IN AT THE KILL

From Charles Manson to the Yorkshire Ripper, Son of Sam to the Monster of Florence, John Douglas tests his wits against the best criminal minds of his generation. By John A. Jenkins

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Edmund Kemper is, by his own lights, a man of superior intellect and no small achievements. He boasts of once having been America's youngest fully-fledged civic booster; a twenty-year-old Christian living what he calls a "Jesus-first" life.

But that distinction is just an ironic footnote in Kemper's *vitae*. He is a legend for far more weighty reasons, and he implores his visitor to please, just please, get the story right.

"*I did not butcher people*," Ed Kemper, now 41 years old, insists with the petty certitude of a grammarian arguing over nuance. "*Decapitation is not butchering. The papers and the magazines had me butchering my victims. But I only dismembered two bodies. They were all decapitated; all but my mother's friend. Why? Why didn't I just pop some teeth out, or crunch some bones up? I was starting to branch out in my thoughts about how to do things and get away with it. The psychological trip was, the person is the head. For some reason, someone looks entirely different with no head. I noticed that."*

In an interview room at Vacaville prison in California, John Douglas, an energetic man not particularly suited to the sedentary, just sits there for a change and listens. There is little choice. Kemper talks fast, like someone trying to finish a long story before he runs out of the door. But Kemper is going nowhere.

Kemper is a giant of a man, 6'9" and 302 pounds, and as the words spew out, his voice betrays macabre enthusiasm while an intermittent giggle gives away his self-consciousness. These are awful stories. Over a span of maybe

half-a-dozen years, Kemper killed ten people: his grandparents, his mother, her best friend, and six hitchhiking students. He chopped their heads and hands off, ate parts of them, and, in his nagging mother's case, propped up her severed head on the kitchen table, ranted and raved at it, ripped out the larynx and ground it up in the waste disposal. "Mom didn't give a fuck. She was using us for her own little comforts." Nice guy.

Maybe it's a stretch of the imagination to see Kemper as the pride of the Junior Chamber of Commerce chapter at the Atascadero State Hospital for the criminally insane, California. But then he was much younger and the shrinks thought there was still hope; at that time he'd only hacked up his grandparents.

As Douglas listens to this serial killer offhandedly describe the young women he stalked and murdered after his release from Atascadero, the word that comes to Douglas's mind is nothing to be proud of, but at least he is being honest with himself. Douglas spells it out: "p-u-s-s-y". A coward. The word refers to Edmund Kemper, not to those who are dead, although Douglas has called murdered girls by that cruel name, too, when he thought doing so would please a murderer enough to make him relive the thrill of the kill.

Which is what Douglas wants.

The dead cannot speak, but their killers can, and Douglas has probably talked to more of them than any other man alive.

Douglas is the top cop on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's serial murder beat. He's chief of the elite Behavioural Science Investigative Support Unit, putting the most brutal murderers under a psychological microscope to understand why and how they kill.

Witty, tall, trim, well-barbered and one of the Bureau's nattiest dressers, Douglas is *Miami Vice* with manners. Forty-five years old with a pretty wife, three kids and a house in the suburbs, Douglas might be able to work undercover posing as an IBM executive or an up-market real estate salesman. He looks very *corporate*, going off every day to his $77,000-a-year job with a pistol in his briefcase.

When Douglas is called in on an unsolved murder, it is often because the local police fear that the murderer has killed for the sport of it, and that he will kill again. Maybe the crime scene has yielded no clues. Or has it?

After thirteen years on the serial murder beat, Douglas sees things differently. He has investigated over 5,000 homicides, rapes and kidnappings, many of them the world's most notorious unsolved crimes. Douglas's thumbprint is on the cases of the Tylenol Murderer in Chicago; the .22 Caliber Killer, Buffalo, NY; the Trailside Killer in California; preppy killer Ted Bundy, guilty of at least 31 girl student murders; the Green River Killer, Seattle; the Zodiac Killer, San Francisco; our own Yorkshire Ripper, and Italy's Monster of Florence.

