Death, Death, Death, Afternoon Tea:

The Social Significance of Serial Killers, Products of Modernity

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"Serial killer": The term incites excitement, intrigue and disgust in most people when mentioned. Everyone between the ages of thirteen and 113 can name a serial killer, if not several: Ted Bundy, Charles Manson, The Hillside Strangler, Timothy McVeigh, and Jack the Ripper, just to mention a few. These are household names, but academics have yet to penetrate the serial killer psyche and, overall, the serial killer represents a hole in our understanding of human behavior. Maybe that is the crux of our fascination with serial killers: the hole they represent and the realm of things that may lie there, hidden, maybe within each of us.

The current discourse surrounding serial killers is heavily rooted in biographical and psychological explanations of why serial killers do what they do. There is plenty of information on the personality of the serial killer, his thought patterns and cognitive functions. Likewise, there are many biographical studies of the serial killers: his origins, family life and childhood, etc. This discourse is not without purpose or function, but it does leave a gaping hole in our understanding of serial killers: their role as social[1] beings. What is the social significance of serial killers? Serial killers are human beings and therefore products of our society as well as forces in it. In order to obtain a deeper understanding of serial killers we must analyze their position in and interaction with society. When approached from this angle, we begin to see a pattern of serial killers reacting to the conditions of modern society and creating chaos within it. To understand the social significance of serial killers we must examine the framing of serial killers, their relationship with the media, and the conditions of modern society facilitating serial murder.[2] The social significance of serial killers, then, will not tell us why or how serial killers are made, but rather, what conditions in modern society allow for their existence and facilitate their behavior.

BACKGROUND

Haggerty (2009) identifies two themes "in both public and scholarly discourse" (p.169) found in current serial killer literature: the presentation of the serial killer as "unknowable" and questions regarding definition. There is an abundance of etiological, biographical, and psychological research on the subject of serial killers, although it is often unreliable because of problems with research methods. Current sociological studies are therefore working with flawed data, making publications scarce and imprecise. Methodological problems are unavoidable in any study, but identifying the possible pitfalls of different methods can allow us to see where we might make up for them in future research and where we should be careful about drawing damning conclusions.

Because serial murders and murderers are such a "black hole" of information for sociologists and other social scientists, we must rely on incomplete quantitative and qualitative data. Qualitative data on serial murderers such as interviews, biographies, case studies, or literature like autobiographies and diaries authored by the research subjects themselves present a plethora of methodological problems. These problems, as outlined by Hinch and Hepburn (1998), include difficulties with relating to access to research subjects and problems with reliability and misinformation. Quantitative data, similarly, is problematic for a number of reasons, not the least of which is the simple fact that "the number of serial murders and serial murderers is unknown" (Hinch & Hepburn, 1998; Dietz 1986, p.486). When estimates as to the number of active serial killers are made, the range is great (in the U.S. 10 to 500, in Canada 5 to 30) and therefore highly problematic. Hinch and Hepburn (1998) point out that "The variation in these estimates can be attributed to a variety of problems with data sources: arbitrary definitions; small samples; samples biased toward only known/apprehended serial killers; and samples relying upon secondary sources such as biographies or newspapers"; these problematic data

sources are often used because "official data are not reliable"(Hinch & Hepburn, 1998, p.#??), as most academics know all too well. Official crime data comes from the Uniform Crime Reports or the Supplemental Homicide Reports, both of which are problematic because they are incomplete and unreliable due to problems with reporting. These problems include the fact that reporting is voluntary and therefore incomplete, organizational pressure may lead to misreporting, and data only includes crimes known to the police, and therefore missing persons and unreported crimes are not included (Hinch & Hepburn, 1998). Besharov and Lauman-Billings also mention issues with unsubstantiated reports and issues with reporting laws, the latter being a structural problem (Adler & Adler). And there is yet another problem with quantitative data: "cross-national analysis is impeded by definitional problems, differential reporting patterns, and data inaccessibility"(Hinch & Hepburn, 1998, Problems with Quantification section, para. 7). These problems make the validity comparisons about serial murder and murderers across countries questionable.

