"John Douglas is a brilliant man. . . . [He] knows more about serial killers than anybody in the world."
—Jonathan Demme, director of *The Silence of the Lambs*

"Mr. Douglas leaves us shaken, gripped by a quiet grief for the innocent victims and anguished by the human condition."
—Dean Koontz, *The New York Times Book Review*

PRAISE FOR BESTSELLING AUTHORS JOHN DOUGLAS AND MARK OLSHAKER AND

THE ANATOMY OF MOTIVE

"Compelling. . . . A fascinating ride. . . . Rich in authenticity and detail."

—*The Plain Dealer* (Cleveland)

"THE ANATOMY OF MOTIVE finds John Douglas at the top of his form—as always. This is a terrific book for true-crime and mystery lovers alike."

—James Patterson, author of *Pop Goes the Weasel*

"Douglas is tops in the field. . . . As always, [he] and Olshaker deliver an entertaining read."

—*Publishers Weekly*

"Gripping and terrifying. *THE ANATOMY OF MOTIVE* paints the world of the profiler in vivid detail."

—Kathy Reichs, author of *Death du Jour*

"Compelling. . . . Impeccably researched and brimming with information. . . . Fans of murder and mayhem, as well as those trying to fathom the criminal mind, will find *ANATOMY,* with its sharp observations and terrifying tidbits, a must."

—Biography Magazine

"An informative, provocative page-turner. . . . Douglas' advocacy of awareness and observation, combined with his chilling accounts of criminal motivation, offer a valuable lesson to all in staying abreast of the unlikely but most lethal dangers of our society."

—Kirkus Reviews

"Recommended. . . . Douglas draws on his expertise and copious case files to paint a morbidly fascinating picture of man as a killing machine."

—Library Journal

OBSESSION

"Eye-opening. . . . Douglas' compassion for the survivors of violent crimes seems to equal his understanding of the criminals themselves."

—Publishers Weekly

"I rarely use the phrase 'must read' . . . but I can't think of a book that deserves it as much as *Obsession*. It's a survival handbook."

—The Register-Herald (Eaton, OH)

JOURNEY INTO DARKNESS

"An unsparing account of a brutal business. . . . The real genius here lies in the analytical rigor of Douglas' crime-scene investigations. . . . Gutsy, hard-nosed police work of the most difficult—and readable—kind."

—Entertainment Weekly

"Passionate, intelligent, and heartbreaking, the message of *Journey into Darkness* is a hard-hitting, no-holds-barred attack on our namby-pamby, wishy-washy, 'politically correct' age."

—Nashville Banner

"A hard-hitting, no-holds-barred look at [behavioral profiling] and how it has been used time and again to solve crimes across the country."

—The Anniston Star (AL)

MINDHUNTER

"A quirky, winning tale of awful crimes and awe-inspiring detective work."

—USA Today

"A fascinating journey into the thrill killer's psyche. . . . Douglas seems to have a true gift of instinct. *Mindhunter* is gripping."

—Dayton Daily News (OH)

"In this . . . fascinating memoir of his twenty-five-year career with the FBI, John Douglas contends that psychopathic serial killers have a warped need to kill. . . . The key to Douglas' approach is to look for the 'signature'—as opposed to the modus operandi—of serial killers. . . . Douglas is at his best describing the terrible crimes that were committed and explaining the logic of his profiling method."

—Houston Chronicle

"In his spellbinding book, the legendary Douglas . . . delves into much of the gritty how-to of criminal personality 'profiling.'. . . He's downright gifted. . . . I defy anyone interested in psychology, detective work, or logic and puzzle-solving to put *Mindhunter* willingly aside once begun."

—The Virginian-Pilot

BY THE SAME AUTHORS

Mindhunter: *Inside the FBI's Elite Serial Crime Unit*
Unabomber: *On the Trail of America's Most-Wanted Serial Killer*
Journey into Darkness
Obsession

BY JOHN DOUGLAS

Sexual Homicide: *Patterns and Motives (with Robert K. Ressler and Ann W. Burgess)*
Crime Classification Manual *(with Ann W. Burgess, Allen G. Burgess, and Robert K. Ressler)*
John Douglas's Guide to Careers in the FBI

BY MARK OLSHAKER

NONFICTION

The Instant Image: *Edwin Land and the Polaroid Experience*
Virus Hunter: *Thirty Years of Battling Hot Viruses Around the World (with C. J. Peters, M.D.)*

FICTION

Einstein's Brain
Unnatural Causes
Blood Race
The Edge

ANTHOLOGY

Unusual Suspects *(edited by James Grady)*

THE ANATOMY OF MOTIVE

THE FBI'S LEGENDARY MINDHUNTER EXPLORES THE KEY TO UNDERSTANDING AND CATCHING VIOLENT CRIMINALS

JOHN DOUGLAS
AND MARK OLSHAKER

A Lisa Drew Book

POCKET BOOKS
New York London Toronto Sydney Singapore

POCKET BOOKS, a division of Simon & Schuster Inc.
1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020

Originally published in hardcover in 1999 by Scribner

ISBN 978-0-671-02393-5

First Pocket Books printing July 2000

20 19 18 17

POCKET and colophon are registered trademarks of
Simon & Schuster Inc.