It was Douglas who helped to investigate the serial killing of 27 black children in Atlanta from 1979 to 1981, and who coached the faltering prosecution team well enough for it to convict Wayne Williams as the murderer. But Douglas says he felt branded as a racist for declaring, before Williams's arrest, that the killer *had* to be black. (The FBI's profilers are convinced that serial killers only kill within their own race.) He also earned an FBI censure for convicting Williams *before* the trial, in the media. Douglas is unrepentant because when you match wits with a murderer you can't have second thoughts. "I'm not strokin' myself. I just feel confident in what I do. If that's having a big ego, then more people should have a big ego."

The idea behind the FBI's Behavioural Science Investigative Support Unit is that in unsolved murders there are psychological clues that ordinary detectives don't look for. So Douglas and nine other senior FBI agents help track down irrational, abnormal killers by analyzing criminal minds. Once a serial killer is captured, Douglas swoops in to probe the murderer's mind for clues to other, unsolved killings. In hour upon hour of prison conversations with killers – Douglas alone has interviewed over 150 convicted murderers, rapists, kidnappers and assassins – the agents have learned not only to speak the *lingua franca* of the killers, but to think the way these horrible minds do. Among others, he has matched wits with John Wayne Gacy, who killed 33 boys in Chicago; Richard Speck, who murdered eight student nurses in Chicago; and David Berkowitz, New York's notorious Son of Sam. And, of course, Ed Kemper.

"*I'm on an honesty thing the last five or six years; except when people get into my car. I didn't tell 'em I was gonna kill 'em. I couldn't quite handle that … Are you interested in what I was taking the heads off with? It wasn't a saw, not even a hack saw: a buck knife.*"

There were more than 23,000 murders in the United States in 1990. Surpassed by its European and Asian cousins in so many other ways, America has bested its rivals in the one game it would like to lose. Only the Philippines comes close.

Most people kill for profit or revenge, and most murderers know their victims. Those are the easier ones to solve. It's when somebody kills for fun that things get tough. Lust murderers, the mind trackers call them. They don't stop. You have to hunt them down.

With killings in America at an all-time high, Douglas's street value is soaring, too. For a nation that likes it murder and gore on the screen, if not the street, Douglas is proof that life truly can imitate art. Yes, he really does drive a brand-new, bright red BMW. Yes, he really does get clues from dreams and he believes in psychic power.

The American true-crime television shows love him: *Top Cop* and *Hard Copy* featured Douglas in recent months. A well-known literary agent wants to auction his life story to the highest-bidding publisher. Even Hollywood has acknowledged him. He was technical adviser on the set of *The Silence of the Lambs*, Jonathan Demme's film of Thomas Harris's harrowing novel. The book's FBI section chief, Jack Crawford, played on screen by Scott Glenn, holds the same post as Douglas. There are photographs in his office of Douglas proudly standing with the two stars of the movie, Jodie Foster and Glenn, and Demme who directed. Douglas had his own director's chair on the set. The canvas back of the chair is framed on the wall, too.

Amid so much publicity and adulation, it is all too easy to forget the urgency of Douglas's real mission. Each year, his group helps about 650 local police departments, as well as those in Australia, Canada, Britain and Italy, who have hit dead ends in their own murder investigations. The number of calls for help keeps zooming upward. Even Douglas concedes the FBI's claim of an 80 per cent success rate is dubious – "You can't make chicken salad out of chicken shit" is one of many aphorisms collectively known at the FBI as "Douglasisms"- but the feds, by mixing cop lingo with some tools of social

science, have made believers out of inherently mistrustful local police who would never invite a psychologist in on a case, and who not that long ago didn't think much of inviting in the FBI, either.

"I'm like a male whore." Douglas flashes an infectious, mischievous smile. "I can't say 'No' to my customers."

