
Practical Homicide Investigation

Tactics, Procedures,
and Forensic Techniques

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Summary

This method of investigation is still considered to be in a developmental stage, and its adaptability to homicide investigation is limited to those cases in which there is some form of communication. The investigator should be aware of its limitations and not assume that psycholinguistics can replace traditional homicide investigation procedures. However, psycholinguistic analysis has proven to be a valuable investigative tool in those cases where it has been used. In homicide cases psycholinguistics has been used in just about every major investigation, from the Alphabet Bomber to the Zodiac and Zebra Kebra Killing.

Psychics

The professional homicide detective utilizes many tools in the investigation to assist in the retrieval of information, some of which may be inaccessible through ordinary methods. A somewhat sensational and often controversial practice is the use of psychics. The purpose of this section is to provide the investigator with information on the use of a psychic in homicide investigations.¹⁴

Practically speaking, police officers are naturally skeptical of psychics and psychic phenomena. However, from an investigative point of view, anything which has proven to be successful in one investigation should certainly be considered in other cases. It should be noted that information provided by the psychic may not always be accurate and in some instances may have no value to the investigation. However, this should not discourage authorities from using a psychic, especially in homicide cases where there is limited information. The use of a psychic can be considered as an additional investigative aid.

What Is a Psychic?

A *psychic* is a person who is especially sensitive to nonphysical forces of life energy. According to Ms. Renier, being a psychic "involves getting rid of logic and rationale." A psychic is not someone with magical or mystical powers. Instead, the psychic is a person who learns to control a portion of the brain which is not generally used in

¹⁴The information presented in this section is based on research of specific cases, personal interviews, and correspondence with several psychics including Ms. Noreen Renier, a psychic and recognized authority on the phenomena of extrasensory perception. Ms. Renier has worked with various police agencies including the FBI on homicide cases and other criminal investigations.

