1-1-2012

The Use of Fire in Australian Homicide Cases: A Link to MTTAF and the Action Systems Framework

Bruce Watt  
*Bond University, bruce_watt@bond.edu.au*

Rebekah Doley  
*Bond University, rebekah_doley@bond.edu.au*

Claire Ferguson  
*Bond University, Claire_Ferguson@bond.edu.au*

Follow this and additional works at: [http://epublications.bond.edu.au/research_posters](http://epublications.bond.edu.au/research_posters)

Part of the [Criminology and Criminal Justice Commons](http://epublications.bond.edu.au/research_posters)

Recommended Citation

**Abstract:**
This project will examine the use of arson in homicide cases in Australia since 1990. It will involve a partnership between ACART and the Australian Institute of Criminology’s National Homicide Monitoring Program in order to examine the link between crime scene indicators, firesetter characteristics and the Multi-Trajectory Theory of Adult Firesetting treatment program. The project has relevance to treatment providers, investigators and researchers by linking all three in a comprehensive assessment of arson associated fires and the offenders who perpetrate them. Multidimensional statistical analysis will be used to identify themes and logistic regression will be employed to identify relevant predictor variables. Results will be of benefit to investigators and mental health professionals, as well as informing prevention efforts.

**Research Questions:**
- Why was the firesetting carried out (M-TTAF/Action Systems Model)?
- Do arson-homicides with various motives involve different elements of firesetting and present differently?
- How is this crime type reflected in the M-TTAF model of deliberate firesetting?

**Approach/Methods:**
- Variables will be extrapolated from the empirical literature explaining deliberate firesetting.
- Issues specific to homicide offenders will be considered and a proposed model of arson-related homicide will be developed and tested.
- Theoretical underpinnings of the classification system will be used to discriminate types of arson (validated in: Canter & Fritzon, 1998; Fritzon, Canter & Wilton, 2001; Fritzon & Brun, 2005; Miller & Fritzon, 2007; Santilla, Hakkanen & Fritzon, 2003; Fritzon, Lewis & Doley, 2011).
- The findings will be set in the context of the current multi-variante model of deliberate firesetting, M-TTAF (Gannon, O’Ciardha, & Doley, 2012).
- The M-TTAF model comprises two tiers: Tier 1, seeks to integrate current theory and research knowledge into a broad theory of firesetting; and Tier 2 seeks to summarize discrete offender profiles, describing ways in which firesetters may arrive at firesetting.
- Multidimensional statistical analysis will be used to identify themes and logistic regression will be employed to identify relevant predictor variables.

**Expected Outcomes:**
- Will link analyses of scene behaviours to offender characteristics, to the treatment model.
- Will facilitate further testing of Fritzon and Canter’s (1998) action systems model to determine its applicability to homicides.
- Findings will inform ACART treatment manual
- May also be helpful to fire investigators and law enforcement personnel.
- Findings will facilitate the ability to carry out detailed assessments of the types of firesetters who eventually set fires involving a loss of life so that these risk factors for escalation may be widely known and these types of fires better investigated and prevented.