

The Mailbox Vandals

One morning, some residents of a suburb outside Chicago find their mailboxes to be vandalized. Over a period of several weeks, more and more mailboxes are vandalized in the area. Some of the mail is stolen while some is destroyed and left at the scene. Most of the doors on the mailboxes are broken.

The police are unsure whether this is a teenage prank, the work of thieves looking for credit cards and personal information, or the rampage of a mentally ill person.

Role of the FBI

The FBI is contacted to obtain information about similar crimes in other parts of the country.

Role of the Profiler

The profiler gathers all the data such as fingerprints, names of the mailbox owners, their addresses, and identity of the mail stolen or destroyed. Then, the profiler creates a geographical map of the area where the incidents have taken place.

The profiler compares this information against the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) database. The mailbox owners are also interviewed. Witness statements are analyzed for patterns. Based on this data, the profiler creates a few potential profiles of individuals who may have been involved in this crime.

Role of the Forensic Psychologist

If and when a suspect is arrested, he may be ordered to be evaluated by a forensic psychologist to determine if he is mentally ill, competent to stand trial, and knew what he was doing (legally sane) at the time of the alleged offenses.