# Foreword

## Criminal Profiling, Third Edition

Men of genius do not excel in any profession because they labor in it, but they labor in it because they excel.

—William Hazlitt (1778–1830)

In the 1970s, I was introduced to profiling at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Academy when several classes were taught to the American Society of Crime Lab Directors. I saw this field as an adjunct to crime scene investigation, and I had a great deal of enthusiasm for its merits. Later in my career, I worked with the FBI-trained profiler for the California Department of Justice (CA DOJ) and even considered transferring out of the crime lab business to follow a similar path. The successor to the original DOJ profiler caused me to rethink my position.

In the early years of its development at the FBI, the public knew little about the actual methods profilers used, or that there were such things as profilers at all. They perhaps knew, for example, that a profiler had helped with the Atlanta child murders, but little else. It was the later films based on the works of author Thomas Harris that caught the public eye and caused profiling to become a profession of interest; in particular, Mindhunter (1986) and The Silence of the Lambs (1991). As a direct result of these and similar films and the TV shows that came after them like UNSUB (Unknown Subject), Millennium, Profiler, and more recently Criminal Minds, more than a few criminal justice students have been inspired to become profilers.

However, many of the television programs became more supernatural in their orientation, with the profiler having "flashes" of the crime as it had occurred. This did not provide a real sense of what profilers actually can and cannot do. Profiles do not come in a flash or vision; they require long, hard work examining physical and behavioral evidence. This was something that I wanted my own students to understand.

During the 1990s, when I worked for CA DOJ, I often had our DOJ profilers over to guest lecture in my crime reconstruction class. They had been trained by the FBI and could explain some of the methods and services that were available. On one such occasion, one of my students asked, "What happens if there are different opinions or interpretations about a profile?" The profiler responded, in essence, "That could never happen. We get together before a report is finalized and all come

to an agreement." The "we" referred to the DOJ profiler and the FBI profiling unit back in Quantico. Bear in mind, this statement was made to a class of forensic scientists; all of them were criminalists with at least 10 years in crime labs and who actively responded to crime scenes. We were shocked that there could not be different opinions of the same evidence. That everyone must reach a consensus before an FBI-style profile could be drawn up was unbelievable.

Criminalists frequently disagree about the interpretation of physical evidence and do not always reach consensus. You can't compromise a physical fact, just the interpretation. And interpretations can vary.

For someone interpreting the characteristics of a person committing a crime to say that all profilers (in the field and back at Quantico) must reach agreement before a report could be written just blew our minds. While this tradition builds consensus and squashes dissent (and lets it appear as though the final report has passed a form of peer review), it's fairly bad practice. At that moment, my class realized that FBI-styled profiling was not an infallible discipline, despite what we were previously led to believe. Good science dictates that we cannot always agree; there must be room for differing opinions and interpretations. As Samuel Butler wrote:[1]

> Then he saw also that it matters little what profession, whether of religion or irreligion, a man may make, provided only he follows it out with charitable inconsistency, and without insisting on it to the bitter end. It is in the uncompromisingness with which dogma is held and not in the dogma or want of dogma that the danger lies.

The pioneering work done by the FBI in forming its profiling group was certainly groundbreaking and commendable. However, as is too often believed within closed law enforcement circles, the agency considered itself somehow unique, considerable, and exceptional. FBI profilers continue to believe that criminal profiling can only be performed by those trained in a specific program by the FBI or by those who have "apprenticed" under an FBI-trained profiler. The exclusivity of the group has rendered it just that—a closed society of narrow-thinking law enforcement investigators. Ironically, they were and are actually treading in the realms and research of other established professionals: forensic scientists, forensic psychologists, forensic psychiatrists, and criminologists. And being a closed circle working outside of their actual profession (the formal education and actual experience of FBI profilers varies greatly), these investigators don't always know what they are doing or when they are wrong. With a propensity for quashing dissent and everyone having to agree all the time, I guess it's not a surprise that their methods haven't changed substantially in three decades.

Film, television, and good public relations by the FBI have continued to inspire students toward criminal profiling as a career choice. However, even in the mid-1990s, there were no organized programs of study, no specific practice standards or principles, and the only publicized route was through law enforcement—specifically the FBI. For students unfamiliar with the players and the field, there was no visible profession to enter. This remains a problem for students interested in FBI profiling, because the FBI has fewer than 20 "profilers" working for the agency at any given time—and they often don't even call themselves profilers anymore.

[1] Butler, S. (1903) *The Way of All Flesh*, UK: Grant Richards.

