

*Serial Killer Characteristics Predicting Organized or Disorganized Classification*

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One of the most commonly used typologies for serial killers is whether they are considered organized or disorganized. In this study, we examine variables dealing with serial killers' backgrounds to determine whether or not these variables can be linked to whether the killers are classified as organized or disorganized. This examination uses a database maintained by Radford University and Florida Gulf Coast University, containing all known offenders who have killed two or more victims. Independent variables examined in association with the organized/disorganized classification include whether the killer had previous arrests, education level and IQ, the killers' abuse of alcohol, and whether or not they were raised by both of their birth parents. Previous arrest and alcohol abuse showed no statistically significant association to whether a killer was organized or disorganized. Offenders raised by both birth parents were more likely to be organized. Education and IQ were also associated with the outcome, with those who had a high school education or higher being more likely to be organized. Organized killers had a statistically significantly higher IQ than disorganized killers. Implications associated with these findings will be discussed.