

The Religious Killer

A physician who performs abortions is killed. His killer is identified and arrested after a lengthy manhunt.

The defendant is very religious and claims that he wanted to stop the physician from performing abortions and killing babies. He claims that he was acting according to his beliefs and God's instructions.

Role of the FBI

Prior to the identification of the killer, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is contacted to identify potential perpetrators of the crime. Video surveillance of the clinic where the abortions were performed is reviewed.

Background information of individuals who were previously arrested for trespassing at the clinic or agitating, protesting, or blocking in front of the clinic is also reviewed.

Role of the Profiler

The profiler reviews the background information of potential suspects and develops a profile of the killer—the killer's access to weapons, level of intelligence, personal beliefs, social status, and geographical mobility. Depending on whether the crime took place in broad daylight in the parking lot of the clinic or at the doctor's home late at night, the profile of the suspect would be different. The profiler considers the following questions:

- Did the killer lie in wait?
- How was the murder committed?
- What kind of weapon did the killer use—a high-power rifle from a distance or a pistol?

Role of the Forensic Psychologist

As the defendant appears to be highly religious, the question for the forensic psychologist is to find out whether the defendant is experiencing persecutory delusions or command hallucinations. If that is the case, the evaluation may focus on the defendant's legal sanity at the time of the offense.