

Criminal profiling essay sample

[Law](#), [Crime](#)



Criminal profiling-also known as Criminal Investigative Analysis-has long been admired since its conception in the early 1800s. Even now, shows like " Law and Order", " Criminal Intent" and " Profiler" glorify criminal profilers as delphic seekers of truth that use almost god-like investigation skills to bust criminals. In November of 2007, Malcolm Gladwell had an article published in the New Yorker titled, " Dangerous Minds: Criminal Profiling Made Easy". At first glance, this is a typical piece of literature that worships the feats of notable criminal profilers. The article begins with the story of the elusive Mad Bomber and the futile effort to catch him. That was until they consulted James Brussel, a psychiatrist known for helping the F. B. I. with counter espionage work. Through close analysis, Brussel picked up clues and made assumptions that ultimately led to the arrest of Geroge Metesky, otherwise known as the Mad Bomber. We continue with this pattern of praise for various successful psycho-analysts until page seven which was about the middle of the article.

Gladwell starts to allude that maybe ciminal profiling is not always accurate. He continues on with cases in which criminal profiling had been off by a mile and was basically useless. We then later hit page eleven which finally states the thesis. Gladwell keeps us running to the right and then slingshots us to the left after pages of supposed admiration for criminal profilers. On page 11, he writes, "...if you make a great number of predictions, the ones that were wrong will be forgotten, and the ones that turn out to be true will make you famous. The Hedunit is not a triumph of forensic analysis. It's a party trick." Readers get caught up in the fast paced and exciting world of

profiling only to be told later that it is all a “ party trick”. From there on out, the party’s over.

In “ Dangerous Minds: Criminal Profiling Made Easy”, Gladwell follows a very untraditional format in his writing. Whereas most writers tend to put their thesis at the beginning of their writing, Gladwell waited till the very end to confirm his stance on criminal profiling. His prelude leading up to his point of view was the complete opposite of what he believed and brought the readers to believe that criminal profiling was, well, the best thing since sliced bread. Gladwell’s writing style in this piece is very renegade but does well in convincing readers to believe that criminal profiling is a sham. In addition to this, it pokes fun at FBI agents and psychologists who use criminal profiling as a means to find suspects related to specific crimes.

Typically, readers are able to detect a writer’s main purpose and point of view in the first page if not the first paragraph of an essay. But instead, Gladwell decides to humor the public on their false notions about criminal profiling until it leads him to a case in which criminal profiling proved ineffective in crime solving. Indeed, this piece is a prime example of the “rules of writing” being broken. However, despite the unusual format, Gladwell proves to be entertaining and interesting. His anecdote in the beginning of the essay about the Mad Bomber was extremely well written and caught the attention of readers. In fact, all of his criminal profiling stories (including those refuting criminal profilers) were entertaining and kept the reader wanting to know more. His easy to read language and writing style

was a breath of fresh air with the myriad of typical criminal profiling stories circulating.

In any case, Gladwell was able to convey his message that criminal profiling was not all that it was knocked up to be. He gave both sides of the argument and ultimately picked one that he decided was the most logical and proved his point with multiple sources and anecdotes on various cases. Though the rules of writing are often strictly adhered to in nonfiction writing, Gladwell went ahead and did an untraditional take on a popular subject today and successfully executed his argument.