Cover design and illustration by James Wang

Printed in the U.S.A.

QB/✠

For

Dolores Douglas, Thelma Olshaker, and Molly Clemente

with love

Authors' Note

As always, our deepest and most profound gratitude go out to the "first team" that made this book possible: our visionary, sensitive, and nurturing editor, Lisa Drew; her assistant, Jake Klisivitch; our research director, Ann Hennigan, who shaped and organized the entire book; our agent, manager, and confidant, Jay Acton; and Mark's wife, Carolyn, our in-house counsel and Mindhunters chief of staff.

It's about time we gave special thanks to Scribner publisher Susan Moldow, who suggested this book theme to us, was critical in the development process, supported and guided us at every step, and has always kept the faith. Publishers like her are rare and we feel extremely fortunate to have come into her orbit.

Thanks also to our many friends and colleagues in law enforcement, forensic analysis, victims' rights, and the related fields. Your work is vital and your inspiration enormous.

To Bobby Acton, keep on plugging. You're the next

generation of Mindhunters and we need you out there.

To Sean Lee Hennigan, your obvious love, good humor, and unfailingly sunny disposition have been a constant source of strength and encouragement.

Finally, we'd like to take a moment to remember Suzanne Collins, Stephanie Schmidt, Destiny Souza, and all the rest of our angels. And if we're worthy, we hope they'll put in a good word for us.

—John Douglas and
Mark Olshaker
February 1999

Contents

The key to the period appeared to be that the mind had become aware of itself. . . . The young men were born with knives in their brain, a tendency to introversion, self-dissection, anatomizing of motives.

RALPH WALDO EMERSON,
Life and Letters in New England

THE ANATOMY OF MOTIVE

PROLOGUE

Dunblane

Why did he do it?
I just happen to be in Scotland when I hear about the massacre.

It's the morning of Wednesday, March 13, 1996, and I'm in a television studio in Glasgow as part of a promotional tour for my book *Mindhunter,* at the invitation of our British publisher. For the last hour I've been interviewed about criminal profiling on the ITV television program *This Morning* by a very personable team of cohosts named Richard Madeley and Judy Finnigan. How did I begin in the field? they ask. How did I learn what I know, and who did I learn it from? How did my Investigative Support Unit in Quantico, Virginia, go about creating and using a profile of an unknown subject or UNSUB, as he is known in FBI and law enforcement circles? Throughout the tour I've been really pumped up by the Brits' fascination with the subject and the interest they've shown in my career of studying and hunting killers, rapists, bombers—men whose evil and depraved acts challenge the bounds of the human imagination. Fortunately for the people of the United Kingdom, their society is not nearly

as violent as ours in the United States; but they come by their fascination understandably. The first known serial killer—Jack the Ripper—terrorized the East End of London in a grisly mystery that's remained unsolved for more than a hundred years. On this tour, interviewers still ask me if the killer could be profiled and the case closed. I tell them that it would be difficult to come up with the Ripper's specific identity at this late date, but that even after a century we can very legitimately profile the UNSUB and say with reasonable assurance the *type of individual* he was. In fact, I tell them, I've done it several times in the Ripper murders—both in training exercises at Quantico and on a live international television broadcast with Peter Ustinov some years ago.

I'm back in the TV station's green room when the producer comes in. I assume she's going to thank me for appearing, but when I look at her she's grim, and her voice is urgent.

"John, can you come back on the show here?"

I've just done an hour—what more could they possibly want? "Why?" I ask. "What's happened?"

"There's been a horrible murder in Dunblane."

I'd never even heard of the place. It turns out to be a traditionally peaceful village of about 7,300 people, midway between Glasgow and Edinburgh, that goes back to the Middle Ages. I've got about five minutes before the producer wants me back on, and she quickly hands me the wire service copy.

It says there's been a mass killing of children at the Dunblane Primary School. Reports were frantic and details sketchy, but it appears that a gunman walked into the school at about 9:30 in the morning and began shooting four-, five-, and six-year-olds in the playground. There'd been multiple gunshots, and some of

the children had definitely been killed. Others were injured, their teacher fatally wounded. The news reports didn't have a name or age, but apparently the killer had more than one weapon with him—high-caliber military-type weapons, it seemed.

From these brief news flashes, it sounds like a scene of utter and appalling horror. For a father of three—even with all I've seen—it's difficult not to become sick at the thought of small children being massacred on the playground of their own school.

This is all the information we have when we come back on the air a few minutes later, still reeling from the news. The story is broadcast, and Richard Madeley turns to me and says something like, "Well, John, what do we have here?"

"Well, first of all, you're dealing with a mass murderer," I tell them, then explain how that's different from serial murderers and spree killers. A serial killer is hunting human beings for the sexual thrill it gives him and will do it over and over again, believing he can outwit and outmaneuver the police, never expecting to be caught. The spree killer kills a number of victims at different locations in a short period of hours or days. But a mass killer is playing an endgame strategy. Once he commits himself to his course of action, he does not expect to come out of it alive. He will generally either kill himself after he's "made his statement" or commit what we call "suicide by cop"—forcing a confrontation in which the police or SWAT team will have no choice but to open fire. I expect that later reports will say that this individual died at the scene. These killers are such inadequate people, such losers, that they know they cannot get away and won't give others the satisfaction of controlling them or bringing them to justice.

