

# Sample literature review on serial killers

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



Profiling has become one of the most successful and productive method to solve crimes. Within the recent decades police has been working side by side with psychiatrists and psychologists to create a specific algorithm to profile and catch the offenders that were believed to be “uncatchable”. FBI turned out to be the most prominent in this field of research. Profiling nowadays is a combination of law enforcement and science, especially psychology. It is used on a daily basis; however, it is still a new field of science without many definitions or boundaries. Therefore, it's a common thing for its practitioners to come up with their methods, terminology and ways of profiling. But the Term itself was brought to masses with the help of mass media, due to "The Science of the Lambs". Even though profiling is called by different names - it still means the same thing and has the same goal: to help solving crimes by examining the evidence and creating an offender's profile. According to Taber (2009) FBI is currently using special Organised/Disorganised/Mixed approach of classifying the offenders. In order for FBI to conduct the correct classification - special agents are required to examine the untouched crime scene. After such examination, the criminal is being classified either as Organised offender or Disorganised. If traces of both categories are present - mixed subcategory is introduced. By introducing different categories within profiling many previously believed unsolvable crimes were solved. Let us analyse how it works and what these categories look like on the example of three most wanted psychopaths in the US: John Wayne Gacy, Richard Trenton Chase, and Jeffrey Dahmer.

All of these men have committed terrible crimes, but each of them falls under different category. Let us analyse what are they. Actions of American

psychopaths and killers are stunning. But few can match the cynicism with the legendary clown killer John Gacy. Sometimes it seems surprising how blind the society can be. After all, just look a little closer, and it is easy to see the monster behind the mask of the first-class citizen. But people do not notice it that is why John Wayne Gacy remained uncaught for so long. And it is no wonder, since it is difficult to notice anything wrong in a man who is a successful, generous entrepreneur. The most terrible maniac in state's history for a long time remained beyond suspicions, even in spite of his dark past.

Gacy's first murder was in January 1972, when lunching with his lover Timothy MakKoyem (Blanco, 2014). When he noticed a knife in his Timothy's hand, he decided that he wanted to kill him. They started fighting and shortly after John Timothy was killed. When the flash of rage passed, it occurred to Gace that Timothy just wanted to cut the bread. He also felt a strange, unknown up to this feeling that was pleasant. John Gacy enjoyed the feeling of impunity that he felt a few months later. In order to divert the suspicion from him even further, he married a classmate Carroll Hoff, who had already had two children. She could not stand him very long.(Blanco, 2014)

The maniac developed tactics by which he picked up his victims. He usually went in poor neighbourhoods, to look for young boys. By getting acquainted with them, he offered a drink and promised expensive gifts. Most of them agreed, and mousetrap slammed. Gacy pumped his victim with drugs, tied them up and then tortured, raped for hours. When he got tired of it all, he strangled the poor and folded body in the basement of his home. When the basement was overflowing, Gacy drove the bodies to the canal and dumped

them into the water.(Blanco, 2014) This went on for quite a long time till the moment Gacy " felt in love" with a minor and his mother reported this to the police (Blanco, 2014). At the trial, Gacy tried to plead not guilty due to his supposedly split personality, but psychiatrists found him sane. " Gacy's lawyer, Sam Amirante, said that Gacy had moments of temporary insanity at the time of each murder, but regained his sanity before and after to lure and dispose of ," (Lohr, 2014) In 1980, he was sentenced to death for the murder of 33 people. He had spent on death row for 14 years before the lethal injection was made.(Blanco, 2014). Analysing John Gacy's profile it is clear that he belongs to Organised (Psychopaths) category due to the following facts:

- His IQ was higher than average
- Followed his code on how to find new victims
- He was socially adequate (managed to get married to a classmate to stay off the radar)
- He led the normal life between killings (was an entrepreneur, first-class citizen for others)
- Raped, tortured the victims before killing them
- Dismembered bodies, left little physical evidence at crime scenes.(Hunter, 2012)