Hinch and Hepburn (1998) argue that "reliance upon narrow definitions, questionable data gathering, and the creation of typologies based on these definitions distort the analysis of serial murder and serial murderers" (Abstract). This distortion must be acknowledged since most serial killer literature is based upon these flawed typologies. Hinch and Hepburn (1998) challenge the common assumptions, including "the notion that serial killers are male, the assumption that they kill mostly strangers, the notion that they don't kill for financial gain, and the notion that their victims are powerless people"(The Definition section, para. 1).[3] However, these notions are helpful because of the simple fact that they *are* notions, commonly held beliefs about the topic. Moreover, while these generalizations are problematic as they exclude certain types of killers and victims, overwhelmingly these generalizations represent the *most common*

incidents, which are the subject of my paper. Generalizations noted, I do not wish to ignore the outliers either.

FRAMING

Once the methodological research problems surrounding the study of serial killers have been identified and acknowledged, it is important to examine the framing of serial killers. Every issue has a frame. The frame purposefully includes some objects and does not include others. For this reason, when studying any issue, it is equally important to study its frame. Because frames are socially constructed, they reflect how society understands (or does not understand) an issue. The "serial killer" frame, therefore, can tell us volumes about how society interacts with and understands the serial killer.

There are many different definitions, typologies, and categories used to describe different types of serial murderers. Hinch and Hepburn (1998) argue that "classification attempts are misleading and tend to reinforce" stereotypes; they also point out that most current typologies and classifications "exclude those serialists who are externally motivated (e.g. hit men, terrorists, politically or religiously motivated killers and black widows)" (The Problem With Typologies section, para. 2). Categories are loosely defined and there are many cases of serial killers which do not fit nicely into categories or overlap several (Hinch & Hepburn, 1998). The overlapping of typologies can cause ideological conflict, and this is especially true when mass murderers, serial killers and sensational murderers are grouped together. Nevertheless, categories and typologies are relevant and indicative of the way serial killers interact with society.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI] (2005) defines serial murder as "The unlawful killing of two or more victims by the same offender(s), in separate events" and notes that "the time period between murders separates serial murder from mass murder"(Definition of Serial Murder section, para. 12-13). While this definition guides our justice system when labeling and

pursuing serial murderers, I am more concerned with how society defines and understands the "serial killer." While some current serial murder categories are sloppy, other definitions are too narrow and exclusionary (Heide & Keeney, 1995). In an attempt to correct this problem, Heide and Keeney distinguish between three types of multiple murder: mass, spree and serial murder.[4] Regarding mass murders, Dietz (1986) outlines three categories of mass murderers, as well as common mass murderer motives.[5] Fox and Levine (2003) come up with a slightly different, but overlapping, typology for mass murderers, categorizing them as motivated by revenge, power, loyalty, profit, or terror.[6] Serial murder, then, is defined by society and understood to be "the killings of multiple victims spread over time" (Heide & Keeney, 1995, p. 301).

Another weakness in the current definition of the serial killer, is that it "encompasses killings that few people would suggest are instances of serial murder" (Haggerty, 2003, p. 169): pirates, dictators and soldiers, for example. The latter two examples bring up the issue of sanctioned killing, as both dictators and soldiers are deeply embedded in the system of government. Capital punishment and the deaths that occur during political uprisings are also considered sanctioned killing and therefore viewed as socially acceptable. Multiple murder can thus be considering "just" as long as it is ordered and executed by the government, whereas instances of civilian multiple murder are considered morally wrong and are often seen as acts madness. What seems to matter, as Eddie Izzard in *Dressed to Kill* points out, is *who* is doing the killing and how much social, financial and cultural capital he/she/it possesses.

And, um, but there were other mass murderers that got away with it! Stalin, killed many millions, died in his bed, well done there. Pol Pot killed 1.7 million Cambodians, died under house arrest, age 72. Well done indeed. And the reason we let it – them get away with it is because they killed their own people. And we're sort of fine with that. Ah, help yourself, you know. We've been trying

to kill you for ages! So kill your own people, ohh, right on there. Seems to be,

Hitler killed people next door – awwww…stupid man. After a couple of years, we

won't stand for that, will we?

