the day of and the day before the homicide, and how long was he/she lying in place before being found. If emergency responders have moved the body, don't try to move the body back to where you think it was. The case record should note anything that has been moved or altered. My rule is MLR – Move it?, Leave it, Report it.

Also it is important to include in the case file a list of everyone working the scene (EMTs, police, fire, etc.) (Geberth, 1997, p. 6). I might have to find them if I need help sometime down the road. In his homicide investigator's field guide, Geberth recommends also secretly photographing and/or videotaping bystanders at the scene (1997, p. 19). In atypical homicides, perpetrators are known to stand by and watch the chaos they have caused. Identify as many bystanders as possible and include their names and information in the case file.

Digital and photographic record. The first things I look at when I profile a cold case are the photographs of the crime scene including the body and surrounding area. If it is inside, I need photographs of every room and a floor plan. I need photos of the room(s) from every angle and close-ups of windows and doors. I want to be able to see if there is dust on the windowsill or scrapes on the door casing. If the crime is outside, I need photographs coming to and from the scene and views away from the body. I want to know what the victim would have seen.

Close-ups of footprints and impressions are imperative. Castings get lost and I often have to make my best judgment from a photograph. I want close ups of blood, weapons, clothing, wounds, broken furniture, or anything else that might be crime-related (i.e. shell casings) or hard to see in wide angle photographs. Things get lost from evidence lockers and if they do, I at least have pictures of them.

Photograph the outside of the structure from every angle as well as the surrounding neighborhood. Again, I may get the case 10 or 15 years after it happens. Trees grow taller, new houses are built, sidewalks are added and streets are widened. Even if I visit the crime scene, as I often do, it may not look as it did when the homicide occurred. I need the crime scene photographs to help me see what it was like. Seeing the street and the neighborhood is an important part of my profile.

Photographs should be taken before any crime scene processing begins. It doesn't help me create a profile if the body has evidence bags over his/her hands. Bagging the hands is an important part of standard procedure, but shoot the scene before bagging the hands. It is also a problem if evidence bags, investigators, or other unrelated things are in the crime scene photos. One homicide I profiled showed a table full of evidence bags the responding agency had collected and several pieces of key evidence had been moved. Ten years later, how am I supposed to know what the perpetrator moved or left and what was moved by investigators?

Not everything at a crime scene matters, but everything might matter. In an early age when crime scene photographs were shot with 35mm film, developed, and blown up into 8x10's, it was expensive to take photographs you didn't need. But with digital photography, taking 100 or more photographs of a crime scene costs next to nothing. With digital imaging, a homicide case file should easily have 100 photographs. Storing 10 photos costs exactly the same as storing 100 photographs. You have to walk the scene anyway. It doesn't take any more time to shoot, shoot, shoot.

Geberth suggests taking "two full body shots" (1997, p. 20) and in their death investigation guide, The U.S. Department of Justice suggests taking multiple shots "if possible." (1999). Why wouldn't it be possible? I want a dozen shots of the body. Duplicates cost nothing so I'll ignore the ones I don't need. The photographer should shoot pictures of everything on the way in and everything on the way out. These photographs should be copied onto a CD or DVD and labeled. In that form, they will last forever and even if I get the case 20 years later, the photographs will look like they were taken yesterday.

Videotape the crime scene when possible. The homicides where I've had video available have been exceedingly helpful to me as I created my profile. As digital technology improves, it is easier and cheaper to take video of a scene and it is also easier and cheaper to store that video. What you cannot photograph or video, describe in detail in the case file. Anything that isn't obvious in the photographs or video should also be explained in the case file. I want to hear audiotapes of anything that might have been taped and if the case has been profiled on TV shows, I look at those, too. Include a printed record of all digital and Cyber communications of the victim. This includes Twitter, Facebook, answering machines, text messages, voicemail, and email.

When a homicide is suspected to be atypical, investigate it like you know it will be 10 years before someone sees the material. Ten years later when I have to put it all together for my profile, digital records are one of my best tools.

Diagrams. I need diagrams of the crime scene including distances and location of shell casings and juxtaposition of the body. While this is also a part of typical homicide investigation, many details that are important to me as a profiler are often left out of diagrams. One homicide I profiled contained more than fifty excellent photographs including great close-ups of the shell casings. However, no place in the photographs or the reports was there any indication as to where the casings were found. The murder was in a wooded area and small objects like shell casings were invisible unless photographed up close. The location of these casings was an exceedingly important piece of information as I tried to determine handedness of the perpetrator. This is something I was unable to do because of this one missing detail.