But what kind of person would do this? Judy Finnigan wants to know, genuinely bewildered.

"Well," I respond, "the first thing you have to understand is the motive, and the key to that is in the victimology." Who has he chosen as his victims, and why? Are they victims of opportunity, or was a careful and deliberate choice made?

"Generally speaking, mass murderers are white males, ranging from their mid-to-late thirties to their mid-to-late forties. In your country you don't have that large a percentage of blacks, so the white-male guess is a pretty good one. But even in our country, where we have many more blacks, it's still going to be a white male, and he'll be an asocial loner. That's what this gunman is going to turn out to be."

But these things don't happen in a vacuum. I know very well that even though we have few details at this point, a pattern is going to emerge as soon as we know more, and I already feel I can say what that pattern is going to be. The identity of the person who's responsible for this crime, I state, should not come as any surprise to his community. This is someone who's had a history of turmoil in this locale. And because it's a school that is the target, there must have been some problem in his relationship with the children in the school, with the school itself, or with the parents. There must be something related.

"In this kind of case," I say, "you would know that there has to be a reason why this subject would pick schoolkids—something in his life connecting schoolchildren and himself. And he'll pick a place he's familiar with, where he feels comfortable."

Children are sometimes victims in a mass murder, but normally they will be either incidental victims

(such as when someone shoots up a fast-food restaurant) or members of a targeted family. This was a different type of crime altogether, and its perpetrator, I predict, will adhere to a defined pattern of behavior.

Leading up to the crime, these people are very, very frustrated; very, very angry. You would look for this one in Dunblane to have written letters—perhaps to the school principal or headmaster, the local newspaper, or some municipal authority. These types are much more comfortable with the written form of communication—and so they'll express themselves in diaries, express the hate or anger they feel about whatever it is that's bothering them. When they feel they are not getting satisfaction, they may escalate and address their grievances at an even higher level. In the United States, it could be to the president. In Britain, it might be to the queen or prime minister. Then they reach a point in their lives where they feel no one is paying attention. So they take it upon themselves to perpetrate this type of crime.

I tell my television hosts that this crime appears to me to be a kind of revenge. Because the victims were very young children, I suspect it was retaliation for some perceived wrong—real or imagined—perpetrated against the killer. The children themselves were too young to have been targeted individually, too young for the guy to conceive that any of them had personally wronged him. The main target was not the teacher, though. Had that been the case, he would have shot her, then left. She was probably heroically defending the children and he eliminated her merely to get to his primary prey. In my mind, it is as if innocence itself is the target—as if he has decided to take something very precious from either their parents, the school officials, or both.

He will turn out to be single, I say, without any sig-

nificant relationships with women in his own age range. He will have had something to do with young children, either as a teacher himself or, more likely, as a scoutmaster or volunteer of some sort. This is the only sort of sexualized relationship he would feel comfortable with; he couldn't relate to his own peers, or they to him. He may be homosexual and prefer boys to girls, but not necessarily, since the victims are so far prepubescent. But parents or teachers will have become suspicious or wary of him, enough so that he's been removed from his position in charge of young children. He will think this is unfair, uncalled for; after all, all he is doing is giving them love and attention. That's what his letters will have been about: complaining that his reputation has been damaged.

When no one will listen, he realizes he has nothing of importance left in his life. And if these precious innocents are taken away from him, then he will take them away from those who are causing him this grief. He will take it upon himself to punish the authority figures, his own peers. And it doesn't matter whether the boys and girls in the Dunblane Primary School this morning were the specific focus of his grievance or not. The entire community is to blame, his entire peer group is at fault. No parents or school leaders trust him, so they are all deserving of his wrath. This is a retaliation. This is what we classify as a personal cause homicide. Most likely, too, there was a specific precipitating stressor to cause him to act when he did.

This is not someone who ever blended into the community. So often, when a serial killer in the United States is apprehended, neighbors, acquaintances, or coworkers will express shock, saying that he was the last person in the world they would have suspected of being

a vicious murderer. He seemed so charming, or he seemed so ordinary. He seemed to get on so well with his wife or girlfriend.

Not this guy. Mass murderers are different from serial ones. Those around him thought of him as weird or strange. They've had an uncomfortable feeling about him that they might not even have been able to place or articulate. In the United States, I wouldn't be able to attach much significance to the choice of weapon or weapons. There, guns are all too easy to obtain, so the killer could either be a gun nut or someone who just recently procured the firearms for this one intended purpose. Here in Britain, though, guns and rifles are much more tightly controlled. If he wasn't in the military or a specialized wing of the police force, he would have to be a member of a gun club of some sort to have access to these weapons. And given his "odd" personality, this preoccupation with guns should have raised some red flags in itself. This guy was a pressure cooker waiting to explode, and these innocent children paid the price.

I'd already left Scotland by the time the definitive information was made public.