And I th – Pol Pot killed 1.7 million people. We can't even deal with that.

I think, you know, we think if – if somebody kills someone, that's murder, you go

to prison. You kill 10 people, you go to Texas, they hit you with a brick, that's

what they do. Twenty people, you go to a hospital, they look through a small

window at you forever. And over that, we can't deal with it, you know?

Someone's killed 100,000 people. We're almost going, "…Well done!

You killed 100,000 people? Ahhh. You must get up very early in the morning. I

can't even get down the gym! Your diary must look odd. Get up in the morning,

death, death, death, death, death, death, death, lunch…death, death, death

afternoon tea…death, death, death, quick shower." You know. So, uh, so I

suppose we're glad that Pol Pot's under house arrest – you know, 1.7 million

people. At least he – we know where he is – under house arrest. Just don't go in

that fucking house, you know? (Jordan [director], 1998)

Here Eddie Izzard, known for his biting truisms, analyzes society's treatment of multiple

murderers, pointing out the hypocrisy of sanctioned killings as well as the flawed way society

deals with multiple murder.

Heide and Keeney (1995) point out that the FBI's "typology of serial murders

(disorganized asocial type vs. organized non-social type), which was based on male serial

murderers (Ressler et al., 1998), may need to be expanded when cases of females are entered into

the data analysis pool"(Heide & Keeney, 1995, p. 305). Dietz (1986) classifies serial killers in

five categories: psychopathic sexual sadists, crime spree killers, functionaries of organized

criminal operations, custodial poisoners and asphyxiators, supposed psychotics.[7] The supposed

psychotic category is the leanest, since "Psychotic offenders rarely have the wherewithal

repeatedly to escape apprehension"(Dietz, 1986, p. 483). Serial killers are not in fact freaks or

aliens or mad men (in all cases), but are in fact functioning members of society and products of

modernity.[8]. Another category of multiple murderers is the sensational murderer, defined by

Dietz as "those that have a higher than chance probability of receiving coverage in tabloids" (p.

488).[9] Dietz's content analysis of detective magazines, which illustrates the entertainment value

of these sensational murders[10], finds, ultimately that headlines do not reflect reality; rather they

pander to our voyeuristic tendencies with sensationalized entertainment.

Mass, serial and sensational murders share some common elements. Dietz (1986) claims

that "mass, serial and sensational homicides all evoke a high degree of publicity" mainly because

this publicity "is among the motives of their perpetrators"(p. 477). He further explains that

"Offenders vary in the degree to which publicity is a motivator" and accounts for the fact that

some serial murderers commit suicide before their crimes hit the news since "they, like other

suicides, may expect to witness the aftermath"; there are also serial murderers who "enhance the

probability of apprehension for the sake of publicity," and, "[b]y insuring publicity for the crime

. . . [reveal their] desire to terrorize the community as a whole"(p. 478). These types of murders

"tend to elicit a premature conclusion that the offender must have been mad" (Dietz, 1986,

p.479). Dietz (1986) explains that this tendency "reflects widespread needs to attribute such

behavior to alien forces... while simultaneously reassuring the "believer that people like him are

incapable of such evil."(p. 479). While mass, serial and sensational murders are very different

on paper, their actions, motives, and their (socially-constructed) label are very similar.

MEDIA

Armstrong (2007) does an excellent job describing the media circus that inevitably follows the emergence of a serial killer:

> If he just drops off the face of the earth, this won't ever go away. The Feds will keep pouring money and man-hours into solving it. The newspapers will keep reminding people that it's unsolved—in other words, that the Feds 'fucked up.' Every time a potential suspect turns up, you risk the public taking matters into their own hands. Sure, it'll die down eventually, but you can bet that on every anniversary for the next decade, the media will bring it back up, reignite the fear. Then there's the whole issue of copycats . . . (p. 417).