What does it take for a vocation to become a profession? Is forensic science a profession? This basic question has caused many heated discussions at forensic science meetings. According to one definition, which is as good as anything I've seen:[2]

> A profession is an occupation that requires extensive training and the study and mastery of specialized knowledge, and usually has a professional association, ethical code and process of certification or licensing.
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> In many legal regimes that have "regulated professions" the issues of "public safety" or "client welfare," harm, ethics, accreditation or credentialing, licensing, peer discipline, special knowledge, judgment, training, practical experience and oaths of conduct are common to the regulated professions. One or more of these factors may suffice to distinguish the profession from a related trade. The professional is obligated and sworn to exercise expert judgment on behalf of the client's interest. The client is not usually assumed to understand the complexities of the professional's special knowledge domain.

In the preface to the first edition of this textbook (1999), Brent Turvey wrote that criminal profiling "has not yet achieved the status of a profession." He then gave several reasons why. I want to argue that the past few years there have been a number of developments that may have overcome his reasoning, not the least of which is that Dr. Saferstein correctly refers to the field as the "profiling profession" at the end of the first paragraph of the original foreword.

When Brent Turvey first moved to California, criminalist Keith Inman told him "his first onus was to his profession."[3] That made an impression on him. The public face of criminal profiling was at that time almost exclusively law enforcement. The only entry, it was often stated, was through law enforcement, and within that construct only a few were allowed to become profilers. The author did his homework and realized that there existed a community of professionals already practicing criminal profiling beyond this narrow scope, and he saw the need to bring them together.

In 1998, after he finished the manuscript for the first edition, the author reached out to a group of forensic scientists, mental health professionals, and investigators. He wanted them to meet with him under one roof. This included NYPD Detective John Baeza, ex-FBI profiler Mike Chamberlin, Dr. Michael McGrath, and myself. The subject of discussion was the formation of a professional association for profilers. The result of that meeting was the formation of the Academy of Behavioral Profiling (ABP). The ABP was the first independent professional organization for criminal profilers with firm educational requirements and a published code of ethics. Brent Turvey took the additional measure of inviting several people from various parts of the world to participate in the formation of the association. The first step was taken to establish profiling as a profession: forming an association.

The ABP has various levels of membership from students, to affiliates, to full members in the investigative, forensic, behavioral, criminological, or general sections. The members, currently almost 200 strong, are able to participate in an online forum for the discussion of events in the field, attend the ABP's annual meeting, and to publish their work in the Journal of Behavioral Profiling.

Full membership requires, among other things, an examination—the Profiling General Knowledge Exam (PGKE). This was designed by an international committee

[2] "Profession" at Wikipedia.com; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Profession

[3] Personal communication with the author.

of investigators, forensic scientists, and behavioral scientists at the request of the ABP's PGKE Committee. The PGKE was completed and first administered in 2001. This testing process is a second step toward the establishment of criminal profiling as a profession: certification.

The ABP also undertook the task of developing practice standards. After many long discussions and extensive rewrites, the board of directors published these guidelines in 2000.[4] The guidelines have been refined over the years and have reached a pinnacle in the current edition of this text. At this point, the field of profiling meets the major criteria for being a profession. The only question is whether or not there is extensive specialized knowledge in the field.

This text, now in its third edition, certainly shows a wealth of specialized knowledge. It provides clear principles and practice standards, a strong code of ethics, and an undeniable map of the connection between criminal investigation, forensic science, criminology, mental health, and criminal profiling. These are the last threshold steps in demonstrating professionalism.

Henry Ward Beecher stated, "To become an able and successful man in any profession, three things are necessary, nature, study and practice."[5] One must have the nature to want to understand the field, the ability to study and learn about the field, and the desire to practice in the field to be a professional. The novella Profession by Isaac Asimov reiterates this theme. Asimov shows it is the ability to think, learn, be innovative, and strive to improve the profession that makes a professional, not the title.[6]

Brent's body of work, ably supported by that of many others, fits the criteria necessary for criminal profiling to be considered a profession. He has not only helped to build that profession, but he has worked within the community to create courses of training and written material that has assisted others to learn the methods. This third edition of Criminal Profiling is a worthy furtherance of that effort and represents another tremendous step forward in the advancement of criminal profiling methods and research.

W. Jerry Chisum

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[4] Baeza, J., Chisum, W.J., Chamberlin, T. M., McGrath, M., Turvey, B., (2000) "Academy of Behavioral Profiling: Criminal Profiling Guidelines," *Journal of Behavioral Profiling*, 1(1)

[5] Henry Ward Beecher (1813–1887); www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/h/henry_ward_beecher.html.

[6] Asimov, I. "Profession," *Astounding Science Fiction*, July 1957, Street & Smith.