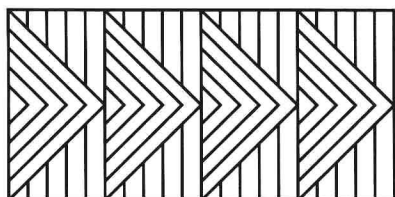


SERIAL MURDERERS and **THEIR** **VICTIMS**

A collection of red blood splatters of various sizes and shapes, scattered across the lower half of the page. Some are large and dark, while others are small and light, creating a sense of violence and gore.

ERIC W. HICKEY



Serial Murderers and Their Victims

Eric W. Hickey

California State University, Fresno



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TO THE VICTIMS, BOTH THE LIVING AND THE DEAD. MAY THEIR
SUFFERING NOT BE IGNORED OR FORGOTTEN.

AND TO THE MEMORY OF HAROLD E. SMITH, MY FRIEND AND
COLLEAGUE.

About the Author

Eric W. Hickey earned a Ph.D. in sociology from Brigham Young University and taught sociology and criminology courses at West Georgia College and at Ball State University. In 1990 he became a member of the criminology department at California State University, Fresno, where he currently teaches courses in psychology of crime, juvenile delinquency, victimology, and corrections.

Dr. Hickey has had considerable field experience. For nearly three years he worked with psychopaths, sex offenders, psychotics, and the criminally insane in the forensic unit of the Utah State Mental Hospital. He has published articles and book chapters on female offenders, missing and murdered children, and victimization. He also continues to conduct extensive research on violent offenders, victims, and deviant behavior.

Foreword

The Contemporary Issues in Crime and Justice Series introduces important topics that until now have been neglected or inadequately covered to students and professionals in criminal justice, criminology, law, psychology, and sociology.

The volumes cover philosophical and theoretical issues and analyze the most recent research findings and their implications for practice. Consequently, each volume will stimulate further thinking and debate on the issues it covers, in addition to providing direction for policy formulation and implementation.

The phenomenon of serial murder has become a very serious social problem; yet there is very little understanding about those who commit these heinous acts or the impact such acts have on survivors of the victims. This empirical examination of the lives of 203 serial offenders by Eric Hickey significantly adds to our understanding of these topics.

The book examines the cultural, historical, and religious influences that have, over time, contributed to the stereotyping of and myths about serial killers. It also offers a theoretical foundation for the violent behavior of serial murderers by discussing biological, psychological, structural, and social process theories. In addition, it presents the author's trauma-control model for understanding serial murder behavior—a model that suggests that violent behavior, fueled by facilitators (such as fantasies, alcohol, and pornography) and reinforced by the “routine” traumas of day-to-day living, keeps the serial killer caught up in a self-perpetuating cycle of violence.

Hickey has chosen to classify serial offenders into three groupings—female, male, and team killers—which allows for a more precise examination and understanding of each class of offender. Profiles of the various types of serial killers are provided in an effort to understand their personal histories and patterns of killing. For example, case studies of offenders such as Nancy Hazel Doss (the “Giggling Grandma”), Theodore Robert Bundy, David Richard Berkowitz (“Son of Sam”), and Kenneth Bianchi and Angelo Buono (the “Hillside Stranglers”), although gruesome and often macabre, offer insight into their personalities and behavior. In line with this approach, an in-depth interview with a serial murderer, recounting his crimes and describing his emotions, is included. The book also examines empirically the victims of

serial killers, with special attention focused on missing and murdered children.

The subject of the growing number of unsolved killings in the United States is addressed, along with that of serial killing in foreign countries. Finally, the role of law enforcement in dealing with serial murderers, the final disposition of cases, and future issues and research agendas are discussed. Until now, little research has been done and serious thought given to this topic; this work, however, will change all that. Because of its empirical and comprehensive nature, *Serial Murderers and Their Victims* will make a major contribution to the understanding of this topic and its impact on society.

Roy Roberg

Preface

Serial Murderers and Their Victims is the first comprehensive, empirical examination of serial murder in the United States. It provides a thorough analysis of the lives of serial killers through the examination of individual cases, typology construction, and models. The extensive data included not only provide insights into individual killers but reveal factors common to more than 200 serial killers—including male solo offenders, female offenders, and those who murder with accomplices.