Include general distances to neighboring structures, public areas (i.e. shopping centers or parks) or traffic

areas (interstates or busy highways). Also useful are on-line resources like Google Earth. I often use these tools when I profile a case so I can get an aerial view of the location where the murders occurred. With an aerial view, I can see the accessibility of the neighborhood. What might look like a remote area from the ground might actually be an apartment complex, shopping center, or industrial area. Someone with knowledge of the location could easily walk a path through the woods. Aerial photographs make that kind of option obvious to me. Likewise, neighborhoods change and buildings disappear. An entire subdivision, shopping center, or school complex might have grown up in the time between the crime and when I get the case. I need to know that the area around the crime was distressed, wooded, or developed and if the case notes don't tell me that, all I have to go on is what I see when I walk the neighborhood. A visual of what the area looked like at the time of the crime is very helpful. When a case is determined to be atypical, include something like a Google Earth aerial view in the case record.

Reports and interviews. As discussed earlier, with typical homicides, incomplete interviews and poorly written reports are not always critical in closing the case. For profiling atypical homicides, incomplete interviews are a major problem. Many times I've discovered notes in cold case files about witnesses who claimed to have seen or heard something, but no follow-up was ever made. Likewise, I have regularly found suspects who fell through the cracks and even though their names and information existed in the case file, investigators never knew of them or failed to follow through with the lead. I suspect this happens most often with atypical homicides that are investigated as typical homicide. The investigator thinks he knows who committed the crime and in his eagerness to close the case, he doesn't want to be distracted by leads he sees as red herrings. By the time the case grows cold, it may have been passed on to other investigators and incomplete interviews get overlooked – an easy mistake to make in a case file that may contain 1,000 pages.

I want to see every scrap of paper that goes with the case and I read everything. This includes every little note written on a napkin or post-it note. I never know when something will have been overlooked as the case passed from one hand to the next. This is how I found the DNA link in the homicide mentioned above.

Reading police reports, interview transcriptions, and such helps me not only to profile the perpetrator, but also to get an accurate picture of the victim. All my profiles include a profile of the victim as well as the perpetrator. I need as much information as is available on the victim. Friends, lovers, ex-lovers, work habits, hobbies, hopes, and dreams. Knowing something about the victim helps me form an idea of what the person was like and who could have had access to her, how she would have responded to various situations, and so forth. The more thorough the case record in regard to the victim, the better it is for a profiler. I can't easily acquire this information twenty years later. In typical homicides it is not necessary to invest any energy in creating a profile of the victim, but in atypical homicides it is critical.

Ballistics and trajectories. Profilers need any information available on ballistics and trajectories in cold cases. I use this information to determine which order shots and other injuries occurred. This helps me figure out exactly what happened, who was standing where, and it sometimes helps me reconstruct the murder. I need to know how every drop of blood came to fall where it did and how the victim's body came to acquire every wound. I develop this information from the crime scene reports, photographs, and from the medical examiner's reports. String trajectories are very helpful, but very time consuming. String trajectories are not often necessary in typical homicides, but they can be very helpful to me as a cold case profiler of atypical homicides.

Type of weapon. Women almost never kill with ligatures. Men use knives, their bare hands, guns, ligatures, and blunt objects. Sometimes they bring their weapon with them and sometimes they use a weapon at the scene. Sometimes they take their weapon when they leave and sometimes they don't. The selection of weapon tells me something about the person and what he was thinking. I need this information in a report. In typical homicides, something obvious like "weapon was acquired at the scene" might easily be omitted

from a report. Everyone knows the perpetrator will be arrested before the day is over and that detail won't be forgotten. However, in atypical homicides, that detail will be very important to me as a cold case profiler, but I won't have the luxury of the investigator's memory. All information regarding weapons needs to be in the report.

Medical Examiner's report. When I profile a cold case, I look very carefully at all of the victim's wounds. Therefore, I need all of the autopsy photographs. ME reports are fairly uniform and for most cases I've worked, the reports have been thorough, but these reports often omit information that would be helpful. I need to know what injuries would be fatal by themselves and which injuries would not. I need to know if an injury would have incapacitated the victim, but not killed him. It would also be helpful to know how long he would have lived from the onset of the attack. Medical examiners are reluctant to speculate in formal reports about these things and they rarely note the order of injury. Even when they think they know they don't put it in a report because they have to defend their statements in court. Therefore, informal conversations with the ME about such things could help me later as a cold case profiler. These conversations and speculations need to be in the case file.