"I got my high on the complication of the thing; the meticulous way I ironed out potential problems before they even started .. Hatpins! Mace! The more weapons the girls had, the safer they felt, the more chances they'd take, the easier it was for me. Unless it's a policewoman with a gun in her hand, aimed at me, I've got her exactly where I want her. The first two victims were convinced the FBI and the CIA and Interpol were going to come looking for 'em two hours after they were missing. Both of 'em had money. Ritzy families. Real important. 'Boy, if I don't call daddy, we'll be missed."- Kemper

The Behavioural Science Investigative Unit has its offices in an underground bunker at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia. During the Cold War, it was to be a bomb shelter for the White House high command. Now, it's just a bucolic outpost 50 miles from Washington, located on federal property next to a Marine Corps base. Tan-brick, low-slung buildings have sprouted on a verdant landscape. This is where new agents (fewer than one in ten applicants are accepted) get their training, and all around the academy you can hear the pop-pop-pop of the nearby pistol range. Agents must shoot to kill, but not in the back and never at a car. They're taught that the best way to solve a case is with their brain; the next best, by defensive tactics: boxing, wrestling and judo. Deadly force is the last resort.

When Douglas came to the academy in 1977, after seven years of working the usual bank robberies and kidnappings in the Detroit and Milwaukee field office, it was as a traveling criminology instructor, visiting local police offices to teach two-week courses. He already had a graduate degree in educational psychology (he has a doctorate now), and that was enough to bring him in out of the cold. But Douglas couldn't abide the bland diet of the academic. He wanted to learn what made criminals tick, particularly those whose well-planned killings made them the most difficult to apprehend. So Douglas and a partner, Robert Ressler, decided to start making visits, unauthorized and unannounced, to prisons near the cities they toured.

His account comes in excited, machine-gun bursts tinged with the softened residue of a Brooklyn accent that was once hard-edged American cockney. It's a city drawl that betokens what might have been. Dad was a newspaper pressman. Mom says her son was *the* All-American boy, what with his athletics and all, but John jokes that he only joined the teams to avoid getting knifed for his lunch money."

"There's only so many bars you can go to; only so many dance contests you can enter when you're on the road." Douglas laughs now as he recounts how the FBI's psychological-profiling programme began because two big suits from Washington got bored. "I said, 'Listen, let's really *do* something! Rather than talk about Charles Manson, let's go interview Charles Manson. Rather than talk about David Berkowitz, the Son of Sam, we're gonna be in Rochester, NY, let's drive over to Attica and actually interview him. Let's just see if they will talk to us.'"

Ressler: "Should we tell the Bureau?"
Douglas: "Naw. If we tell the Bureau, there's a good chance they may reject us!" That was 1978. Douglas and Ressler interviewed Manson, Berkowitz, and Sirhan Sirhan, the assassin of Robert F. Kennedy. "We're *there*. We're walking down Death Row and people are throwing feces and cups of urine at us, and saying they'd like to screw us n the rear end if they had the chance. Screaming. Yelling. It's very intimidating."

At the time, even Douglas was amazed that these caged murderers were willing to talk at great length about their crimes.

Sometimes it took some judicious prodding to get them to open up. With Berkowitz, Douglas used a *Daily News* tabloid headline he'd brought along: SON OF SAM TERRORIZES CITY. "David," I began respectfully, "a hundred years from now, nobody's going to know who John Douglas is, or Bob Ressler. But a hundred years from now, people will know who David Berkowitz was: the Son of Sam in New York City. As a matter of fact, David, at this very moment there's a guy in Wichita calling himself the BTK Strangler. It stands for Bind, Torture and Kill. And in his letters to the police, he's drawing crime-scene sketches of his crime. He mails them to the police to establish his credibility. The guy also wrote, in his letters to the police, that he wanted a name: like son of Sam!"

Through this deft flattery, Douglas knew he'd stroked Berkowitz into his mind trap. "His eyes lit up. That got his attention." Berkowitz opened up and told Douglas about his unhappy boyhood: no girlfriends, still a virgin when he joined the army and shipped out to Korea. He paid $10 for sex with a Korean prostitute and immediately contracted venereal disease. "So, he's not a happy guy." Berkowitz described returning to the US and learning he was adopted, and how he then searched for and finally visited his natural mother – only to have her slam the door on him. Berkowitz became an arsonist; Douglas says Son of Sam's personal diaries documented more than 2,000 fires he set in New York City. And then he graduated to major league kills.

