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# CRIME CLASSIFICATION MANUAL

SECOND EDITION

A STANDARD SYSTEM  
FOR INVESTIGATING AND CLASSIFYING  
VIOLENT CRIMES

JOHN E. DOUGLAS,  
ANN W. BURGESS, ALLEN G. BURGESS,  
*and* ROBERT K. RESSLER

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AND CLASSIFYING VIOLENT CRIMES

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John E. Douglas, Ann W. Burgess,  
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Editors

 **JOSSEY-BASS**  
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[www.josseybass.com](http://www.josseybass.com)

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Published by Jossey-Bass

A Wiley Imprint

989 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-1741 [www.josseybass.com](http://www.josseybass.com)

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The authors wish to thank the news writers for the national wire services, national magazines, and local newspapers, and the contributors to Wikipedia, for providing direction for our search of case studies used in this manual.

#### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Crime classification manual : a standard system for investigating and classifying violent crimes /

John E. Douglas . . . [et al.], editors. — 2nd ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-7879-8501-1 (alk. paper)

ISBN-10: 0-7879-8501-5 (alk. paper)

1. Crime—Classification—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 2. Crime—United States—Classification—Handbooks, manuals, etc. I. Douglas, John E.

HV6253.C75 2006

364.01'2—dc22

2006016863

Printed in the United States of America

SECOND EDITION

*PB Printing* 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*To the victims of violent crimes and the  
men and women who work tirelessly seeking  
justice for them. This book is dedicated to them  
with respect, with humility, and with compassion.*

# Preface to the Second Edition

This is the second edition of the *Crime Classification Manual* (CCM-II). The development of this manual over the years has received notice from FBI investigative profilers, law enforcement officers, corrections and parole staff, mental health staff, and students in forensic studies and criminal justice studies.

The purpose of this manual is fourfold:

1. To standardize terminology within the criminal justice field
2. To facilitate communication within the criminal justice field and between criminal justice and mental health
3. To educate the criminal justice system and the public at large to the types of crimes being committed
4. To develop a database for investigative research

This book is about classifying crime. Professions develop and advance their science as they are able to organize and classify their work. The nature of science began when organisms began to generalize, to see similarities between themselves and members of their own species or to see differences and other similarities between other species and themselves. Thus, the nature of science requires that one first observe and then attempt to categorize, compare, and classify observations. Classification is a process in data collection and analysis in which data are grouped according to previously determined characteristics.

The past three decades have witnessed the major advancement in investigative science. A series of FBI studies conducted in the 1980s on sexual murderers, rapists, child molesters and abductors, and arsonists described and identified critical characteristics of these crimes. These characteristics were initially used for profiling techniques. An additional use of the research findings has now been compiled into a crime classification manual. The advances in technology and forensic science have also strengthened the investigative skills for solving crime.

In the development of this manual, a decision was made to base the classification on the primary intent of the criminal: (1) criminal enterprise, (2) personal cause, (3) sexual intent, and (4) group cause.

## TASK FORCE

Task force groups chaired by supervisory special agents at the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime worked on refining the crime categories for the first edition. The preliminary draft of the manual was presented to an advisory committee, which provided additional comments and suggestions for refinement of the manual.

This second edition of the CCM contains three new classifications contributed by experts in their field. Michael Welner contributed the classification of Religion-Extremist Murder and Neonaticide, Mark Safarik contributed the Elder Female Sexual Homicide classification, and Allen G. Burgess classified Computer Crimes. In addition to these classifications, we have added chapters on nonlethal crimes and cybercrimes.

## DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this book, the crime definitions are as follows:

- *Murder* is the willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another. The classification of this offense, as for all other Crime Index offenses, is based solely on police investigation as opposed to the determination of a court, medical examiner, coroner, jury, or other judicial body. Not included in this classification are deaths caused by negligence, suicide, or accident; justifiable homicides; and attempts to murder or assaults to murder, which are scored as aggravated assaults.

- *Sexual assault* includes forcible rape, as defined by the FBI's *Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports* (UCR): the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will. In addition, assaults and attempts to commit rape by force or threat of force are included, as well as crimes of noncontact, commonly called *nuisance offenses*. Crimes against children such as fondling and molestation are included.

