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Agnieszka Daniszewska

Serial Homicide

Profiling of Victims and Offenders
for Policing

 Springer

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*This book is dedicated to Professor
Emil Pływaczewski, who shared his great
wisdom with me and was a constant source
of inspiration, and Maria Maki Haberfeld,
who helped me believe that success is a
matter of hard work.*

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About the Author



Agnieszka Daniszewska was born on 3 December, 1991, in Białystok, Podlaskie Voivodeship, in north-eastern Poland. She graduated from Law Faculty at the University in Białystok, which has been ranked number 1 law faculty in Poland in 2012, obtaining the highest—very good—grade for a thesis about serial killers. She is currently a doctoral student of the same Criminal Law Department, preparing a thesis under the supervision of Professor Emil Pływaczewski, the dean of Law Faculty. She’s planning to develop her academic career in the future, specializing in criminology.

Introduction

Serial murder is one of the most morbid and drastic phenomena known to society. The act of murder is a crime, provoking such negative emotions that public opinion demands that violent criminals receive the harshest punishment possible. Serial murder, constituting repeated acts of murder, is therefore punished even more severely but the motive behind the perpetrator's actions tends to be more elusive, raising many questions that are difficult to answer. The study below focuses on the phenomenon of serial murder, including definition problems, and incorporates theses from various scientific disciplines, from psychology and psychiatry, through to medicine and criminology.

This study is criminological in nature, meaning that it looks into crime as a specific form of deviant behavior, crime as perceived by society, as well as the perpetrators and victims of serial murder. In addition, it also considers issues concerning deterrents and the institutions of law enforcement. The final section, which focuses on what are broadly perceived as preventive measures, concludes with a comprehensive survey of bibliographical resources carried out in New York and an interview with Maria Maki Haberkfeld, Associate Professor of Police Science in the Department of Law, Police Science and Criminal Justice Administration at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City.

The first chapter of the study distinguishes different forms of multiple murder in order to more easily differentiate serial murder from the rest, where the difference concerns the number of victims, the time period between the crimes, and the distance covered by the perpetrator. The development of the scientific approach and the media's approach to serial murder is then discussed, including a description of the history of criminal profiling and its contribution to the capture of the most dangerous criminals. The disturbing tendency to glorify this type of crime is also illustrated. The third section of this chapter constitutes a detailed breakdown of criminogenic factors, and thus the conditions that may influence a criminal act. The perpetrator's family situation, childhood, and alcohol abuse are considered. Finally, the scale of serial murder today is presented and compared to previous decades.

The second chapter deals with the perpetrators of serial murder. The first section concerns their typology based on motive, as adopted by the academics the Holmes

brothers. The visionary murderer suffering from hallucinations and the missionary aiming to save society are distinguished from the hedonistic murderer and the power maniac. Subsequently, the systematization of serial killers is presented according to the organization of their activity—this was a typology developed by the FBI through the use of police profiling during the investigation process. Of key importance is the state of the crime scene as left by the perpetrator, the way in which the victim was selected and the behavior that may have ensued after the murder act. The third section looks at the conditioning of the perpetrator, whether psychological, psychiatric, biomedical, or social. Attention is paid to the murderer's childhood, physical or mental scars, or even their hormone levels and the connection between their EEG reading and aggression. The profile of a typical serial murderer is then constructed on the basis of all the information referred to in the second chapter.

The third chapter describes the person affected by the murder crime, namely the victim. First, the compilation of the victim report is discussed, being a crucial element in criminal profiling. A comprehensive profile of the perpetrator cannot be created without a basic knowledge of specific aspects of the victim's life. Further in the third chapter, a typology of the victim, according to academic criminologists, is presented and victimogenic factors as well as victimization (the process of becoming a crime victim) are described. The third section gathers together the various elements concerning the role of the victim in the bringing about of a serial murder and presents two basic factors affecting one's susceptibility to becoming the victim of a crime—provocation and predestination.

The fourth chapter differs somewhat from the others, constituting case studies of serial murderers, namely a description of their criminal activities and brief biographies. The information contained in this chapter facilitates a clearer and easier classification of murderers according to particular perpetrator types. It allows for a better understanding of figures such as Ted Bundy, Henry Lee Lucas, and John Wayne Gacy.

The final chapter concerns investigation and evidencing procedures in serial murder cases, related problems and possibilities for more effective countermeasures. The first section introduces the basic terminology and characterization of criminal profiling. This is followed by a description of the practical side of investigative work, when the profile of a serial killer is created in order to gain a better understanding of the processes and procedures related to the prosecution of dangerous criminals. Furthermore, issues that may slow down and hinder an investigation are also considered.