"What he said was, after the rejection, the hostility, the anger, he decided to get a gun, a .44 Magnum, and go to the dumps in NY City and start practicing with the weapon.

"He held it in a police-like stance, which he learned in the military. Even the selection of the weapon tells you something about the guy. He could use a .22 or .38 but he takes one of the most powerful weapons he can find.

"Then, he goes to areas where he can find couples. He's involved in voyeuristic activities, watching them. He's primarily interested in the female, so he shoots and kills the female and then he goes after the male.

"What David Bekowitz taught us was, in between the kills, serial killers are always on the hunt, looking for victims of opportunity. If they can't find a victim, they'll go back to the areas where they've been successful in the past. Berkowitz would go back to the areas of his previous kills, and he'd stand there, fantasize and relive the kills. He just stands there, maybe masturbates, and then he'll even go the gravesite.

"Berkowitz would do that; *many* of these guys do that."

When Ted Bundy finally broke down and admitted his grisly string of at least 31 female student murders in Washington, Utah, Colorado and Florida, his confession was to another agent from the FBI's Behavioural Science Unit, Bill Hagmaier, working for Douglas.

"Bundy was trying to help us on the Green River murders out in Seattle." Forty-one Washington State women died and eight others disappeared

between July 1982 and March 1984. "What he was saying, we already knew: if you want to get the guy, the crime scene becomes a part of the killer. He'll gravitate back there. Most of these cases, they've preselected the areas. What Bundy would do, he'd go back and even have sex with 'em after death. The bodies would start decomposing and Bundy would have *sex* with them!"

People get very regimented in ways to kill and ways to get away with it. Wouldn't it blow somebody's mind to invite somebody over to the house, bump him off, cut the sucker up into nice usable chunks, throw him in the Waring blender, grind his ass up, take him out on the lawn and fertilize your yard! No way anybody'd even suspect you! Puree of Pal."

Over time, Douglas became the FBI's serial interviewer, probing the criminal minds of other assassins and mass murderers. Arthur Bremer, John Wayne Gacy, Richard Speck, James Earl Ray, David Chapman (the murderer of John Lennon), and hundreds of lesser lights.

The more killers he talked to, the smarter and cockier Douglas got, to the point where he'd sit among the killers during prison visits and play a game, trying to guess their backgrounds and motivations based only on what they told him about the way they killed. They were Douglas's personal Tarot, and by his own account the convicts got a special high as their interlocutor turned over the cards and told him their past.

"These guys would get so excited! They'd say, 'You gave me a high; I'm getting off on it.'

"They're talking about their crimes, and I'm not offended by it. They may even talk about cannibalism, and I'm not shuddering or anything. I'm *laughing* with them about what they did to the victims, and using street language like them. They think it's pretty cool."

It felt like Douglas was on a roll one day as he visited the Maryland state penitentiary in Baltimore.

"So I said to them: 'You guys killed cops, you had drug kills; I really want a good *rape murder*. There's gotta be some out here in the yard.'

"One of the prisoners says: 'You've got to talk to Charlie Davis.' So I pulled in Charlie Davis, he's a big tall guy, almost 6'5", and he sat down.

"I gotta give them a little bit of bullshit myself. I say: 'Look, no promises can be made here about whether you guys can get out early or anything. But the warden is aware of who's cooperating in the investigation, and it may help your case down the way.' Deep inside, I'm saying, I hope it *never* does! But I'm sounding believable, trying to outcon the con.

"To this guy, Charlie, I say: 'I'm at a disadvantage; I don't know what you did.' He says: 'I killed five people.' I said: 'Just describe the crime scenes.'" It turned out that, when he wasn't raping and killing, Charlie was an ambulance driver. He'd dump his victims alongside the road. Often as not, when the body was discovered, it was Charlie who got the call to pick them up. That was his pretext for returning to the scene, to become a silent witness to his own carnage.