I want to know if the victim was sexually assaulted and I definitely want to know if sperm and/or seminal fluid are present. A sexual assault with no ejaculation is different than one where the perpetrator ejaculates into the victim's vagina, anus, or mouth. It is very common in a sexual assault/homicide for the victim to be penetrated, but no seminal fluid to be found inside the body. For this reason I need to know if there is evidence of penetration even when seminal fluid is absent. Also, in atypical homicides, perpetrators may masturbate after the killing on the victim's clothing, on the ground, or on the victim's body. Any such evidence needs to be in the case notes.

CODIS and ViCAP

CODIS is the Combined DNA Database Index System. Basically it is a big national DNA database. Any criminal since 1985 or so who has been arrested for certain crimes (i.e. rape, murder) or who has been convicted and sentenced to prison (almost any crime) is in the database. Even if a case is 50 years old, if there is blood or other viable DNA material available, it can be scanned today and run through CODIS. A CODIS hit results in an almost certain conviction. The Atlanta Cold Case Squad has a 100% conviction rate and many of those cases hinge on CODIS hits. If the perpetrator gets arrested and convicted for almost any crime (forgery, prostitution, or minor possession of a controlled substance), once he goes to prison he is swabbed and his DNA goes into the CODIS database. It was through CODIS that investigators were able to finally catch Gary Ridgway, also known as the Green River Killer. This was once thought to be a crime that would never be solved and the 48 homicide cases attributed to him would never be closed. After running samples through CODIS, Ridgway was arrested and charged for the Green River murders and he has since been convicted.

Buccal swabs of every possible suspect are imperative. Technology that doesn't even exist today may be available by the time your case becomes a cold case. In fact, in 1987 Ridgway had been a suspect in the Green River Killings, but there was insufficient evidence to convict him. Fifteen years later, improved DNA testing methods led to his arrest and conviction.

The Violent Crime Apprehension Program (ViCAP) is also a powerful tool available to Cold Case Squads. Serial offenders (rapists, sexual killers, arsonists, etc.) can increase their probability of escaping detection simply by staying on the move. A single homicide or rape in one jurisdiction is far more difficult to identify as a serial crime (although it is by no means impossible) than several crimes with a similar signature. When agencies do not communicate, as they often do not, a serial killer could commit a homicide in one city and then move sixty miles away and do the same thing again using the same MO and signature. Without communication between agencies, it would be next to impossible to connect the crimes. ViCAP provides

that needed communication.

Completing the ViCAP Crime Analysis Report is tedious and time consuming, but it is invaluable. While it may not help a given agency solve the majority of its homicides or rapes, the most prolific offenders run the highest risk of being caught when their crimes are in the ViCAP database. Nearly everything that I want to know for a profile is contained in the 90+ questions on the ViCAP Report. Atypical homicides should always be submitted to ViCAP and that report should be in the case record. Other databases such as IAFIS, NIBIN, and RUVIS can also be helpful.

Collecting The Cold Case Record

The homicide record should include all of the above in a single file if possible, using dividers and folder tabs for organization. Separate witness statements from initial crime scene reports. Section tabs are also needed for ME reports, photographs, leads to investigate, suspects interviewed, and CODIS reports. Include a section for on-going leads and new information. Keep everything. For evidence items that are too big to put in a file, either include a description of the item or a photograph. If a case goes cold, put everything in a digital format and put it on a CD/DVD. This is an inexpensive and easy way to keep track of cases. It helps me a great deal when I can pick up an entire cold case and put it in my coat pocket as opposed to carrying boxes of paper and photographs out of the office.

SUMMARY

One case I profiled included a single file folder with only about forty pages. In the file were five or six 5x7 photographs, the ME report, and the attending officer's hand-written report. The photographs were in horrible condition, out of focus, and not one close-up existed in the file. There was a photograph of a substantial amount of blood in a bathroom on the wall and sink. But no place in the report could I determine where the bathroom was in relationship to the body or whose blood it was. It almost certainly was the perpetrator's. However, if the perpetrator were injured and bleeding as profusely as it appeared from the bathroom scene, he/she almost certainly would have bled on the floor, carpet, and walls. Yet no such photographs existed and no mention was made of any such blood trail. The case file was useless to me in my profile. The ME report was complete, but the dates and times on the ME report didn't match the dates and time on the officer's reports. Some of the information in this case had been lost over time and consequently there was very little I could do. In my profile I noted that it was unlikely the case would ever be solved and with so much information missing from the file that much of my profile was mere speculation. I wasn't any help because I wasn't given anything to work with.

