**Crime Profiles: The Anatomy of
Dangerous Persons, Places, and Situations**
by Terance D. Miethe and Richard C. McCorkle

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Reviewed by James D. Calder

It took so many years in the twentieth century for criminology to come round to the idea that crime's important elements have less to do with a perpetrator's reasons or excuses, and more to do with the nature of victimisation, places of occurrence, and dynamics of perpetrator-victim relationships. At last, the security field finds kinship with criminology's new themes in crime causation. In fact, security studies and criminology have opportunities for co-operative ventures in data discovery and analysis, especially since new ground has been ploughed on the interactive factors linked to criminal events. An analogy may be taken from the study of fire science wherein experts understand that no fire can occur if just one of three elements of fire causation is missing. Perhaps the authors of *Crime Profiles* approach the crime problem in similar fashion: no crime when certain elements are missing: persons, places, or situations.

This well-organised book nicely supports both basic and advanced security management texts, although its special focus on characteristics of criminal events is best considered at the beginning of a course. The idea is that new students to security studies are likely to benefit in part from the authors' clear pictures of criminal situations, followed by mainstream security topics associated with crime prevention. Although this book provides no direct assistance in a variety of essential topics associated with the security function, such as emergency preparedness, health and safety issues, fire-security co-operation, protection of information resources etc, the overall risk-probability orientation is extremely valuable in changing the way security professionals think about one-dimensional, cause-and-effect relationships.

Crime Profiles contains nine chapters: 'Introduction to the Study of Crime Types'; 'Homicide and Aggravated Assault'; 'Sexual Assault'; 'Personal and Institutional Robbery'; 'Residential and Nonresidential Burglary'; 'Motor Vehicle Theft'; 'Occupational and Organizational Crime'; 'Public Order Crimes'; and 'Crime Control and the Anatomy of Dangerous Persons, Places, and Situations'. For purposes of security course instruction, one should set aside chapters on homicide and assault, sexual assault, and public order crimes, since these are issues of far greater concern to police. But the remaining chapters contain excellent background for the main concerns of the security field. Students should come away from this book with more understanding about the nature of risk reduction associated crimes against facilities and property. The book ends where one may wish to begin an introductory security management course. The authors' conception of profiles fits well with the larger framework of risk analysis, particularly where the focus may shift to calculations of specific threat characteristics, quantification of threat probabilities, and assessment of if-then scenarios in the crime risk environment. Absent such calculations, prevention strategies amount to mere guesswork. Thus, profiles of offenders, victims, opportunities and situations introduce the student or the professional to data demands of succeeding phases in the risk assessment equation.

The authors should consider revisions to this work in two areas. First, students and professionals would benefit from a brief historical account of the evolution of criminology in connection with the movement away from individual offender characteristics, replaced by systematic analyses of risk factors and opportunity theory. Also, the authors should consider an additional chapter in which specific applications of the typological approach are demonstrated. All could benefit from a chapter that brings together published research on burglary, robbery, assaultive crimes in connection with some real world events such as retail shoplifting, small store robbery, warehouse burglaries, and workplace sexual harassment. In other words, an otherwise well-crafted criminological work could have more meaning to people in the security field if additional bridges connected profile characteristics with outcomes encountered by security managers.

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