Douglas asked Charlie a few more perfunctory questions: where was the last victim last seen? In a bar. Why'd she leave? She was paged to go out to the parking lot because her car lights were still on.

That was her fatal mistake. No, her lights weren't really on. Charlie just wanted to lure the babe out to the lot, so he could jump her. He called a cop friend, had him run a license-plate check, and got the necessary information. When she took the bait, he handcuffed her, pushed her into his car, and quickly drove off. Then he raped her.

"How'd you kill her?" Douglas asked, dead-pan.

"I strangled her."

Important information. Charlie Davis was a spur-of-the-moment killer.

"Charlie," Douglas began, as the rest of the murderers grew quiet, "you didn't come prepared to kill. It was an afterthought, after the rape."

"Right. I didn't want to kill her," Charlie admitted, "but I hadn't disguised myself. I had to go through with it."

Douglas asked where the victims were found. Charlie replied that all of them were in open view. Douglas then said to himself: he *wants* the victims to be found.

"Then I can start profiling him: he gets wrapped up in the crimes, he's enjoying it. Particularly after he's done five of 'em. He's manipulating the police.

"But then I said to Charlie: 'Let me tell you about yourself. I don't know anything about your personal life, but, number one, you love police. You'd love to be in a position of power. If you had another occupation, it'd be as a police officer.'

"He started laughing! His dad was a police lieutenant." Douglas also accurately predicted Charlie was working in a menial job, far below his real abilities, and correctly foretold the events precipitating each of the murders: Charlie was angry at the so-called bitch in his life.

"'And let me tell you something, Charlie. I don't know that much about your case, but you took something belonging to the victim.' Charlie got red as a beet! All these other killers are looking at this real hard-nosed SOB, and they're saying: 'What is it? What did he take?' I said: 'I don't know what you took, but you took something from that victim. A photograph, a piece of jewellery, a piece of clothing. What was it, and why did you do it?'

"Charlie says 'I really never thought of it. I took jewellery from the other ones, and the jewellery I'd give to my wife.' It's like the cat who kills the mouse and drops it on your doorstep, only this is the SOB in his life, the wife. He goes out on a kill, brings back something belonging to the victim, and tells the wife: 'This is something I found on the street.' So, when she wears, it Charlie's saying to himself: 'Little does she know that when she's having sex with me later on, little does that bitch know that jewellery came from one of my victims!'" Perverse revenge. Douglas continues: "On one of the victims, he said he went through her wallet and he saw a photograph. On this particular murder, he threw clothing over her face and put her face down. The others were uncovered, face up.

"That told me he didn't feel good about this one. What he found was a photograph in her wallet of the victim, her husband and their pet dog at Christmas time. I questioned him: 'What did you do with that photograph?

You want to the gravesite, didn't you?' And he actually confessed to returning! 'I went to the gravesite.' He placed the photograph underneath the dirt. It was like returning it to the victim.

"All the other guys sitting around there, it was like watching a boxing match! They thought I was a psychic! But it's not that; it's just reconstructing. How in the hell do you do that? You do that by looking at the killer's handiwork. In order to know the offender, you must know the crime."

The last two women I killed, I didn't even give them any warning. I just slowed the car down to two or three miles an hour … I had the gun right next to her on the seat. I just reached up, pivoted my elbow and my wrist, right net to her head. I had the spot exactly picked out where I was going to blow her brains out. Dead centre of the brain. Right smack in the middle cause it's gonna be quick. Double-header trip. Wham! Wipe out two people! The one in the back, she's looking around, picking her nose, or whatever. This is what I'm surmising. Then I hear a real sharp gasp. She saw the gun. It also triggered the girl in the front. She was real friendly when she got in the car. I was sitting there trying to work up the nerve to blow her brains out, so I really didn't want to converse a helluva lot. I get to like her or something, I'm not gonna want to do it."

