

Forensic Psychology: A Very Short Introduction  
By David Canter

Lie detection, offender profiling, insanity in the law, the minds of serial killers, and many other topics that fill news and fiction are all aspects of the rapidly developing area of Forensic Psychology. David Canter shows how these often controversial topics bridge the gaps between academics and practitioners, behavioural sciences, and the law.

Questions for thought and discussion:

- What are the difficulties in saying what Forensic Psychology is?
- Take any case featured recently in the media and consider what contributions a forensic psychologist might make to that case.
- Do you think criminals are born or made?
- What is a psychopath?
- Find out about a serial killer and explore whether he can be considered mad.
- Should offenders be treated as patients or criminals?
- How can deception be detected?
- What is offender profiling?
- Are criminals fundamentally different from non-criminals?
- What programmes are available in UK prisons for helping offenders to be law-abiding?
- What are the challenges to carrying out psychological studies of criminals?
- What is 'Investigative Psychology' and what are its origins?
- What have psychologists discovered about eyewitness testimony?
- How do psychologists contribute to legal proceedings?
- What are the psychological effects of imprisonment?
- How do you think forensic psychology will develop over the next 20 years?
- What is 'syndrome evidence'?
- Should psychologists be allowed to help select juries?
- Do you think it is possible for someone to confess to a crime they did not commit? Why?
- What differences would you expect to find in what forensic psychologists do in different countries?

Other books by David Canter

Breakwell, G.M. & Canter, D.V. (eds). *Empirical Approaches to Social Representations*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993)

Canter, D. *Criminal Shadows: The Inner Narrative of Evil* (London: Harper Collins, 1995)

Canter, D. *Psychology in Action: Selected Writings* (Farnham: Dartmouth, 1995)

Canter, D. *Mapping Murder: The Secrets of Geographical Profiling* (London: Virgin Books, 2007)

Canter, D. And Youngs, D. *Investigative Psychology: Offender Profiling and the Analysis of Criminal Action* (Chichester: Wiley, 2009)

Canter, D. (ed) *The Faces of Terrorism: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Chichester: Wiley, 2009)

#### Further reading

M. T. Huss, *Forensic Psychology: Research, Clinical Practice, and Applications* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009)

D. A. Kraus and J. D. Lieberman (eds.), *Psychological Expertise in Court* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009)

J. D. Lieberman and D. A. Kraus (eds.), *Jury Psychology: Social Aspects of the Trial Process* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009)

C. R. Bartol and A. M. Bartol, *Introduction to Forensic Psychology: Research and Application* (London: Sage, 2008)

D. A. Crighton and G. J. Towl, *Psychology in Prisons, 2nd edn.* (Oxford: BPS Blackwell, 2008)

A. Vrij, *Detecting Lies and Deceit: Pitfalls and Opportunities* (Chichester: Wiley, 2008)