Sixteen children, ages four to six, died that morning, fifteen at the scene and one at the hospital. So had their teacher, forty-five-year-old Gwen Mayor, who courageously tried to stop the attacker as he entered the school and headed for the children's exercise class in the gymnasium—not the playground as we originally understood. Twelve other children were injured. Only one escaped unscathed, and two others, by the grace of God, were out sick that day. The killer had tried to get to the school during a time when hundreds of students were in the gym for the morning assembly, but he had received incorrect information when he asked a student

about the schedule; so when he arrived, only one class was present. He had four guns with him, including two revolvers and two nine-millimeter semiautomatics. Headmaster Ronald Taylor called in the emergency and was credited with keeping the others in the seven-hundred-pupil school calm and safe as gunshots echoed throughout the building. The massacre took three minutes in total.

The gunman, Thomas Watt Hamilton, forty-three years of age, white, and unmarried, was a former scoutmaster said to be obsessed with young boys and bitter over the community's rejection of him. He'd become a Scout leader back in July of 1973, but there had been complaints about his behavior and he was asked to leave the organization in March of the following year. His repeated attempts to get back in were unsuccessful. In addition to young boys, his other primary interest was guns. He was a member of a local gun club and held the appropriate permits to fire them under the club's auspices.

Neighbors described the tall, balding Hamilton as private, a loner. Some compared him to Mr. Spock on *Star Trek* and all thought he was weird. According to their reports, he was invariably dressed in a white shirt and parka with a flat cap covering his receding hairline. He'd originally run a Do-It-Yourself shop called "Wood Craft," then decided to become a professional photographer. Two female neighbors described the walls of his two-bedroom house in the Braehead district of nearby Stirling as being full of color photographs of scantily clad young boys.

When he couldn't get back into organized scouting, Hamilton formed his own boys' club, called the Stirling Rovers, and took groups of eight- to twelve-year-olds on outings and day trips, during which he would take

extensive pictures, home movies, and, later, videos. One of the two neighbors was once invited in to watch a home movie of young boys frolicking in their swimsuits. In 1988, he tried yet again to get back into the Scouts, with the same lack of success. Between 1993 and 1994, local police requested information on Hamilton from scouting organizations after spotting him in a gay red-light district. Around the same time, he sent letters to Dunblane parents, denying rumors that he molested young boys. In the weeks before the massacre, he had been turned down as a volunteer at Dunblane Primary School. He wrote to the media to complain about the police and Dunblane teachers spreading lies about him, and he wrote to the queen that the Scouts had damaged his reputation.

All in all, my profile stood up in every significant detail. Several Scottish newspapers ran headlines such as *G-man shares insight into mind of a maniac* and *Train Police to Spot Potential Killers, Says Expert.*

So how was I able to do this? How was I able to peg a man I knew nothing about except his final explosive act, in a place many thousands of miles from where I've lived and worked? Is it because I have a psychic gift when it comes to crime and criminals? I wish I did, but no, I don't and never have. It's because of my two decades' experience in the FBI dealing directly with the experts themselves—the killers and other violent offenders—hunting and profiling them. It's all in what I learned along the way.

And it's because behavior reflects personality. If you've studied this segment of the population as long and as intensively as I have, you come to realize that even though every crime is unique, behavior fits into certain patterns. Why should it not be surprising for a man like

Thomas Watt Hamilton to become a mass murderer of children, but highly surprising for him to become, say, a serial killer or bomber, even though those two categories often involve antisocial loners as well?

If you've seen enough and experienced enough to be able to pick out the significant pieces of those patterns, then you can begin to figure out what's going on and, more important, answer the question *Why?* That, then, should lead to the ultimate answer: *Who?* That's what every detective and FBI agent want to know. That's what every novelist and reader wants to know. What makes people commit the crimes they commit in the way they commit them?

It's like the old staple of 1930s gangster movies: why does one person become a criminal and the other a priest? Or from my perspective, why does one become a serial killer, another a rapist, another an assassin, another a bomber, another a poisoner, and yet still another a child molester? And within these crime categories, why does each commit his atrocities in the precise way he does? The answer lies in one fundamental question that applies to every one of them:

Why did he do it?

The who? follows directly from there.

That's the mystery we have to solve.

CHAPTER ONE

What I Learned from the Bad Guys

WHO done it? and WHY?

That's what we all want to know.

Let's look at two relatively simple, straightforward crimes. On the surface they appear very similar, but they're really very different. They even happened near each other, and in one of them I was the victim.

It wasn't long after I retired from the FBI, while we were redoing our house.

We're practically camping out, sleeping on the floor for weeks. I joke to my wife and kids that they're starting to get a sense of how the Manson family lived. Most of our furniture and nearly all of our possessions are being stored in the garage. Finally, when it's time to do the floors, we have to move out into a nearby motel.

One night the FBI gets a call from the local police; they're trying to track down Special Agent John Douglas. When they find me, a detective gets on the phone and says, "We found some of your property during an arrest here."

I say, "What property? What are you talking about?"

He says, "Well, we don't have all of it that was taken. We found a wooden box with the FBI seal on it."

"Yeah, that's mine," I confirm. It contained a special presentation Smith & Wesson .357 magnum with my credential number engraved on it, commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of FBI agents carrying service weapons. A number of special agents had them. "You have the gun?" I ask anxiously.

"No," he says. "The gun's not here."

