Investigative Psychology

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Presentation by Porter Adams
Overview of Investigative Psychology

- Historical Background
- Contributions to Psychology
- Areas of Research
- Impact on Policy and Practice
Historical Background

- “During the 1970s, the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) provided 192 recommendations [...] extrapolation of certain relevant psychological material”
- New techniques were developed in the 1980s
- Offender profiling led to a study by Alison et al.. (2003) which “showed that of 4,000 claims made, nearly 80% were unsubstantiated and less than 31% were falsifiable.”
- “Investigative psychology emerged in response to the issues surrounding offender profiling”
Contributions to Psychology

- Clarifying link between behavior and personal characteristics
- Relationship between offender’s criminal and non-criminal life
- Linking crimes based on “the existence of a discernable and common pattern in behavior across all offenses”
Areas of Research

- Groups and Networks
  - The structure of offending groups or criminal networks

- Investigative Expertise
  - Detective Work
  - Interviews
  - Crisis Negotiations

- Offender Differentiation
  - “Differentiating the ways in which offenders behave during their offenses, on the basis that these variations may reflect underlying differences in the offenders' motivations or interpersonal tendencies (Canter 2000)”
Impact on Policy and Practice

- Suspect prioritization
- Crime linkage
- Geographic profiling
- Interview strategies
- Risk assessments