- *Arson*, as defined by UCR, is any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, or personal property of another. Bombing has been added to the classification.

- *Computer crimes* include crimes whereby the computer is the target or the mechanism for committing the crime or the computer user is the target. It also includes crimes committed over the Internet or whereby the Internet plays a role in the commission of the crime.

- *Nonlethal crimes* include crimes such as burglary, robbery, and assault in which death does not occur. These crimes may be precursors to crimes of rape and murder.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE MANUAL

This second edition of the *Crime Classification Manual* is divided into four major parts.

Part One focuses on crime analysis and practice and presents a review of the study of crime and the key concepts in the decision process for classifying a crime; modus operandi and the signature aspects of violent crime; the detection of staging, undoing, and personation at the crime scene; prescriptive interviewing; and classifying crimes by severity and the FBI Academy's Violent Criminal Apprehension Program to assist law enforcement in unsolved crimes.

Part Two contains the classification categories of Homicide, Arson/Bombing, Rape and Sexual Assault, Nonlethal Crimes, and Computer Crimes. It also includes new chapters on cybercrimes and Internet child sex offenders.

The chapters in Part Three address the topics of mass, spree, and serial homicide; homicidal poisoning; and the use of biological agents as weapons.

Part Four contains chapters on wrongful convictions and criminal confessions.

Our results have implications not only for law enforcement personnel who are responsible for the investigation of a crime, but for professionals in other disciplines who address the crime problem: criminal justice professionals directly involved with the legal aspects of crime; correction institution administrators and staff personnel, who not only have custody of criminals but also are responsible for decisions regarding these individuals' return to society; mental health professionals, both those involved with offender treatment and those assisting victims and families affected by these crimes; social service personnel working with juveniles, as they detect early signs and characteristics of violent individuals and seek to divert these individuals from criminal activity; criminologists who study the problem of

violent crime; and public policymakers who address the problem through their decisions. It is our hope that this book will advance the knowledge base of these professionals as they seek increased understanding of the nature of crime and of the individuals who commit such crime.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We acknowledge the people who assisted with this second edition: Dona Petrozzi for her research of crime statistics, Sarah Gregorian for her assistance with the preparation of the manuscript, and the contributors of cases who are acknowledged with the case. The editors of the book, John E. Douglas, Ann W. Burgess, Allen G. Burgess, and Robert K. Ressler have all contributed to this edition. We also wish to thank the following persons who contributed cases: Emily Dendinger, Danielle Esposito, Kevin Faherty, Erin Lenahan, Emily Kitts, Emily Lilly, Kendall McLane, Kriten Moore, Leonard I. Morgenbesser, Robert B. Norberg Jr., Kathryn A. Reboul, Dan Ryan, Mark Safarik, and Michael Welner.



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# Introduction

**V**iolent crime is of increasing concern in our society. Murder, arson, and sexual assault represent serious interpersonal violent behaviors, and law enforcement officials feel public pressure to apprehend the perpetrators as quickly as possible.

## THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

### Murder

The total number of murders in the United States during 2003 was estimated at 16,503, or 1.2 percent of the violent crimes reported. More persons were murdered in July, 9.3 percent, of that year than during any other month, while the fewest were killed during February, 6.9 percent.

Geographically, the South, the most populous region, accounted for 43.6 percent of the murders. The West reported 22.9 percent; the Midwest, 19.5 percent; and the Northeast, 14 percent.

The murder volume increased 1.7 percent nationwide in 2003 over 2002. The nation's cities overall experienced an increase of 2.7 percent, with upward trends recorded in all but two city population groupings. Of the cities, those with populations of 250,000 or more registered the highest increase: 13.2 percent. Suburban counties recorded a rate of 4 murders per 100,000 inhabitants, and rural counties registered 3.4 murders.

With the exception of the Midwest, each of the U.S. regions experienced more murders during 2003 than during 2002. The number of murders was up

3 percent in the South, 4.6 percent in the Northeast, and 1.4 percent in the West.

In terms of weapon choice, firearms accounted for the largest proportion of weapons used during murder, at a reported rate of 70.9 percent of homicides. In 13.4 percent of murders, a cutting instrument was used; 7 percent involved personal weapons; 4.8 percent involved a blunt object; and other weapons, including arson and poison, accounted for 4 percent.