Douglas and his cohorts use their interviews to draw composite profiles of various types of killers. Among other things, they've categorized murderers as "organized", denoting a well-planned, clueless crime, or "disorganized", where the killing seemed to be spur-of-the-moment, and they claim to have drawn statistical inferences about the likeliest suspects for both styles of homicides. When a police department asks for the FBI's help, a thick package of crime scene and autopsy photographs, police reports and other evidentiary and investigative materials is sent to the academy, where it is evaluated by a team of agents from the Behavioural Science Investigative Support Unit. The agents then respond back with a psychological profile of the unknown killer.

Sometimes they visit the crime scene, but the agents are much more likely to examine the materials and draft their profile in the stark, government-issue confines of their underground offices. "You get a clinician's approach to it," concedes James I. Luke, who was once the medical examiner in

Washington, but who now assists in the FBI's programme. He is an expert in asphyxial deaths. "It's five dimensions removed from the street."

For the sterility of it all, someone accidentally wandering into the office might think he had stumbled upon a bunch of bureaucrats looking at a selection of photographic stills from a Brian De Palma film.

An attractive young blonde woman has been killed. So has her boyfriend. Both had their throats slit, and, God, the photographs of that make for a gruesome sight. The boyfriend's head is sliced so deep that it's most clean off his neck. But the girl got it worse. She was probably raped, and she surely fought before she died. There is a knife wound through her hand, and three more on the left side of her face.

At the autopsy, the coroner photographed the girl's nude body from every conceivable angle. It is bluish-red from lividity. Insects have already started to do their work. She stares out from one of the photographs, eyes open wide and unfocused, like a doll's.

Talk to me, sweetheart. Four FBI agents sit around three wooden tables pushed tightly together, studying the investigative record and the dozens of blown-up-crime-scene and autopsy photographs that are scattered all around. A big map of the United States is affixed to one wall; video equipment is pushed up against two others. The walls are tan; the room's furnishings are institutional drab. Lights are bright fluorescent. And there are absolutely no windows, anywhere.

None of the agents has been to the crime scene, and none has the time or even the inclination to go. The local police want the FBI's reading on this one, but the agents feel they can oblige from their office. Most of the FBI's psychological assessments are done right here, deep within the old bomb shelter.

As far as the agents are concerned, the photographs tell the story. The killer was good with a knife, but not so good with rope – he tied granny knots. He had made his plans in advance; he stalked the couple and brought the tools of his crime, rope and a knife, to the site. He had probably been to the site before. An organized criminal, in the FBI's typology. The girl was found in a field, adjacent to a seldom-traveled road that was a lovers' lane. She was

clumsily covered by a few old picket fencing stakes that the killer found at the scene.

Judson M. Ray, one of Douglas's agents, ponders this last fact. "The killer knew her," Ray confidently declares in due course. "He covered her up because of remorse for what happened. But he didn't know the boy." That's because there was no effort to cover him; he was found tied to a tree 150 feet away.

The killer used more rope than he needed to bind the young woman's hands behind her back. Moreover, she and her boyfriend were both quite drunk, so the killer really didn't need so much effort to subdue her. 'He has a need for control. That's his own internal need. It's not necessary for successful completion of the crime."

Multiple wounds to the girl, versus just one to the boy, means the girl was the object of the killer's focused rage. "You don't need to cut the body three times. She's who the killer came after."

The young man's throat was cut left to right, by someone who came up from behind. That tells the agents the killer was right-handed and probably slit his throat without any warning. Ray, the agent everybody just calls Jud, shakes his head not in sadness, but in seeming disgust that the guy didn't help his lady. "I'd like to think he stole that boy's confidence by saying, 'I'm just gonna rape her. Gonna tie you up. Don't wanna hurt anybody. Soon as I finish, I'll come back and untie you. It'll be over with.'"

Peter Smerick, another agent in Douglas's programme, picks up on that theme. "He tied the boy up, put a noose around his neck and then tied him to a tree. There's no indication that he tried to do anything to get out of his bindings. So, the kid did as he was told, and the time came and his throat was cut, too."

