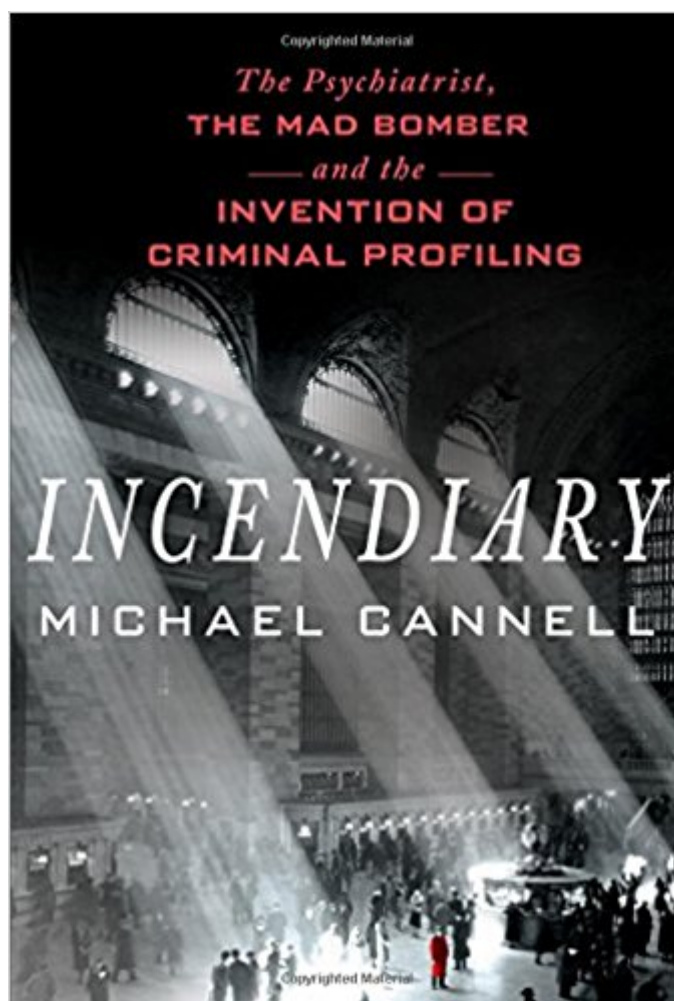


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Incendiary: The Psychiatrist, The Mad Bomber, And The Invention Of Criminal Profiling



Synopsis

Long before the specter of terrorism haunted the public imagination, a serial bomber stalked the streets of 1950s New York. The race to catch him would give birth to a new science called criminal profiling. Grand Central, Penn Station, Radio City Music Hall— for almost two decades, no place was safe from the man who signed his anonymous letters “F.P.” and left his lethal devices in phone booths, storage lockers, even tucked into the plush seats of movie theaters. His victims were left cruelly maimed. Tabloids called him “the greatest individual menace New York City ever faced.” In desperation, Police Captain Howard Finney sought the help of a little known psychiatrist, Dr. James Brussel, whose expertise was the criminal mind. Examining crime scene evidence and the strange wording in the bomber’s letters, he compiled a portrait of the suspect down to the cut of his jacket. But how to put a name to the description? Seymour Berkson— a handsome New York socialite, protégé of William Randolph Hearst, and publisher of the tabloid *The Journal-American*— joined in pursuit of the Mad Bomber. The three men hatched a brilliant scheme to catch him at his own game. Together, they would capture a monster and change the face of American law enforcement.

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Customer Reviews

“Exceptionally absorbing.” — *Seattle Times* “Fascinating . . . Cannell is at his best in making the impact of F.P.’s crimes palpable: he conveys in detail the dangers faced by the members of the NYPD Bomb Squad . . . and aptly captures the state of terror

created by explosions in random places such as movie theaters and train station restrooms.

• Publishers Weekly "Taut. . . the story holds its tension from start to finish through all those twists and turns. A fascinating study not just of a historical crime and its consequences, but also its unintended effects.

• Kirkus Reviews "A riveting thriller | Incendiary is powerful historical nonfiction at its very best.

• Linda Fairstein "Cannell brilliantly assembles his facts with an artist's flair and poignancy | you won't be able to put it down.

• William D. Cohan, bestselling author of House of Cards "A gripping and important book with a haunting resonance for our times.

• Daniel Stashower, three-time Edgar Award--winner and bestselling author of The Hour of Peril "Incendiary describes some of the major accomplishments of psychiatrist and criminal profiling pioneer Dr. James Brussel. It is an excellent read.

• F. Lee Bailey "An intriguing account of a chilling crime spree.

• Michael M. Baden, M.D., bestselling author of Remains Silent

MICHAEL CANNELL is the author of The Limit: Life and Death on the 1961 Grand Prix Circuit and I.M. Pei: Mandarin of Modernism. He was editor of the New York Times House & Home section for seven years and has written for The New Yorker, The New York Times Magazine, Sports Illustrated, and many other publications. He lives in New York City.

Micheal Cannell is an amazing storyteller. His research is meticulous, so that the words on his pages come life with vivid clarity. (I have grown up with Mike as a friend all my life, this is the first of his 3 books that I have read, but will seek out his others for the detailed narrative he creates) The Mad Bomber is a story I had no knowledge of, but transported into his world that Micheal has so brilliantly recreated, I have gained a huge understanding of the foundations of much of the criminal justice system today. I often read legal thrillers, fast paced adventurous fluff that have twists and turns to lead to a grand finale. Mike's style of writing is that every chapter feels like it is its own story, all combined to create fascinating book. We know where the book is going, but the details of the journey make this a fabulous read.

Exceptional! Very well written. Hard to put down.

Fascinating read - this case history of a serial bomber in the 1950s relates the fascinating story of a long and frustrating criminal investigation, the origins of criminal profiling, and the role the press

played in this important case. Along the way the reader becomes acquainted with eccentric psychiatrists, hard-bitten cops, tough reporters and vindictive judges. Well worth reading for true crime buffs, fans of New York history and anyone interested in the role of medicine in the legal system.

Interesting and well written narrative history about the Mad Bomber who terrorized NYC during the 1950's and how he eluded the NYC police department for over a decade. The author's criminal profiling coverage was particularly interesting. Overall, the book was just the right length for the subject matter. Recommend.

Tells the unknown (to me) story of a serial bomber while weaving in contemporary history, cultural developments and psychology. Good read.

Excellent book. Kept my interest from beginning to end. Amazing what few tools the police had to work with back then. Such a different world now.

Good book- great story

Great book on a true crime we never hear about these days, which terrorized NYC. And a fascinating account of the beginning of criminal profiling.

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