Armstrong also highlights the strained relationship between the authorities, the serial killer, and the media. As Dietz (1986) notes, "Publicity can aid or hinder the investigation"(p. 478) of serial murders: it can lead to a quicker arrest or can cause critical information to leak, thus hindering the investigation or in some cases bringing it to a grinding halt.[11]

Media is a social tool, murder is a deviant human (and therefore social) action, and the relationship between the two must be examined from a sociological perspective in order to understand the way they operate. Media is also our window into an otherwise totally unknown world since serial killing is among the most statistically rare forms of crime (Jenkins, 1994), meaning that "most people thankfully have no first-hand experience of serial killers" (Haggerty, 2009, p. 173). Haggerty (2009) summarizes society's relationship to serial killers and the media: "Without mass media, individuals certainly could not have the intimate familiarity that they often demonstrate with both the general dynamics of serial killing and the appetites of particular killers"(p. 173). So the media turns otherwise unknown serial killers into household names.

We desire proof that our justice system (and social order) work effectively, and media, while not suited or meant for this purpose, is a venue for obtaining this proof. Unfortunately, the media powers are aware of this human desire and exploit it, thus mass producing moral panics. Jenkins (1994) argues that moral panics about serial murder are frequently the product of ideological campaigns for law and order, and notes a correlation between the serial murder moral panic of the 1970s and "a strong political trend toward a reevaluation of the etiology of social problems, a general tendency toward viewing wrong-doing and deviance as issues of personal sin and evil rather than social or economic dysfunction" (qtd. in Hinch and Hepburn, 1998, Problems with Quantification section, para. 9). Therefore, moral panics focusing on serial murders can be understood as often reflecting current social concerns and social problems.

Susan Sontag (2003) claims that "being a spectator of calamities taking place in another country is a quintessential modern experience, the cumulative offering by more than a century and a half's worth of those professional, specialized tourists known as journalists"(p. 18). This is not only true for international calamities, which are separated from society by distance and sometimes language, but local calamities that occur in a neighborhood, a county or even a state away is an extension of this modern phenomena: "Information about what is happening elsewhere, called '—news—' features conflict and violence—'If it bleeds, it leads' runs the venerable guideline of tabloids and twenty-four-hour headline news shows—to which the response is compassion or indignation, or titillation, or approval, as each misery heaves into view" (Sontag 2003, p. 18). Serial murder, being one of the bloodiest categories of news stories, in Sontag's view, is primed to be front page "news."

Sontag (2003) reminds us that media is a modern tool, since there are so many ways in which we may regard "—at a distance, through the medium of photography—other people's pain." and notes that coverage of violence "may give rise to opposing responses. A call for

peace. A cry for revenge. Or simply bemused awareness, continually restocked by photographic information, that terrible things happen" (p. 13). In this way, she comments not only on the modern nature of the media, but on its relationship with society, and the potential for change or stagnation in response to violence. She also argues that in our modern world "picture-taking [has] acquired an immediacy and authority greater than any verbal account in conveying the horror of mass-produced death" (2003, p. 24). I argue that picture-taking can be substituted with the most technologically advanced form of media information operating in any given society. In our case, picture-taking means videos on the internet or television.

Due in large part to the media's prevalence, "fame has become a generalized standard of success" and "there are few quicker routes to celebrity than committing a sensational crime" (Haggerty, 2009, p. 174). Haggerty (2009) echoes Dietz, pointing out that "serial killers often revel in their celebrity and actively seek out media attention" (p. 174). There exists a symbiotic relationship between the media and serial killers, since the killers offer "rich opportunities to capture public attention by capitalizing on deeply resonate themes of innocent victims, dangerous strangers, unsolved murders, all coalescing around a narrative of evasion and given moral force through implied personal threat to audience members"(Haggerty, 2009, p. 174). The media also allow for a new kind of serial killer identity to emerge, whereas in "pre-modern societies killing sequentially might have been something that someone *did,* today a serial killer is something that someone can *be*"(Haggerty, 2009, p.175). Dietz (1986) claims that the publicity generated by sensational crimes like serial murder "is among the motives of their perpetrators" (p. 477). Indeed, he claims that "reading their own press clippings helps them to complete an identity transformation… [and ultimately]…helps them create themselves and construct their emergent killer identities" (qtd in Haggerty, 2009, p. 175). The media function for the serial killer as tools for identity construction. Thus the relationship between the mass media and serial

killers can be summed up as follows: the media "foster a culture of celebrity while simultaneously placing on offer the category of 'serial killer.'"(Haggerty, 2009, p. 175).

