Serial Killers

Dr. Mike Aamodt
Radford University
maamodt@radford.edu

Updated 09/10/2011

Types of Multiple Killers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mass</th>
<th>Spree</th>
<th>Serial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td># of victims</td>
<td>4+</td>
<td>2+</td>
<td>2+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of events</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of locations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2+</td>
<td>2+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooling-off period</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: # of victims for serial killers was revised from 3 to 2 at the 2005 FBI-sponsored symposium on serial murder.

Serial Killer Frequency

- **Hickey (2010)**
  - 352 males and 64 females in U.S. from 1826-2004
  - 158 males and 30 females in U.S. from 1970-2004
  - 300 international serial killers from 1800-1995
- **Radford University Data Base (9/10/2011)**
  - 2,257 serial killers
    - US: 1,353
    - International: 904
  - Number of serial killers varies with each update because many names listed as serial killers are not actually serial killers and new serial killers are added

Updated 09/10/2011
General Serial Killer Profile
Demographics - Worldwide

- Male
  - Our data base: 88.3%
- White
  - 65.1% of all serial killers (68% in Kraemer et al, 2004)
  - 61.8% of male serial killers
  - 83.4% of female serial killers
- Average intelligence
  - Mean of 98.7 in our data base (median = 93.5)
  - n = 174

General Serial Killer Profile
Age at First Kill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Our data (2011)</td>
<td>1,890</td>
<td>29.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kraemer et al. (2004)</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
General Serial Killer Profile
Demographics – Average age is 29.2

- **Males**
  - 29.0 is average age at first kill
  - 9 is youngest (Robert Dale Segee)
  - 72 is oldest (Ray Copeland)
  - Jesse Pomeroy (Boston in the 1870s)
    - Killed 2 people and tortured 8 by the age of 14
    - Spent 58 years in solitary confinement until he died
- **Females**
  - 30.7 is average age at first kill
  - 11 is youngest (Mary Flora Bell)
  - 66 is oldest (Faye Copeland)

General Serial Killer Profile
Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>U.S. N=1,345</th>
<th>U.S. &amp; International N=2,232</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Problem with Profiling

- **Typical Serial Killer Profile in the Media**
  - A white, male, in his mid to late twenties
- **Statistics (U.S. Serial Killers)**
  - Male (89.7%)
  - White (65.8%)
  - Mid to late twenties (29.7%)
  - White, male (57.0%)
  - White male in his mid to late twenties (16.0%)
Racial Changes Across Time
U.S. Serial Killers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hisp</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>56.7%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>62.4%</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>72.6%</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>80.0%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>96.8%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>81.0%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>76.5%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Updated 06/11/2011

Serial Killing is a White Thing
1980-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>57.12%</td>
<td>74.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>34.49%</td>
<td>11.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>6.52%</td>
<td>9.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1.07%</td>
<td>2.81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Updated 06/11/2011

Race
Prolific African American Serial Killers

- 44       \text{Jakin Bird}
- 30       \text{Loving Mitchell}
- 39       \text{John Fred Thomas}
- 23       \text{Wayne Williams}
- 24       \text{Marty Tate}
- 16       \text{John Muhammad & Lee Boyd Malvo}
- 15       \text{Richard Jannenski}
- 10       \text{Fred Glover}
- 9        \text{Dr. Fred & Peyton Jackson}
- 7        \text{John Russell}
- 44       \text{James Lee Cooks}
- 36       \text{Larry Head}
- 37       \text{Vincent Gordon}
- 37       \text{Hilton Mitchell}
- 37       \text{Mervin Monroe}
- 37       \text{J.C. Simon}
- 37       \text{Chesley Dewayne Turner}
- 37       \text{Chester Walker}

- 34       \text{Lorenzo Gilbert}
- 29       \text{Charles Delfonte Johnson}
- 30       \text{Sydney Jones}

- 12       \text{Elton Manning Jackson}
- 12       \text{Sibley Lee Mcleod}
- 12       \text{Kathy Scott}
- 12       \text{Brandon Thrasher}
- 12       \text{Carol Eugene Wints}
- 12       \text{Robert Wilson}

Updated 06/11/2011
Race
Prolific Hispanic Serial Killers
• 27 Angel Colon Maldonado
• 25 Juan Corona
• 23 Adolfo Constanzo
• 15 Richard Ramirez
• 12 Robert Rubane Diaz
• 11 Juan Chavez
• 10 Eddie Seda
• 9 Jorge Benitez
• 9 Rolando Garcia
• 9 Alfredo R. Prieto
• 9 Dorothea Puente
• 7 Fernando Cota
• 7 Tondy Herrera
• 7 Diana Lumbrera
• 7 David Villarreal
• 6 Juan Cordoba
• 6 Timothy Joseph McGhee
• 6 Paul Ruiz
• 6 Efren Saldivar
• 5 Ricardo Caputo
• 5 Ramon T. Hernandez
• 5 Leslie Torres

