

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to find out among three psychological approaches: biological, social learning, and motivational approaches, which one is more appropriate in accounting for the occurrence of a serious aggressive act – homicide, using newspaper cuttings as the data source. A self-designed coding scheme was used to analyze the 351 homicidal cases. The result shows that there was not a single approach that could fully explain the occurrence of homicidal behaviors. Among the three approaches, the motivational approach could account for the largest number of homicidal behaviors whereas the biological approach could explain the smallest number of such behaviors.