Serial and mass murders sometimes use the media to accomplish a bigger goal, to send society a message. September 11th is one example of mass murder with a message: imperialism, capitalism, modernity and democracy are evils that much be squashed. This horrific act of terrorism is thus an act of mass murder with a social message within a particular social context. Serial killers, on the other hand, can be seen as bored with modernity. Things are too organized, too normal, so they seek to cause chaos by playing a "game" with very high stakes. They toy with the police and enjoy watching the effects of their mayhem on the nightly news. The Manson Family murders are a good example of this: the mastermind was discontent with his failed attempts at storming the music industry and decided to exact revenge by turning the Hollywood dream on its head and targeting his obstacles (LaBianca, Tate) for barbaric murder that shook Californians to their very core. As Gibson points out, "The Zodiac killer, for instance, was not the only serial killer to use the media to communicate with the public and taunt the police"(qtd. in Haggerty, 2009, p. 174). Thus the mass media, a modern and social tool, interacts with, facilitates, and sometimes even encourages the serial killer.

MODERNITY

To claim that serial murder is a modern phenomenon does not mean that modernity *causes* serial murder but rather, that several characteristics of modernity, "including anonymity, rationality, and the mass media," shape and facilitate serial murder by providing "the key institutional frameworks, motivations, and opportunity structures characteristic of contemporary forms of serial killings"(Haggerty, 2009, p. 170). To understand serial murder as a modern phenomenon, let us first define "modernity" as Haggerty (2009) does as "a series of distinctive changes in the nature of science, commerce (the rise of capitalism), urbanism, the mass media

and personal identity"(pp. 170-171). Haggerty goes on to articulate six "preconditions for serial

killing which are distinctively modern": the mass media and the rise of celebrity, anonymity, a

"means/end rationality that is largely divorced from value considerations", denigration and

inequality, "opportunity structures for victimization", and social engineering (p. 173).

Modernity brought about the rise of anonymity, which facilitates the operations of a serial

killer. Capitalism brought modern phenomena like immigration and apartment buildings. Now,

people are jammed packed together with "others" so they seek to maintain their privacy and

boundaries. Even though capitalism has us living closer to our neighbors than ever, we are more

strangers than neighbors. We know, "a defining attribute of serial killers is that they prey on

strangers"(Haggerty, 2009, p. 176), so now that more and more of us are living in social

anonymity, there are more and more strangers (read, targets) milling about. Likewise, the

modern notion of privacy, means you may not see your neighbor for weeks and not notice out of

ignorance or respect for the privacy of others, thus allowing the serial killer to "operate

comparatively freely"(Haggerty, 2009, p. 176).

Similar to the issue of anonymity, is the process of denigration seemingly inherent in

modern life. Denigration processes create 'liminal' individuals[12] who are forced to "reside

outside of or in between esteemed cultural classifications," which ultimately means they are

"lesser humans and less socially significant"(Haggerty, 2009, p. 180). Homosexuals, minorities,

and the disabled are some examples of "liminal' individuals. Haggerty (2009) also points out

that devalued groups, to different degrees, are "removed from the idealized wealthy,

heterosexual adult male that is the esteemed benchmark in western societies" (p. 180). Members

of this esteemed class in North America are very rarely the targets of serial killers, while

devalued populations are disproportionately targeted; in this way, serial killers "embrace and

reproduce the wider cultural codings that have devalued, stigmatized and marginalized specific

groups"(Haggerty, 2009, p. 180). Serial killers are, in a way, working to preserve the status quo, since they leave those with power and influence untouched, instead targeting the marginalized, the hated, those already victimized by those in power. Similarly, the goal of mass murderers is often to maintain or reinforce the status quo. Timothy McVeigh's 1995 bombing of the Oklahoma City Federal building was in fact about race. A white middle-class man became upset with the increasing numbers of minorities in his region and voiced this frustration by blowing up a building. And some serial killers view their actions as a great service to society, as if they were taking out the "trash." This is especially true for serial murderers who target members of "dispossessed groups," such as female prostitutes. The most generalized serial killer profile is a white, upper-middle class male, making him a member of the powerful and valued class.