Oh shit, I'm thinking. Even though it was a commemorative piece, it was still capable of firing. Readers of *Mindhunter* may recall that shortly after I began my Bureau career as a street agent in Detroit, I lost my Smith & Wesson Model 10 revolver—had it stolen right out of the glove compartment of my Volkswagen Beetle. This was one of the worst things you could do as a new agent, especially while J. Edgar Hoover was still alive. And now, here I am, retired after what I think is a distinguished twenty-five-year career, and I'm still unwittingly supplying weapons to the enemy!

I didn't even know anything was missing. I ask the name of the suspects, and two out of three immediately ring a bell: they're the teenage sons of two of the men working on my house. One I don't know much about, but the other is a nineteen-year-old college freshman who'd been a standout high school athlete. I'm surprised, disappointed, and pissed off.

The cops ask me to go home and inventory what's missing. In addition to the gun, the missing items include a TV, a stereo, that kind of thing. Even if the suspects hadn't been caught, we'd know these were small-time amateurs from what they took. The arrest came after the police figured out a pattern: all of the people reporting similar types of burglaries knew one another.

These three were stealing only from places they knew and felt comfortable in. When the cops executed a search warrant on the apartment they shared, they found much of the stolen stuff.

The motive: they wanted to furnish their apartment.

As I said, I was angry, but not as angry as the father of the nineteen-year-old.

He tore into his son. "Are you nuts! Not only is this man my client, he's an FBI agent. He's licensed to carry a gun and knows how to use it. What if he came home at night while you were there? You could have gotten yourself killed!"

"I wasn't really thinking," the young man sheepishly replied. The oldest of the three was the ringleader and it was clear to me that this guy just went along.

When the cops questioned him, he swore that they'd gotten worried about my .357 and thrown it into the river. The rest of the property was returned. He pleaded guilty, made restitution, and, I think, got the crap scared out of him.

From a criminal profiling perspective like mine, when you're investigating a break-in the first thing you ask, as the police did here, is, what was taken?

If it's the normal stuff—cash, credit cards, and jewelry on one level, TVs, stereos, and VCRs on another level—then you've got a straight criminal enterprise burglary and the only thing you're going to be able to do is determine the sophistication and experience of the burglar based on his choice of target and the loot taken. If you haven't already picked him up, you're not going to catch him until he surfaces in connection with another theft, as happened in my case.

Contrast this, though, with another breaking and entering, which took place only a few miles away.

In that case, a woman reported that her apartment had been broken into, and when police questioned her about what was taken, all she could determine was missing was some of her underwear. Shortly before this, there had been several incidences of women in the same garden apartment complex suspecting that a Peeping Tom had been staring into their windows. On some of the occasions in which the cops came out to investigate, they found evidence that someone had been masturbating just outside the windows in question.

Two cases of breaking and entering. The first offender (or in that case, offenders) took a gun and some valuable property. The second one didn't. And yet, while neither one of these crimes makes us happy, most of us are going to realize instinctively that the second is more dangerous. But how do we know this?

Because of motive. And how do we know from his motive—even though we haven't apprehended him and learned his identity and personal details—that he poses the greater danger? Because of the research we've done and our experience with other similar types of offenders.

A criminal enterprise burglar—someone who steals with a profit motive in mind, or in our case, simply because he wants merchandise someone else owns—is either going to persist in his unlawful pursuit or he isn't. I didn't feel this kid would. He'd faced the consequences of getting caught, and that clearly was not the turn he wanted his life to take.

On the other hand, police all too often dismiss panty thieves, or fetish burglars, as nuisance offenders—and all too often they're not. This second guy didn't take women's underwear to fence it, or because he couldn't afford to buy any of his own. Clearly his motive had to do with the sexual images it conveyed

and the charge it aroused. The motive had to do with fantasy. And if we stop to consider that the evidence suggests this guy has already graduated from voyeurism to breaking and entering and theft—a far-higher-risk enterprise—there is no reason to assume he is going to be satisfied at this level. A fetish burglar is not likely to stop on his own.

Sometimes nearly identical crimes, such as burglaries, are actually the result of vastly different motivations on the part of the offenders. Recognizing these motivations is key to understanding the crime and the criminal and to evaluating the danger to society. Consider the case of one burglar I came across in my career. We'll call him Dwight. At sixteen, he, too, was arrested for burglary, and the motive was clearly the desire for money. But Dwight had also been arrested recently for assault. In fact, his first arrest came at age ten, for breaking and entering. By the time he was fourteen, his rap sheet included more B&E charges, as well as aggravated assault and grand theft–auto. He stole his first car before he was even old enough to be eligible for a learner's permit, much less a driver's license. Sent to a juvenile facility, he was consistently judged a behavior problem. Therapists and counselors described him as hostile, aggressive, impulsive, lacking both self-control and any sense of remorse. He repeatedly blamed others for his own problems and wrongdoing. He admitted using both alcohol and marijuana. He was labeled an antisocial personality.

Whereas "my" burglar came from a stable two-parent home with a mother and father who were horrified to learn of their son's crime and got involved immediately in getting him back on track, Dwight's home life was considerably more problematic. He had been left by his mother with her parents, who formally adopted him

when he was four months old. The mother kept one son with her but for some reason left Dwight behind. His grandfather was in the Air Force, so they moved around a good deal; but when Dwight was nine his grandparents separated, and he stayed with his grandmother, which left him with no male role model.