Judson Ray: "He probably came up behind him, said to him: 'OK, buddy, I'm cutting you loose.' I've seen *dead* men move more."

But the agents also found the awkward way that the girl was covered to be a telling piece of psychological evidence. It was clearly an afterthought; not so carefully planned as the rest of the crime seemed to have been.

Ray, for one, thinks the killer only intended to rape his quarry. "Something happened during the next fifteen minutes that caused the deaths of these people. I don't think the person went there primarily to kill these people."

In not too much time, the agents have performed a credible analysis of the crime. Their profile even points to a probable suspect: one of the girl's former boyfriends, who knew she went to the lovers' lane because he'd been there with her, too. The local cops certainly acted like they, too, thought the ex-boyfriend was their man. They had already given him a lie detector test. He failed. But because hard evidence linking him to the killing is nonexistent, he is still free, and that points to the inherent limitations of the FBI's psychological profiling programme.

Sure, Douglas and his men can give the cops insights into who their likeliest suspects might be, but they cannot produce a suspect based on the psychological profile they give alone, and they certainly cannot amass the proof necessary to arrest a suspect without the kind of investigative work that regular cops and crime laboratories do.

Even in the case of this double murder, the local police are really waiting for the results of the DNA test – the "genetic fingerprint"- on the semen found inside the dead girl. The important question is: was it the ex-boyfriend's? That single forensic test will be far more definitive than any profile the FBI draws.

That is why psychological profiles will never replace crime-scene forensic (hair, blood, and fibre types) and good, old-fashioned police work: knocking on doors and interviewing anybody who might have glimpsed the killer. Even Douglas acknowledges that his profile cannot produce a suspect, and he says that those who expect otherwise have missed the point: the psychological profile is just another investigative tool, albeit one designed to get the cops to start thinking like their quarry. "It gives you ideas."

In the movies, it is different. In *The Silence of the Lambs*, the FBI section chief is a genius. He masterminds a nationwide manhunt that snares a psycho killer in a matter of days.

But the funny thing is that Douglas professes not to care much for the way the character is drawn. He says he would rather be in the midst of the

manhunt, tracking down the killer and getting him to confess, instead of orchestrating the big event like some desk jockey from Washington. Douglas tells how he would do it; how he would get the suspect to spill his guts even if there wasn't a single scrap of tangible evidence available for the conviction. The words come softly, evenly, in a kind of hypnotic rhythm. You can tell he's reliving something.

"You assess the suspect. Maybe he's had a rub with the police. Maybe he has interrogation experience. Maybe he's been a jailhouse attorney. Maybe he faces the death penalty. How do you get him to admit to a crime where he faces the death penalty?

"You do a night-time interrogation. Research shows he'll feel more comfortable and he may let his guard down. It also shows him you're serious. You didn't go home at five o'clock. And you have respect for him. He's not there, being paraded in front of everybody on the day shift, like a trophy.

"You use low lighting. Like in my office. A relaxed setting. Maybe you have some files on the table; either files about him, or the *inference* that they pertain to him. Like you've really done your homework.

"You say: 'I know, Joe, that you got blood on you.' If he did it, he'll react. Get red. Twist his body in his seat. Be uncomfortable.

"Now, if you accuse him, the suspect is going to have to save face. You say: 'We know you did it. You're gonna have your attorney. But listen, this is like a dream to you. You don't know if you did it or not, because when you murdered her it's like you were just in a dream. There's a side of your personality that *you* don't even understand.'

"If the guy is listening to you, you know you're on the right track. Let him sleep. Let him tell you he did it in a dream state. Maybe he'll accept the face-saving deal, and then you'll get your confession."

The stratagem works, as Douglas knows well; not for nothing has he probed the minds of all those murderers. In fact, the "dream state" ploy is so effective that even innocent people have been induced to confess.

Too bad for them. Douglas doesn't have any second thoughts. He thinks just like the killers.