Opportunity structures are a modern phenomena overlapping with anonymity and denigration since serial murder often involves marginalized groups operating anonymously. For example, many serial killers have targeted female prostitutes (Haggerty, 2009, p.181) a marginalized group, and one that operates fairly anonymously, at nighttime, usually in dangerous areas. Female prostitutes are also members of the "dispossessed classes," meaning they are unclaimed, no one takes guardianship of them and no one takes responsibility for their actions or their welfare. Members of the "dispossessed classes" become easy targets since, "by preying on the dispossessed, serial killers reduce the likelihood that their actions will be detected, and if detected, that they will be investigated with any degree of urgency or effectiveness" (Haggerty, 2009, p. 181). In short, "certain classes of individuals are disproportionately targeted by serial killers because of their greater accessibility and the degree to which they are removed from systems of"(Haggerty, 2009, p. 181) justice, guardianship and authority.

Haggerty (2009) claims that "Societies are modern to the extent that they are envisioned as being 'man made' and amenable to such human designs"(p. 183). This type of thinking lends

itself to the idea that some of us are "weeds"--useless, and taking up space in the otherwise beautiful garden of Earth. And, like real weeds, "such individuals must be segregated, contained and sometimes eliminated to keep them from spreading"(Haggerty, 2009, p. 183). When these notions are combined, social engineering, the Holocaust, and some serial killers are the result.[13] The social engineer-serial killer is distinctly modern, based on enlightenment ideas of rationality and eugenics. According to Haggerty, these killers operate in reaction to the modern phenomena of anonymity and immigration and articulate "uniquely modern ambitions of social betterment; to the extent that their killing is connected with utopian designs for social improvement, 'visionary' serial killers are distinctly modern" (p. 183).

The commodification of serial murder is also another distinctly modern phenomena, and, while serial killer themed action figures, movies, novels, and video games often have little to do with the actual serial killer, the prevalence of such commodities reveals society's obsession with serial murder and the "serial killer."[14] As Sontag (2003) noted, we live in a "culture in which shock has become a leading stimulus of consumption and source value"(p. 23).

CONCLUSION

Haggerty concludes that "Modernity provides a series of elective affinities between serial murder and contemporary civilization… sets the parameters of what it means to be a serial killer, and establishes the preconditions for serial murder to emerge in its distinctively contemporary guise" (Haggerty, 2009, p. 184). If we are ever to shed light on the black hole that represents the serial killer, several academic shifts need to occur. Research methods must be refined and standardized to facilitate cross-country comparisons. Definitions must be clarified and inclusive of all types of multiple murder, and must be pragmatic. This is not to say that all multiple murderers are the same; an array of typologies can be developed after definitions are clarified.

But most of all, serial killers must be understood as social beings, and social products and social forces operating in a distinctively *modern* society.

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Notes

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[1] I tend to use social and cultural interchangeably in this paper since, for my purposes, they are synonymous when discussing serial killers as social/cultural products. However, I recognize that the two terms do not mean the same thing and this distinction can be important in other uses and discourses.

[2] In this paper I alternate between serial killer and serial murder. The former refers to the person, the individual serial killer whereas the latter refers to the organization of the act of serial murder.

[3] Hinch and Hepburn (1998) point out that the ratio of female to male serial killers (fifteen percent) is about the same as the ratio of female to male murderers, so to say that serial murderers are overwhelmingly male, while true, is to ignore the same ratio among more common murders. Furthermore, they present the fact that "one third of a male serialist's victims are persons known to him," and, among female serial murders, the rate jumps to one half. These numbers massage the generalization that serial murders kill only strangers. To undermine the notion that serial killers do not kill for financial gain, Hinch and Hepburn present the fact that one quarter of male serial murderers and one half of female serial murderers in a study by Hickey were found to have killed for money. Lastly, Hinch and Hepburn point out that more and more the modern serial murdered comes from the lower strata and chooses victims of the upper strata, thereby doing away with the notion that serial killers and predominantly upper class individuals preying on the lower classes.

