

Profiling in malcom
gladwell's "dangerous
minds: criminal
profiling made easy"
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Criminal profiling is defined by Kocsis and Palermo “ as a technique whereby the probable characteristics of a criminal offender or offenders are predicted based on the behavior exhibited in the commission of a crime” (1).

Commonly, it has been attached to the idea that it is a set of leads and a biological picture that shows the possibilities left that would allow them to find out who the criminal offender is (Kocsis & Palermo 1). The process of criminal profiling proceeds through the collection of evidences and traces left in the crime scene in order to associate it with a particular individual and connect his presence in the crime.

However, in the article of Gladwell, an unconventional method or profiling is used where investigators enter the minds of the criminals and picture out how or what the criminal may be instead of using the leads as evidences or sketches (Gladwell). Instead of looking at the person and judging what he/she can do, this type of profiling uses the evidences in order to pinpoint certain characteristics of the criminal (Gladwell). However, there is always the question of accuracy, reliability, and validity of an investigation that is supported only by the type of profiling mentioned by Gladwell.

First, there is a greater chance that errors are committed due to the lack of systematic and logical means of gathering data. Second, there is also a chance that the investigator may be wrong when he/she goes into the mind of the serial killer based on the traces due to biases and personal preferences that may affect his/her perspective on the case. There are also certain stereotypes, which have not been proven, that would affect the process of profiling.

Third, the validity of profile made through the method discussed by Gladwell is questionable because of the instrument used to do it, which is through a psychological process. The definition provided above regarding the process or profiling encompasses different methods that may be seen fit by the investigators. The particular method found in Gladwell's article should be supported by research in order for it to be accommodated into the mainstream profiling standards. As of the moment, there remain questions that linger around the idea of profiling by going inside the minds of the criminal.