The largest group of murder victims, 77.6 percent, were males, and 90.6 percent were persons eighteen years of age or older. Of victims, 45.7 percent were between ages twenty and thirty-four. Of victims for whom race was known, 48.7 percent were white, 48.5 percent were black, and 2.8 percent were persons of other races.

In murder cases where there was a known offender, it is reported that 90.1 percent of murderers were males and 92.0 percent were over the age of eighteen. In terms of race 51.3 percent were black, 41.9 percent were white, and 2.8 percent were of other races,

In 77.6 percent of these cases, the offender had a previous relationship with the victim. Among these cases, 70.9 percent were acquainted with the victim, and 29.1 percent were related to them. Husbands and boyfriends accounted for 32.3 percent of murders against female victims.

The clearance rates for murder continued to be higher than for any other crime index offense. Law enforcement agencies nationwide, as well as in the cities, were successful in clearing 62.4 percent of the murders occurring in their jurisdictions during 2003. Of all murder arrestees in 2003, 48.9 percent were under twenty-five years of age. The eighteen-to-twenty-four-year age group accounted for 27.2 percent of the total. Of those arrested, 89.7 percent were males and 10.3 percent were females. Blacks constituted 48.5 percent of the total arrestees for murder in 2003. Whites made up 49.1 percent, and the remainder were of other races.

## **Arson**

A total of 64,043 arson offenses were reported in 2003 by 12,776 law enforcement agencies across the country. The number of arson offenses reported nationally declined 6.3 percent in 2003 as compared to the 2002 total. Counts for the nation's cities and metropolitan counties dropped 9.1 percent and 6.1 percent, respectively, and rural counties registered an 11.8 percent drop, the largest decline.

The 2003 clearance rate was 16.7 percent. The estimated number of arrests for arson during 2003 totaled 16,163. Of the estimated actual arson arrests for 2003, 50.8 percent were under eighteen years of age, and 30.2 percent were under age fifteen. Males were 84.4 percent of all arson

arrestees. Of those arrested, 77.5 percent were white, 20.9 percent were black, and the remainder were of other races.

## Rape

During 2003 there were an estimated 93,433 forcible rapes of women in the United States. Rape offenses made up 6.8 percent of the total violent crimes. Geographically, the southern states, the region with the largest population, accounted for 37.6 percent of the forcible rapes reported to law enforcement. Following were the Midwest, with 25 percent; the West, with 24 percent; and the Northeast, with 18.7 percent. Compared to the previous year, the 2003 forcible rape volume increased 1.9 percent nationwide.

Nationwide and in the cities, 44 percent of the forcible rapes reported to law enforcement were cleared by arrest in 2003. Of the forcible rape arrestees in 2003, 45.9 percent were persons under the age of twenty-five, with 30.9 percent of the total being in the eighteen-to-twenty-four-year age group. Of those arrested, 64.1 percent were white, 33.3 percent were black, and the remainder were other races.

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Understanding behavior and methodology has been a challenge to the civilized world. The term *dangerous classes* has been used throughout history to describe individuals who are deemed a threat to law and order. Initially the term described the environment in which one lived or was found to be living in versus the type of crime being committed. An example of this occurred in England at the end of the Hundred Years' War with France. The demobilization of thousands of soldiers, coupled with the changing economic trade market, saw the homeless population increase nationwide with the displacement of farmers (Rennie, 1977). During the reign of England's Henry VIII, seventy-two thousand major and minor thieves were hanged. Under his daughter, Elizabeth I, vagabonds were strung up in rows, as many as three and four hundred at a time (Rennie, 1977).

Categorizing these individuals began to change in 1838 when the winning entry at the French Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, the highly competitive academic society, was titled, "The Dangerous Classes of the Population in the Great Cities, and the Means of Making Them Better" (Rennie, 1977). The term *dangerous class* was then used to describe individuals who were criminals or had such potential. Initially these were the poor, homeless, and unemployed in the large cities.