[4] Heidi and Keeney (1995) define mass murder as "the killing of three or more victims in one event"(p. 300). Spree murder refers to "the killing of three of more victims in different locations but within the context of one event"(p. 301).

[5] These categories are family annihilators (who are usually male, depressed, paranoid, intoxicated or some combination of these traits), pseudocommandos ("who are preoccupied by firearms and commit their raids after long deliberation"), and set-and-run killers ("who employ techniques allowing themselves the possibility of escape before the deaths occur.") (1986, p. 482). Dietz also points out the most common motives for mass murder are anger, revenge (toward people or institutions), extortion, insurance fraud or ideological motives.

[6] For more information on mass murder in particular, including a thorough typology, see Fox and Levin's study, "Mass Murder: An analysis of Extreme Violence"(2003).

[7] Psychopathic sexual sadists (often those who have killed ten or more victims) fall into this self-explanatory category and Ted Bundy and John Wayne Gacy serve as examples; crime spree killers "kill repeatedly during a series of crimes motivated by the search for excitement, money, and valuables" (Bonnie and Clyde were crime spree killers), functionaries of organized criminal operations (mafia killers, gang killers, contract killers, mercenaries and terrorists fall into this category), custodial poisoners and asphyxiators (who are usually guardians and caretakers of the very old or very young), and lastly, supposed psychotics, "who claim to be acting at the direction of command hallucinations or under the influence of compelling delusions"(the Hillside Strangler falls under this category) (Dietz, 1986, p. 487-488).

[8] In fact, Dietz (1986) notes that "serial killers who are able to reach the 10-victim level are able to do so because they manage not to be caught, which general requires either careful execution and an acceptable public persona…or high mobility…or both"(p. 483).

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[9] Dietz (1986) classifies the sensational murderers as "sexually sadistic homicides involving sexual assault, torture, kidnapping or sexual mutilation; homicides followed by significant postmortem injuries, such as decapitation, amputation or disarticulation or involving vampirism or cannibalism; homicides with elements of occultism, Satanism, cults or religious ritual; homicides in which either the offender or the victim is socially prominent or famous; and infanticide, matricide, and patricide"(p. 488).

[10] Dietz (1986) found that "38% of homicides involved torture of the victim, a far higher percentage than is true of homicide generally"(pp. 488-489); similarly, "Women victims in the articles were almost universally sexually assaulted prior to being murdered, whereas fewer than 2% of all homicides occur in the context of felonious sexual conduct" and "mutilation themes often appear on the cover of detective magazine, even though the proportion of all homicides involving mutilation is low"(p. 489). Dietz also points out that "Homicides of and by the famous and prominent do not occur with sufficient frequency to support the sensational journalism industry. . . Infanticide, matricide, and patricide occur with sufficient frequency to be standard fare for tabloids, but are curiously unexploited by detective magazines, perhaps because the cases are so readily solved that there is not much of a detective story to unfold or because the sexual elements are too subtle"(p. 489).

[11] The FBI symposium on serial murder (2005) calls for a mutually beneficial relationship between the authorities and the media in order to streamline the process of catching serial killers.

[12] Haggerty (2009) outlines the "devalued populations" as including "the extremely poor, homosexuals, women, the mentally ill, specific racial minorities, and children"(p. 180).

[13] Serial killers who only target female prostitutes, Hitler, and the Oklahoma City bomber, who was frustrated by the influx of minorities in his region, fall under this umbrella of social engineering.

[13] For more on the commodification of serial killers, see Jarvis' article,"Monsters, Inc.: Serial Killers and Consumer Culture."(2007). [13] For more on the commodification of serial killers, see Jarvis' article,"Monsters, Inc.: Serial Killers and Consumer Culture."(2007).