

Influence of Symbolic Analysis in Cases of Ritual Crime

Thomas J. Czeizinger, Jr.

Author Note

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Abstract

This study took a look at the effect symbolic analysis had in the investigation of ritualistic crime. Using a mock ritual crime scene vignette, the study analyzed choices police investigators made regarding suspect questioning. The null hypothesis was that there would be no statistical difference between those who received a symbolic analysis report in addition to the vignette and those who did not. Subsequent investigative decisions regarding questioning were measured through an accompanying multiple-choice survey. Results showed a strong statistical difference between the two groups. It is suggested that in cases of ritualistic crime, the additional resource of symbolic analysis may provide otherwise unrecognized insights useful to seasoned investigators.

Keywords: forensic psychology, symbolic analysis, ritual crime, criminal investigation