Serial Murderers debunks the myths and stereotypes that have evolved from public efforts to find easy explanations for the relatively rare yet horrifying phenomenon of serial murder. It also raises many questions about serial killers and their behavior. The research for this book has included visits to prisons, police departments, and numerous university libraries across the United States, as well as interviews with several serial murderers, their spouses, ex-spouses, lovers, and one-time friends. I explored the lives of dead victims and victims who survived the attacks, and I communicated with families and relatives of the victims. The social, psychological, physiological, and financial devastation inflicted by serial murderers on their victims and the victims' families belies the fact that victims are often reduced to little more than crime statistics. The etiology of victimization and the continued suffering of survivors must not be forgotten or neglected.

Organization

This book explores five aspects of serial murder. First, Chapter 1 examines the emergence of serial killing in the United States and the many problems involved in adequately defining the phenomenon. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 explore cultural, biological, psychological, and sociological frameworks as explanations for serial murder and present a model for understanding serial killing as a *process*. Chapter 5 examines the victims and prospective victims of serial murderers: young women, children, and the elderly. Chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9 sort out the demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics of male and female offenders and those who murder with accomplices; they also include an indepth interview with an incarcerated serial killer. Finally, Chapter 10 addresses current issues faced by law en-

forcement officials, such as the detection and the apprehension of offenders using psychological profiling, sentencing, punishment, treatment, and prevention of serial murder.

This book is intended for students interested in understanding the nature of serial killing, the offenders, and their victims. It is designed to supplement a variety of college and university courses—including criminology, criminal justice, deviant behavior, victimology, abnormal psychology, and penology. Students using this book will be exposed to concepts and information that will help prepare them to understand society's most dangerous criminals. For those currently working in law enforcement, this book should serve as a useful reference and inservice tool.

Acknowledgments

I wish to recognize and thank many people who helped during the course of my research and its publication. I have deeply appreciated the counsel and encouragement of my colleagues John R. Fuller, John D. Hewitt, Ted Simon, and Candice Skrapec. I also wish to thank Scott Berning, Sally Clark, Paige Martin, and Allison Riley for their assistance in data collection, as well as Gena Herring, Amy McClellan, Kathy Downs, and Mike Elliott for their secretarial support. I especially want to thank Sue Sergott for her thoroughness, thoughtfulness, and extra hours donated to ensure the timely completion of this manuscript. My gratitude also goes to my special friend Thom O. Garg for his willingness to assist me in locating materials pertinent to this research.

A special thanks to Ball State University for their financial support in helping me complete this project and to Roberta Roper of the Stephanie Roper Committee and Ruth and John Kuzmaak of Victim's Voices United for their willingness to share their personal tragedies and their efforts to be more than mere survivors. I also want to thank those who reviewed the manuscript for their helpful comments. They are Terry C. Cox of Eastern Kentucky University, Ron Holmes of the University of Louisville, Chester McLaughlin of the University of Texas at El Paso, and Marc Riedel of Southern Illinois University. In addition, my appreciation goes to the entire Brooks/Cole team, especially editors Cindy Stormer, Claire Verduin, and Roy Roberg, for their support and guidance, and to editorial assistant Cathy Collins and production services manager Fiorella Ljunggren, for their enthusiasm and assistance in producing this book. I also want to sincerely thank Stacey C. Sawyer, who deserves much credit for her insightful and timely editing of this book. Never could an author expect to find a more competent, professional team of editors than those provided by Brooks/Cole.

Finally, and most importantly, I want to thank my lovely wife, Margo, for her encouragement and sacrifice on my behalf, and our four children Trevor, Erin, Alicen, and Chad, who missed their Dad when he "had to work on his book."

Eric W. Hickey

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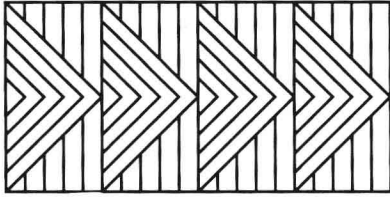
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Introduction: The Phenomenon of Serial Murder

The apparent increase in modern serial, or multiple, murders has incited interest among social scientists in several areas. Researchers have begun to explore the social, psychological, and biological makeup of the offenders in order to establish accurate profiles. In spite of their efforts, the body of knowledge about serial murders remains small compared to the number of unanswered questions—especially about the extent of the phenomenon. Law enforcement personnel and academicians have only begun to understand the dynamics of serial killing and its etiology, or causation.