Investigators should determine if the homicide is typical or atypical at the scene. The beginning of recognizing the possibility of an atypical homicide is asking the question. Are there obvious suspects or not? Does the staging of the scene indicate the potential for a serial crime? Is there anything about the type of weapon, location, time of day, access, or potential connection to similar crimes that make it possible that the homicide is atypical? If so, process the case as if it is atypical.

CONCLUSION

Profiling a cold case is difficult work, but it can be made easier if the case file is complete and if it has been thoroughly investigated. Early profilers often said they could tell everything they needed to know from the crime scene photographs. I disagree with this method. That is like trying to talk with someone via video phone with the sound off, trying to guess what they are saying instead of simply turning the sound up and listening to them say it. I see no reason to speculate when there is other information to confirm or refute one's hypotheses. A complete case file helps provide a complete picture for the cold case profiler.

Investigators can sometimes get away with sloppy or incomplete work on typical homicides. Convictions are sometimes handed to you on a platter. For example, one of my first homicides involved a man who walked into a trucking company and shot his former boss and three other people as frightened employees fled the building and frantically called 911 for help. When the police arrived, the perpetrator was sitting on the curbing outside the building waiting to be arrested. After being Marandized, he readily confessed to the arresting officers and later talked to investigators for several hours without an attorney. Needless to say, this perpetrator went to prison. But atypical homicides never are this easy to close.

This article has provided suggestions as to the difference between typical and atypical homicide and what profilers need to work a cold case. When possible, investigators should investigate every crime scene so someone could recreate the case a decade after their retirement. However, the use of heuristics and shortcuts can be an effective approach with typical homicides, especially when manpower and budget are limited. But with atypical homicides, thorough investigation as described herein is crucial.

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Biography for Gregory K. Moffatt, Ph.D.

Gregory K. Moffatt, Ph.D., is a college professor, author of numerous books and articles on violent behavior, newspaper columnist, and public speaker. He has been a licensed counselor for more than 20 years specializing in children, abuse and neglect, he is also nationally board certified in child sexual abuse. Dr. Moffatt has served as a regular lecturer at the FBI Academy, a profiler with the Atlanta Cold Case Squad, and consultant to numerous airlines, businesses, and schools. He has appeared on ABC, NBC, CBS, and FOX news, as well as America's Most Wanted and he has lectured in countries on four continents.

Biography for Nicholas W. Hersey

A dedicated husband and father, Mr. Hersey has devoted his efforts to discovering ways to better the lives of children. His passion is to give children who have endured various traumatizing experiences a sense of healing through equipping them with tools they can utilize in their days to come. Over the past several years Mr. Hersey has focused his research and experience working within various refugee populations to find common themes amongst children that are universally applicable.

Multiple choice questions:

The three major groups of homicides victims include all of the following except:

Mafia/organized crime professional "hits."

Drug related homicides.

Homicides where the victim has a relationship (work, family, lover) with the perpetrator.

All of the above were discussed by the authors.

The importance of the difference between atypical and typical homicide is:

Typical homicides involve crimes of passion while atypical crimes do not.

Atypical homicides should be investigated differently than typical homicides.

ViCAP requires this distinction.

All of the above were important distinctions mentioned by the authors.

According to the authors, cases grow cold for all of the following reasons except:

Lack of motivation, funding, or manpower to close the case.

Poorly investigated cases.

Political involvement where investigators are pulled from the case.

The perpetrator is known, but there is a lack of enough evidence for a conviction.

When photographing a scene, investigators should:

Take numerous photographs of the scene, body, and environment from many angles.

Wait until the crime scene has been processed and then photograph what you can.

Move a body back into its original position before EMT's worked on before photographing it.

Take only a few pictures of the scene. Too many pictures can be confusing.

The authors suggest that a profiler needs all of the following except:

An aerial view of the scene, such as is available on Google maps.

Facebook, Twitter, and other electronic records of the victim.

String trajectories.

All of the above.

A good case file for a cold case profiler should include:

Photographs of the victim, scene, surrounding area, and numerous close-ups of evidence.

Detailed information on the victims so that the victim can be profiled as well as the perpetrator.

ViCap data and the Medical Examiners reports/photographs.

All of the above should be included.

The authors suggest that atypical homicides should be investigated:

In a way that the scene can be recreated ten years after the investigator retires.

In complete detail regardless of typical or atypical homicide.

Without regard to type (atypical or typical homicide).

None of the above are reasonable summaries.