He had frequent trouble in school and was suspended several times from junior high. Sadly, in his case, time would bear out a prediction many could have made from observing him early on—after years of run-ins with the law, he was ultimately sentenced to death for a horrific rape-murder.

Similar burglaries, but vastly different perpetrators. One did it because it seemed easy and he didn't think much about it. The other did it because he felt that no one else mattered.

It was sometime early in 1978 when it occurred to me that the only way to figure out what had happened at a crime scene was to understand what had gone on inside the head of the principal actor in that drama: the offender. And the only way to find that out, so we could apply the knowledge to other scenes and other crimes, was to ask him. Amazingly, with all the research that had been done in criminology, no one had attempted that before in any but the most casual and haphazard way.

I was a thirty-two-year-old instructor in the FBI Academy's Behavioral Science Unit, pulled back to Quantico after tours as a street agent in Detroit and Milwaukee. I was teaching applied criminal psychology both to new agents and to National Academy fellows. The new agents generally weren't much of a problem for me; they were younger and knew less than I did. But the

NA fellows were another story. These were all experienced upper-level police officials and detectives from around the United States and a number of foreign countries, picked by their own departments for eleven weeks of advanced training at Quantico. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't intimidated by the prospect of purporting to speak with the authority of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, standing up in front of seasoned men and women who'd been on the job a lot longer and worked many more cases than I had. As a defense mechanism, before I covered a given case I started by asking the class if anyone had any firsthand experience with it. That way I'd invite him or her to give us the facts so I wouldn't stick my foot in my mouth.

But then the question was, what can I tell these people that they don't already know?

First, I thought, if we could give the law enforcement community some insight into the process, the internal logic, of *how* violent offenders actually decide to commit crimes and *why* they come up with their choice of crimes—*where* the motive comes from—then we could provide a valuable tool in pointing investigators toward what for them must be the ultimate question: *Who?*

Stated as simply as possible: *Why? + How? = Who.*

How? Why? Where? Who? These are the questions pursued by novelists and psychiatrists, by Dostoyevsky and Freud, the stuff both of *Crime and Punishment* and of *Beyond the Pleasure Principle.* These are the questions asked by philosophers and theologians, by social workers evaluating cases, by judges in sentencing hearings. In fact, they compose the central issue of what we call, for want of a better phrase, the human condition.

But we had to come to grips with these questions from our own perspective, in terms that would be *useful*

to us in the business of law enforcement and crime detection. Technically speaking, a prosecutor doesn't need to demonstrate a motive to get a conviction, as long as he has compelling evidence that amounts to convincing proof. But in actual practice, most prosecutors will tell you that unless they can show a jury a logical motive, they're not going to get an appropriate verdict, such as murder instead of manslaughter.

Whether or not you come right out and say it, the study of applied criminal psychology all gets down to that key question: why do criminals commit the crimes they do the way they do?

This was the mystery I felt we had to solve.

I was doing a lot of "road schools" at the time, partnered with Robert Ressler, a somewhat more experienced instructor who'd been a military police officer before becoming an FBI special agent. The road school was just what it sounded like. Instructors from Quantico would go out and teach local departments and sheriff's offices a compressed, weeklong version of the courses we taught at the Academy. They would take the weekend off, then teach somewhere else the following week before heading home with a suitcase full of laundry.

Being on the road gave us the perfect opportunity to try out my idea of getting incarcerated violent criminals to talk to us. Wherever I was going to be, I'd find out which state or federal prison might be nearby, then see who was in residence there who might be interesting.

Altogether, over the next several years, my associates and I interviewed more than fifty violent offenders in American prisons and penitentiaries, including the thirty-six sexually motivated killers we included in a landmark study funded by the National Institute of

Justice, ultimately published in 1988 as the book *Sexual Homicide: Patterns and Motives.* Coauthor on that study was Dr. Ann Burgess, professor of psychiatric nursing at the University of Pennsylvania, who worked with us practically from the beginning, helping to organize, analyze, and make sense of the voluminous amount of information we collected. Ann also developed the parameters and rigorous standards that helped us transform our anecdotal forays into this heart of darkness into a real and useful study.

We didn't take notes during the interviews, so as soon as we left the prison we raced back to the hotel to debrief and fill in all the empty spaces on the questionnaire. Some of it we'd been able to fill in ahead of time just by examining the case file and studying the subject's record. But the key details—the ones that made the difference to us—were those we had to get right from the subject himself.

At the beginning, all I was trying to do was to get these people to talk to me, to ask them the questions I hoped would help us learn more about real applied criminal psychology, not in an academic sense but in a way that would help in the field, in finding real offenders and solving real cases.

Even now, this many years later, there is a lot of surprise and wonder that so many hardened inmates (most in for long sentences, with little to gain) not only agreed to talk to us but came clean about so much of their personal life, development, and evolution as violent criminals. Why did they agree to talk? I think there were a number of reasons, depending on the individual in question: curiosity, boredom, remorse, or an opportunity to emotionally relive predatory crimes that remained, for some, among the most satisfying experiences of their

lives. My own personal feeling is that we appealed to the egos of some men who were pretty ego-driven; they had a lot of time on their hands and didn't see much apparent interest in their lives or exploits coming from anyone else in the outside world.