Classification of offenders began with the work of statistics. This early work permitted a comparison of the incidence of crime with factors, such as

race, age, sex, education, and geography (Rennie, 1977). Cesare Lombrosos, the famed Italian physician, is generally credited with launching the scientific era in criminology. In 1872 he differentiated five types of criminals—the born criminal, the insane criminal, the criminal by passion, the habitual criminal, and the occasional criminal (Lindesmith & Dunham 1941)—based on Darwin's theory of evolution. The operational definitions for the five groups that were developed allowed subsequent investigators to test Lombrosos's formulations empirically. A majority of his hypotheses and theories proved to be invalid, but the fact that they were testable was an advancement for the science (Megargee & Bohn, 1979).

Englishman Charles Goring refuted the Lombrosian theory of the degenerate "criminal man" in 1913, concluding, "The one vital mental constitutional factor in the etiology of crime is defective intelligence" (p. 369). This concept persisted for several decades. Henry Goodard, who did his early work on feeble-mindedness in 1914, reported that 50 percent of all offenders were defective (Goddard, 1914). V. V. Anderson reported 28 to 50 percent defective in 1919.

As psychometric techniques improved, the finding of mental deficiency changed. Murchison in 1928 concluded that those in "the criminal group are superior in intelligence to the white draft group of WWI" (Bromberg, 1965). As studies progressed, it became obvious that a disordered personality organization (including psychoses, neuroses, and personality problems) was a more significant factor in crime than feeble-mindedness.

With increasing rapidity, from the late 1930s to the World War II years to the present, interest has shifted away from insanity and mental defectiveness to personality disturbances in analyzing the genesis of crime. In the decades before the report of Bernard Glueck from Sing Sing Prison in New York State (1918), the focus in crime study was on subnormal mentality.

In 1932 the Psychiatric Clinic of the Court of General Sessions in New York began to classify each offender according to a personality evaluation, thus combining the insights of psychoanalysis, descriptive psychiatry, and behavioral phenomenology. Each convicted offender presented was analyzed in relation to four categories: (1) presence or absence of psychosis, (2) intellectual level, (3) presence of psychopathic or neurotic features and/or personality diagnosis, and (4) physical condition.

Typologies of crime traditionally have been developed addressing the criminal offense. The psychiatric perspective to understanding crime has used two approaches: scrutiny of the inner (mental and moral) world of the criminal offender and examination of the external (social) world in which he lives (Bromberg, 1965).

A project at the Bellevue Psychiatric Hospital in New York City, spanning 1932 to 1965 (Bromberg, 1965), found that the personality patterns of crim-

inals far outshadowed the significance of psychotic or defective diagnoses in terms of analyzing criminal behavior and in assisting the court and probation department in estimating the potential or deficits of the individual offender. Fifteen personality diagnoses were established by this project.

The investigation of the psychological motivations and social stresses that underlie crime has proved that the behavior patterns involved in criminal acts are not far removed from those of normal behavior. Studies indicate that criminal behavior, as is true of all other behavior, is responsive to inner and outer stresses. The external realities of mental life—social pressures, cultural emphases, physical needs, subcultural patterns of life—precipitate criminal action. The inner realities of behavior—neurotic reactions, impulses, unconscious motivations, preconscious striving, eruption of infantile aggressions—represent a precondition to criminal acts. Criminal behavior is suggested to derive from three behavioral areas: (1) the aggressive tendency, both destructive and acquisitive; (2) passive, or subverted, aggression; and (3) psychological needs (Bromberg, 1965).

Several research-based classification typologies for offenders have been developed. Julian Roebuck in 1967 provided rules to classify offenders based on the frequency and recency of their offenses during their criminal career. According to this system, an offender can be classified into a single offense pattern. The function of his typology was in terms of explanatory theory rather than in terms of diagnostic systems used in treatment. Investigation into the offender's arrest history, regardless of length, was the primary tool used in developing a classification system. The total of known arrests, included with behavior, allowed for the observance of a pattern, if one existed. One basic assumption used was that the arrest pattern would indicate a pattern of behavior or criminal career. The most frequent charge or charges in the history was the basis for classification (Roebuck, 1967). An obvious weakness is that not all criminals have accurate arrest histories.