The pure sensationalism and horror of serial murder has also spawned a plethora of novels about such murders, and the figure of the “cold-blooded, senseless” serial killer has been exploited by the media: for example, in television documentaries and prime-time shows—such as those that depicted California’s Hillside Strangler case and the infamous Ted Bundy (*The Deliberate Stranger*)—and in various box office thrillers. Because of the wide publicity given to serial murderers, a stereotype of this type of killer has formed in the mind of American society. The offender is a ruthless, blood-thirsty sex monster who lives a Jekyll-and-Hyde existence—probably next door to you. In his book *The Red Dragon*, Harris (1987) gave a fictional account of a serial killer who took great pleasure in annihilating entire families. Later his work was made into the movie *Manhunter*, a terrifying drama of psychopathology, blood, and carnage.

The fictional accounts of serial killing, however, often fail to surpass the horror described in nonfictional accounts of serial murder by writers such as Ann Rule—former acquaintance of Ted Bundy, who was executed in January, 1989. Besides her work on Bundy (*The Stranger Beside Me*, 1980), she has written about Randy Woodfield (*The I-5 Killer*, 1984), Jerry Brudos (*Lust Killer*, 1983), and Harvey Carignan (*The Want-Ad Killer*, 1988). Recently, female serial killers have been given increased attention—for instance, by R. Robin McDonald (*Black Widow*, 1986).

The researchers who have been examining the phenomenon of serial murder to promote greater understanding—and, they hope, develop intervention strategies—have also been busy. Case study analysis of serial murder has begun to provide researchers with insightful information, however tenuous. For example, Elliot Leyton (1986) in his books *Hunting Humans* and

Compulsive Killers provides in-depth examinations into the lives and minds of a few contemporary U.S. serial killers and their relationships with their victims. In *Mass Murder: The Growing Menace* (1985), Jack Levin and Jamie Fox assess some of the dynamics of serial and mass murder. Ronald Holmes and James DeBurger, in their work *Serial Murder* (1988), formulate typologies and include material gathered from interviews with serial murderers. Holmes's second work, *Profiling Violent Crimes* (1990), has become a useful tool in the investigation of serial murder. Steve Egger's work, *Serial Murder: An Elusive Phenomenon* (1990), underscores several critical problems encountered by researchers of serial murder. Robert Keppel, who as a law enforcement officer investigated several cases of serial killing, published his observations in *Serial Murder: Future Implications for Police Investigations* (1989).

Many other people associated with research on serial murder have also contributed to the body of knowledge on the subject. For instance, Harold Smith, editor for *Criminal Justice International* at the University of Chicago, has collected data on transnational serial killers—that is, killers whose victims are from different countries. Philip Jenkins, at Pennsylvania State University, has explored the social environments of serial murderers, whereas Candice Skrapek, a psychologist at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, has gathered data on the psychogenic status of serial offenders. Al Carlisle, a psychologist at the Utah State Prison and Provo Canyon Boys School, has explored dissociative states and other forces that may affect the mind of a serial killer.

People in law enforcement have been dealing with serial murders for many, many years. Recently, however, the nature and sophistication of investigation techniques have changed. Computer technology has expedited data collection and analysis. During the mid-1980s, the Federal Bureau of Investigation established, at their Behavioral Science Unit in Quantico, Virginia, the Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (VI-CAP). The VI-CAP program is designed to collect detailed information on homicides throughout the United States. Investigators like FBI Agent Robert Ressler, who has probably interviewed more serial killers than anyone else in the United States, have made considerable progress in understanding certain types of serial offenders. Ressler and colleagues published their findings in *Sexual Homicide* (1988). In addition, the U.S. government continues to develop programs such as the National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC) to focus specifically on repetitive offenders, including serial murderers.

Numbers and Types of Mass Murders and Serial Killings in the United States

The number of murders in the United States currently fluctuates around 20,000 per year. Over the past 20 years we have seen the murder and

manslaughter rates increase 300% while police clearance rates for these crimes have declined from 93% in 1962 to 74% in 1982 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1984b). The homicide rate—8.7 per 100,000 in 1987—appears to be one of the highest of any westernized nation. Although Eitzen and Timmer report that the majority of murders result from domestic and community conflicts, they also suggest that perhaps as many as one third of all murders are perpetrated by strangers (1985, pp. 130–131). Because of a marked increase in stranger-to-stranger homicides, as many as 25% of all murders go unsolved each year. The increasing number of serial murders is believed by some experts to account for many of these unsolved cases (Holmes & DeBurger, 1988, pp. 19–20). Ressler and his colleagues (1988) also documented a dramatic rise of stranger-to-stranger homicides, or murders with no apparent motive. According to their research, these murders represented 8.5% of all murders in 1976, 17.8% in 1981, 22.1% in 1984, and 22.5% in 1985 (p. 2).