Not everyone was emotionally suited to carry out this kind of research. Though you'd have to steep yourself in the details of the hideous crimes, you couldn't show that you were appalled or come off as judgmental; otherwise you'd get nothing. You had to be a good listener and you had to be a good actor—to know how to play the game.

As to why so many agreed to get so personal with us, exposing so many raw nerves, I think that had to do with the depth and thoroughness with which we approached each interview. By the time a man is incarcerated for a violent crime, he's usually faced a number of interview situations: interrogation by detectives, questioning by lawyers, evaluation before sentencing, interviews with psychiatrists or psychologists in prison. And in all but the first situation, where interrogators are looking to pounce on any inconsistencies or indications of untruth, what we're really talking about is self-reporting: the offender telling the interviewer not what's really going on in his own mind but what he thinks he needs to get across for his own advantage or benefit.

We did two things differently. First, we'd immerse ourselves in the complete case file so we couldn't be fooled or misled by the subject about what he'd done and the way he'd done it. Along with the crime details, we'd go over psychiatric reports and prison evaluations, IQ tests, anything available on the subject. The only way you're going to be able to get to the truth with one of

these offenders is to be able to say, for instance, "Wait a minute! How can you say you had some affection and sympathy for the victim when you stabbed her twenty-seven times, way past the point needed to kill her?" And to be able to do that, you have to know the facts of the crime backward and forward.

The second factor that made a difference was our commitment to spending as much time in the interview as it would take to move through the small talk, the bullshit, and the phony sentimentality to wear the subject down, so that we could find out what was actually going on in his mind. Sometimes they would come right out and tell us. Sometimes we'd have to figure it out from clues they'd give us. But the more we heard, the more we could correlate and the more we understood.

Who were the men we went after? There were the "celebrity criminals," like Charles Manson, as well as Sara Jane Moore and Manson follower Lynette "Squeaky" Fromme, both of whom attempted to change the course of American history by trying to kill President Gerald Ford. We talked to Arthur Bremer, who, having stalked President Richard Nixon with the hope of assassinating him, finally gave up in frustration and turned his obsessive energies to presidential candidate George Wallace in 1972, managing not to kill the Alabama governor but condemn him to a lifetime of paralysis and pain. And we met with David Berkowitz, so-called Son of Sam ".44 Caliber Killer," who terrorized New York City for a year until he was apprehended in July of 1977. We spoke to Richard Speck, the low-life thief who made national headlines in 1966 when he broke into a Chicago town house occupied by a group of student nurses and murdered eight of them.

But there were also many others not as well known, though every bit as vicious, who taught us at least as much about the inner workings of personalities whose main goals in life are to kill and to hurt—or as I've stated many times in my career, to *manipulate, dominate,* and *control.* These were men like Ed Kemper, who killed his hated mother in her own bed and cut off her head. Before he got up the courage to do that, he took out his anger and frustration on his grandparents and, years later, six young women around the campus of the University of California at Santa Cruz. Jerome Brudos had had a fetish over women's shoes since childhood before he, the married father of two in Oregon, killed four women and cut off their feet and breasts, after dressing them in his own collection of female clothing. Richard Marquette graduated from attempted rape, aggravated assault, and robbery to the murder and dismemberment of a woman he met in a Portland, Oregon, bar. Paroled after twelve years, he killed and dissected two more women before being captured. As grisly as their crimes were, all of these men—and they were all men; women rarely commit this type of crime—had something to teach us if only we could figure out how to interpret their words and actions.

Now it's one thing to decide you're going to try to interview these guys, but it's quite another to go face-to-face with them. Ed Kemper is six feet nine and well over three hundred pounds. If he wanted to—and at one point he suggested that he might—he could have twisted our heads off and set them down on the table for the guard to find. When we went to interview Arthur Bremer in the Baltimore City Penitentiary, we had to walk a gauntlet through an open yard where violent prisoners roamed

freely, a scene that reminded me of Dante's *Inferno.* And before we were let into any of these correctional establishments, we had to give up our service revolvers and sign waivers that we would not hold the prison liable if any harm should befall us. If we were taken hostage, we were on our own. As Ed Kemper put it, he was in for life, so what more could they do to him if he killed one of us—take away his dessert? Whatever punishment might be exacted would be a small price to pay compared with the prestige among his fellow inmates for having murdered an FBI agent.

So, though we didn't exactly know what we'd be getting out of the project when we began, we definitely had an idea of what we'd be getting into if we undertook it. We adjusted and perfected our own M.O. as we went along. We learned that if we dressed down, the subject was likely to relax with us faster. I could often tell I was about to get what I needed from an offender when he would start talking about the crime and a look would come into his eyes as if he were in a trance, as if he were having an out-of-body experience. The crime—what he did to another person, the way he exerted power and control—was the most intense, stimulating, and memorable experience of his life. By reliving it this way, he was reliving the peak sensation and bringing me with him inside his mind.

The more we learned, the better we got. We discovered, for instance, that assassin types tend to be paranoid and don't like eye contact. The grandiose types, like Manson, want to dominate you, so you position yourself below them (Manson sat on a table), where they can talk down to you. Some just want sympathy. As I said, you have to put your own emotions on hold and play the game. We would commiserate with guys who would

bemoan the fact that their lives were ruined, tears streaming down their faces—ruined, in their minds, not because of what they did but because they were caught. That taught us a lot, too.