Classification of criminal offenders has been and is an important component in correctional facilities throughout the United States. In 1973 the National Advisory Commission called for criminal classification programs to be initiated throughout the criminal justice system (Megargee & Bohn, 1979). This has not been an easy task. The correctional system is a complex, expanding, expensive operation that has accountability to society, individual communities, correctional staff, and the inmates themselves. The current trend within the correctional system has been growth of the inmate population with a modest growth in facilities. As the population within the system is faced with economic and now medical issues (such as AIDS), classification is a cost-effective and efficient management and treatment tool. It provides common language for the various professional groups to communicate among themselves.

Megargee and Bohn (1979) found during their research project that a comprehensive classification system must take into account many different components of the criminal population. They stressed that an important element in any such system is the personality and behavioral pattern of the individual offender.

In the 1980s, a research team at the Massachusetts Treatment Center in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, began a research program to classify sexual offenders (Knight, Rosenberg, & Schneider, 1985). Their application of a programmatic approach to typology construction and validation has produced taxonomic systems for both child molesters and rapists. The classification for child molesters has demonstrated reasonable reliability and consistent ties to distinctive developmental antecedents. In addition, preliminary results of a twenty-five-year recidivism study of child molesters indicate that aspects of the model have important prognostic implications (Knight & Prentky, 1990).

### **Crime Characteristics and Crime Classification Today**

The National Crime Survey (NCS) program is based on findings from a continuous survey of a representative sample of housing units across the United States. Approximately forty-six thousand housing units, inhabited by about ninety-three thousand individuals age twelve or older, take part in the survey. The participation rate for 1987 was 96 percent of all eligible housing units (*Criminal Victimization in the United States*, 1988).

The NCS focuses on certain criminal offenses, completed or attempted, that are of major concern to the general public and law enforcement authorities. These are the personal crimes of rape, robbery, assault, and larceny and the household crimes of burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. Definitions of the measured crimes generally are compatible with conventional use and with the definitions used by the FBI in its annual publication, *Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Reports*. The NCS reports on characteristics of personal crime victims, victim-offender relationships, offender characteristics in personal crimes of violence, and crime characteristics.

The work of investigative analysts at the FBI Academy with the large number of cases seen weekly has led to an expansion of these traditional crime categories. The *Crime Classification Manual* (CCM) makes explicit crime categories that have been used informally.

### **CRIME CLASSIFICATION: THE DECISION PROCESS**

To classify a crime using the CCM, an investigator needs to ask questions about the victim, the crime scene, and the nature of the victim-offender exchange. The answers to these questions will guide the investigator toward



making a decision on how best to classify the offense. However, the optimum use of this manual depends on the quality of information the investigator has concerning the crime.

## Defining Characteristics

The defining characteristics of each offense need to be as comprehensive and complete as possible. Victimology is an essential step in arriving at a possible motive. An investigator who fails to obtain complete victim histories may be overlooking information that could quickly direct the investigation to a motive and suspects.

As one looks through the classification sections in this book, it becomes apparent a blend of motivations inspires many violent crimes. This is especially true when multiple offenders are involved. There may be as many different reasons for the crime as there are offenders.

The approach taken in the CCM for multiple motives is to classify the offense according to the predominant motive. Consider a case in which a husband kills his wife for insurance money. He then attempts to cover the murder with a fire. In addition, he was having an affair, and his wife would not give him a divorce. This homicide has criminal enterprise (financial gain) and personal cause (domestic) motives. It also can be classified as crime concealment under the arson section. The financial considerations should be the primary criteria for classifying this crime. The other applicable categories would be subclassifications. So once classified, this homicide would appear as follows. For example, the number 107 refers to the category "insurance-related death"; the subcategory of 107.01 refers to "individual profit motive." The number 122 refers to "domestic murder" and the 122.02 refers to "staged domestic homicide." The number 231 refers to the category "crime concealment, murder."

107.01	Individual profit motive
122.02	Staged domestic homicide
231.00	Crime concealment, murder

The investigator will now be able to consult the investigative considerations and search warrant suggestions for each of these categories for possible guidance. Prosecutors will also benefit from having all aspects of the crime detailed. Later, other investigators working cases with one or more elements of this offense can use this case or any others with the applicable heading for reference.

The main rule when several of the categories apply (for example, murder and sexual assault, or sexual assault and arson) is to lead with the crime of