

The use of psychology in crime investigation with a focus on criminal profiling psychology of interrogation.

Abstract

This paper deals with some forms of usage of forensic psychology in investigative practice. Forensic psychology is subfield of psychology that deals with its usage in law practice. This paper describes historical milestones in this field. Furthermore, this thesis describes legal institutes that enable the use of forensic psychology in practice.

After this introduction, the remaining part of the thesis is dedicated to selected forms of practical usage of forensic psychology. Specifically, these forms are criminal profiling and psychology of interviewing.

Criminal profiling is a newer method that, based on the evidence found, creates presume profile of the offender. This profile usually contains data on the offender's age, gender, possible employment, and social integration of the offender. The profile can also focus on geographical distribution of crime scenes and based on them the profile can determine the area of probable home residence of the offender. Both these variants are described in section dedicated to criminal profiling. Historical development of this field is also described along with some of the studies devoted to this field that have taken place over the years. The thesis points out discrepancies in opinions on usability of criminal profiling. In the section dedicated to criminal profiling practical use of criminal profiling is described on several case studies. Specific problems of profiling different types of crimes is also described there.

Third and final part of this paper is dedicated to the issue of psychology of interrogation. This field seeks to contribute to the process on interrogation in order to obtain as much information as possible and to minimize the trauma caused by interview to the interviewee especially if victims or children are concerned. This paper describes possible errors in the perception of interrogation by the interrogator and also describes non-verbal communication and its meaning. In this context, discrepancies in the perception of some non-verbal expressions are also pointed out. Furthermore, some tactics of conducting the interrogation and subsequently related issues of false confessions are described. This section also includes interview with crime investigator on the topic of using these tactics in his day-to-day practice. The conclusion of this thesis is dedicated to specific issues of interviewing victims and children.