The interviews revealed some interesting and, we thought, telling commonalities, commonalities that surfaced in my later dealings with violent offenders I profiled, and helped catch, interrogate, and prosecute. My theory was that recognizing the basic elements most have in common was the first step. The next would be to understand how their differences in personality, criminal sophistication, and *motive* led one individual to become a mugger, for example, and another a mass killer. First, I had to learn what qualities and experiences they shared: where they came from, literally and figuratively.

All of them, on one level or another, came from dysfunctional backgrounds. Sometimes this was overt: physical and/or sexual abuse; alcoholic parents or guardians; being shuttled—unwanted—from one foster home to another. In other cases it was more subtle: the absence of a loving or nurturing atmosphere; inconsistent or nonexistent discipline; a kid who, for whatever reason, never adjusted or fit in. Ed Kemper's parents fought violently throughout his youth, until they divorced, after which he was ridiculed and dominated by an alcoholic mother who made him sleep in the locked basement when he reached puberty, claiming she was afraid of what he would do to his sister. David Berkowitz was born illegitimate and told by his adoptive parents that his mother died giving birth to him. He always felt guilty and responsible. When he later learned his birth mother and sister were alive, he went to see them and found they wanted nothing to do with him. He was dev-

astated and began blossoming into the serial killer he became.

When later, at the FBI Academy, we began studying the backgrounds of other violent and serial criminals, we found they all tended to conform to the models we constructed from the prison interview project. Albert De Salvo, the early 1960s "Boston Strangler," had as a role model an alcoholic father who broke Albert's mother's fingers in anger. The man regularly beat him and his six brothers and sisters, and brought home prostitutes. John Wayne Gacy, the Chicago-area builder who dressed as a clown to entertain sick children in the hospital when he was not raping and murdering boys and young men—more than thirty—was regularly beaten and belittled by his own alcoholic father. I could go on and on with these examples.

Why one boy grows up to be a rapist or killer, another grows up to be a bomber or extortionist, and another who seems to have just as bad a background grows up to be an admirable, contributing member of society is a mystery we'll learn more about as we go along. But we did find that in addition to unstable, abusive, or deprived family situations, which understandably produced a severe lack of self-worth and self-confidence, most convicted sexual predators had relatively high IQs, much higher than you would expect to find in the general criminal population.

The prison interviews also revealed equally significant differences in what might appear to be, on the surface, a similar type of crime—think again of the very different burglars described at the beginning of this chapter.

Here's another example: the rape and murder of young women in our society is all too common, and all

rapists would appear to be angry, aggressive psychopaths. On one level, I would certainly not disagree with this appraisal. But it doesn't tell us much about *why* the offender committed the particular crime, and it doesn't help us very much in trying to profile his personality. So let's start looking at the *behavioral clues* we find at the scene.

First, what was the state of the body when it was found? I don't mean the state of decomposition (although that can tell us a lot, too), but what did the killer do with and to the corpse? If the cause of death was stabbing and there were a lot of concentrated knife wounds—what we refer to as "overkill"—particularly around the face, then I know the chances are very good the killer knew the victim well; the crime was a personal cause. And that points us toward motive—toward *Why?* If the body is wrapped up in a sheet or blanket, say, or obviously cared for after death, that's going to suggest that the killer had some tender feelings toward the victim, maybe even remorse. On the other hand, if the body is mutilated and/or left in plain sight, or casually dumped by the side of a road, that tells me the killer had contempt for the victim, maybe even a disdain for women in general.

How do I know all this? Not because as a profiler I'm some kind of psychic, but because the offenders themselves told us. And after we'd heard the same thing a few times over, *we* could start telling *them.* If a rape-murder victim was left lying on the floor, covered by a sheet, we knew that wasn't an attempt to hide the body, at least not by a sane offender. It was a feeble attempt to give that victim some dignity, or to physically hide her from the sight of someone who did not feel good about what he'd just done. We'd simply heard that

truth from enough killers who'd covered their victims' bodies.

I had a recent experience that confirmed our ability to "predict" what the killer was thinking. I'd been retired from the FBI for a couple of years and I was back in a large Eastern state penitentiary, interviewing a convicted killer on behalf of the state parole board. The board wanted my opinion on whether the subject was a suitable candidate for parole. As far as I'm concerned—and I told my clients this—that means only one thing: is he likely to commit another violent act if he's let out? I spent many hours with the guy, wearing down his resistance, making him more and more vulnerable to the truth, trying to find out to my own satisfaction (a) whether he had any sense of the moral dimension of what he'd done, and genuine contrition for it; and (b) whether he still found overwhelming emotional satisfaction in manipulating, dominating, controlling, and exerting life-or-death power over another person. Each thing he told me fit into a pattern I had heard many times before from many other men in his situation, men whose thinking, crimes, and motivations I had studied for more than two decades. And so, when I made my recommendation to the parole board, I was very confident I was giving them solid information. When people in the field of criminology or forensic psychology tell you they can't predict future violence, what they really mean is that *they* can't predict future violence, because they haven't done the direct study and don't have the direct experience. I don't claim I can tell you whether each and every previously violent predator is going to strike again if given the chance, but I can sure as hell tell you whether parole is a risk worth taking or not.