Serial murders, however, may not be the only type of killings attracting considerable public attention. Mass murders, when several victims are killed within a few moments or hours, seem to be occurring with greater frequency. Some of the cases involve offenders walking into shopping malls, restaurants, or government offices and randomly shooting bystanders. In April, 1990, a man released only the day before from a psychiatric institution walked into a crowded shopping mall in Atlanta, Georgia, and began shooting everyone in his path. In other cases entire families have been annihilated by a troubled parent or sibling. In recent years there have also been several instances of assailants walking into elementary or secondary schools—or sometimes just standing by the playground—and randomly shooting children. Although researchers have only begun to collect data on such crimes, certain commonalities have begun to emerge: the offenders are primarily white, male, and span a wide age range. Invariably, handguns, semi-automatic guns, and rifles are the weapons used to kill suddenly and swiftly. Although victims are often intentionally selected by the killer—for example, a former boss, an ex-wife, or a friend—other persons who happen to be in the area often also become prey of the mass murderer. Some offenders, simply frustrated by perceived injustices and inequities, lash out at groups of victims who bear no relationship to them. Table 1.1 gives a brief listing of modern-day mass murders.

Unlike serial killers, the mass murderer appears to give little thought or concern to his or her inevitable capture or death. Some are killed by police during the attack, whereas others kill themselves once they have completed the massacre. In some cases offenders surrender to police and offer no resistance. With the exception of those who murder their families, most appear to commit their crimes in public places. In cases in which families are murdered, the killer usually leaves ample evidence to lead to his or her arrest.

As stated earlier, some mass murders appear to be premeditated—as in the case of Charles Whitman, who fired on unsuspecting victims from the

TABLE 1.1 Modern Mass Murderers

| YEAR | STATE | OFFENDER | DEATH TOLL |
|------|----------------|--------------------|---|
| 1949 | New Jersey | Howard B. Unruh | Shot 13 neighbors |
| 1966 | Illinois | Richard F. Speck | Stabbed/strangled 8 nurses |
| 1966 | Texas | Charles Whitman | Shot 16—mostly students |
| 1966 | Arizona | Robert B. Smith | Shot 5 women in beauty salon |
| 1974 | Louisiana | Mark Essex | Shot 9—mostly white police officers |
| 1975 | Ohio | James Ruppert | Shot 11 family members |
| 1976 | California | Edward Allaway | Shot 7 co-workers |
| 1977 | New York | Frederick W. Cowan | Shot 6 co-workers |
| 1982 | Pennsylvania | George Banks | Shot 13—family and acquaintances |
| 1984 | California | James O. Huberty | Shot 21 in and around a McDonald's restaurant |
| 1985 | Pennsylvania | Sylvia Selgrist | Shot several in mall; 2 died |
| 1986 | Oklahoma | Patrick Sherrill | Shot 14 co-workers |
| 1987 | Florida | William B. Cruse | Shot 6 persons at a mall |
| 1987 | Arkansas | Ronald G. Simmons | Shot 16—mostly family |
| 1988 | California | Richard Farley | Shot 9 in a computer company |
| 1988 | Minnesota | David Brown | Axed 4, all family |
| 1988 | Illinois | Laurie Dann | Shot, poisoned many—1 death |
| 1988 | North Carolina | Michael C. Hayes | Shot 4 neighbors |
| 1990 | Florida | James E. Pough | Shot 13 in an auto loan company—8 died |

bell tower at the University of Texas at Austin. He carried a footlocker full of supplies, including food and ammunition, to the top of the tower in preparation for his attack. Conversely, some cases of multiple homicide may be sparked by what may be viewed as a trivial remark, a minor insult or provocation. However, in both cases those who engage in multiple homicide appear to do so in an effort to regain, even for a brief moment, a degree of control over their lives. To the observer this motivation may not appear rational. To the killer, however, it may make perfect sense, given his or her psychological disorientation.

It would appear that not all mass murderers are motivated by similar circumstances, yet the final outcome is the same. Feelings of rejection, failure, and loss of autonomy create frustrations that inevitably overwhelm them, and they experience a need to strike back. And for many killers the