In contrast to Gacy's profile, Richard Chase belonged to a different category of killers. He is known as the Vampire of Sacramento, showed all the signs that he might be a serial killer starting from early childhood. At age 18, he went to see a psychiatrist for help. At the age of 26 years, he was hospitalised in a psychiatric institution for compulsory treatment. Less than a

year later he was released as completely cured. (Montaldo, 2014) Shortly after that Chase starts killing people. The first attempt to kill a man Chase made December 27, 1977. (Montaldo, 2014) In the evening, he broke into the house of unfamiliar women. No one was at home, and Chase just furiously messed the place up. Only two days later he killed his first victim. The same evening, he was driving his truck down the city and saw a man carrying bags into the house. Chase stopped and fired two shots into a man. 51-year-old engineer and father of two died at the scene. One of the bullets hit the heart. (Montaldo, 2014) After that Chase continued his killing spree. He went from house to house, pulling on the door and looking in the window. Finally, he saw the door open. The hostess, Theresa Whalen, who was three months pregnant, was cleaning the house. Her husband was still at work. The killer shot her twice, then began the bloody orgy. First of all he raped the victim then cut her throat and almost scored a bucket full of blood. (Montaldo, 2014) Not satisfied with this, Chase undressed and went into the bathroom and began to wash himself with blood, simultaneously sipping from a bucket. He managed to leave the house before the arrival of the husband, but did not go unnoticed. After his arrest, neighbours could recognise him leaving the house.

Consequently, the last time Chase "got to drink the blood" of those he killed was on Jan. 27, 1978. (Montaldo, 2014) This time he killed four. On that day, Chase was walking on the streets of East Sacramento, looking for a house for penetration. And soon he found one with the door being half open. Chase took the gun and went to the house. Right from the doorway, he shoots the man. As it turned out, it was Dan Meredith, a neighbour. The housewife, 38-

year-old She heard the shots, and went to check what was going on where Chase met her with two shots. There were children inside the house at the moment: 1. 5-year-old David and eight-year-old Jason. The murderer dealt with the corpse of a woman first, raped her and drank the blood out of the neck.(Montaldo, 2014) Then he shot an eight-year-old boy and moved on to the baby. “ What he did leave at the grotesque murder scene were clear hand and shoe prints, which soon led police to his door and to the end of Chase's insane ,” (Montaldo, 2014) A year later, the trial took place. After a rather heated debate, Chase has been recognised by a jury as sane and was sentenced to death but decided not to wait till the death sentence and committed suicide on December 26, 1980 by taking a lethal dose of neuroleptics. If we compare Chase with Gacy, we can come to the conclusion that Chasy if a “ different breed” of psychopath. Indeed, he belongs to Disorganised category:

Judging by the evidence his IQ was below average (left plenty of evidence on the crime scene. Later the first unsuccessful hit on the house and shot to the wall was linked to the first murder of 51-year-old man.

- He was socially inadequate, was living on his own
- Starting from early childhood was practicing on killing animals, showed signs of psychic instability, was aggressive.
- Drove a pickup truck
- Suffered from mental illness
- Left a chaotic crime scenes.
- Had psychotic rage, mutilated bodies.(Hunter, 2012)

Next cruel psychopath was Jeffrey Dahmer. Judging by the his first look he

was an ordinary hard working man, but there were only few monsters, like Jeffrey Dahmer. He was caught by accident in 1991 when police accidentally checked on his apartment. (Bardsley, 2104) There were facts of cannibalism, sexual perversion, brutal murders and other chilling crimes rocked the whole world.(Bradsley, 2014) Jeffrey had his tactics on how to find new victims as well. He was never after people that might know him; he was always looking for strangers. Usually, he offered his guests a drink that was full of tranquillisers. When a guest felt asleep, Dahmer handcuffed him so that he wakes up he could not resist. The very moment of the murder brought him great pleasure and in order to prolong the feeling Dahmer took photos of each stage of the murder. More than 11 people's remains were found at this place and starting from 1978 he killed 17 people. (Bardsley, 2014) He truly believed that by killing the coloured and homosexuals he makes the world safer and a better place.

Even though Jeffrey Dahmer's profile is quite similar to Gacy's, this offender is considered to be in the mixed category. He was a mixed serial murderer since he had traits from organised and disorganised categories: he was intelligent, had his tactics on how to find new victims (targeted strangers), lived by himself, was sexually inept. Also, he is known for having paraphilia addition, cannibalism, pedophilia, necrophilia, Borderline personality disorder, Asperger's disorder.(Hunter, 2012)

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