Race
Prolific White Serial Killers
• 60 Dr. Michael Swango
• 49 Gary Ridgeway
• 48 Amy Archer-Gilligan
• 41 Gerald Stano
• 37 Donald Harvey
• 36 Ted Bundy
• 34 Gerard Schaefer
• 33 John Wayne Gacy
• 32 Patrick Kearney
• 31 Jane Toppan
• 30 Stanley Bernson
• 29 Charles Cullen
• 28 David Douglas Hill
• 27 Dean Corrl, David Brooks
  Elmer Henley
  Herman Mudgett

Serial Killer IQ
• Media/Internet
  – High IQ
• Our Database (N = 174)
  – Mean = 98.7
  – Median = 93.5
  – Range (54 – 165)
• Rape
  – Yes (95.5)
  – No (101.8)
• Type
  – Organized (113.6)
  – Disorganized (92.5)
• Method of Killing
  – Bomb (138)
  – Gun (99.3)
  – Hands (96.8)
Intelligence
The Smart

- 165 Ted Kaczynski (155)
- 160 Charlene Gallego
- 152 Carroll Cole
- 145 Rudy Bladel
  Ed Kemper (136)
  Ronald Williams
  Herbert Coddington (142)
- 140 Charles Albright
  Robert Browne
  Harvey Gitman (130)
- 138 James Clifford Carson
- 136 Ted Bundy (125)
- 134 Thomas Dillon
  William Christenson
- 130 Lawrence Bittaker
- 148 Juan Corona
- 145 Gary Heidnik (148)
- 125 Walter Leroy Moody (125)
- 115 Marcel Petiot (135)
- 129 Angel Resendez
- 129 Gerard Schaefer
- 128 Bill Heirens
  Paul Knowles
  Randy Kraft
- 126 Joel Rifkin

Intelligence
The Not So Smart

- 54 Donnie Gene Craig
- 57 Simon Pirela
- 58 John Staflen
- 60 Eugene Britt
- 62 Willie James Hodges (66)
- 63 Arthur Goode
- 64 John Thomas Straffen (58)
  Arthur Culombe
- 65 Albert Dyer
  Derrick Todd Lee (91)
  Sean Paul Hanify
  Karl Lee Myers (75)
- 66 Elroy Chester (69)
  Charles Troy Coleman
- 67 Sean Paul Hanify
  Donald William Dufour (62)

Family Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial Killers</th>
<th>U.S. Population*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth parent/s</td>
<td>80.89% 87.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopted</td>
<td>6.37% 2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative</td>
<td>6.71% 8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster home</td>
<td>3.10% 0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphanage</td>
<td>2.07% ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned</td>
<td>0.86% ?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 581</td>
<td>2000 Census</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*O’Hare (2008; Table 2)
Birth Order Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Serial Killers</th>
<th>U.S. Presidents</th>
<th>U.S. Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Born</td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>28.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Born</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>15.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youngest</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>28.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only Child</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>27.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = 388</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2000 Census</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Serial Killer Profile
Childhood

- Unstable home
- Absence of loving and nurturing relationship
- Physical ailments and disabilities
- Head injuries
- Triad
  - bed wetting
  - fire starting
  - animal torture

Effects of the Family
Child Abuse

| Comparison of Serial Killers to the General Population (Mitchell & Amosot, 2005) |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Type of Abuse                      | General Population | Serial Killers |
| Physical                          | 6%                 | 36%                 |
| Sexual                            | 3%                 | 26%                 |
| Psychological                     | 2%                 | 30%                 |
| Neglect                           | 18%                | 18%                 |
| Other                             | 6%                 | Not applicable      |
| No Abuse Reported                 | 70%                | 32%                 |
A Strange Way to Raise a Child  
Gary Heidnik

• 3 years old  
• Didn’t clean room properly  
• Father hung him by his feet out of a 3rd story window

A Strange Way to Raise a Child  
Henry Lee Lucas

• 3 years old  
  – Mother forced him to watch her have sex with strangers  
• 7 years old  
  – Mother made him go to school dressed like a girl  
  – Mother beat him when his teacher gave him a pair of shoes  
• 10 Years old  
  – Mother’s lover showed him how to kill animals and then have sex with them

A Strange Way to Raise a Child  
Danny Rolling

• 6 months  
  – Father kicked him into a wall  
• 1 year old  
  – Father beat him when he crawled funny  
• 6-8 years old  
  – Father beat him twice a week  
• 13 years old  
  – Father handcuffs him to brother, beats them, leaves them outside
A Strange Way to Raise a Child
Robert Garrow

• 1 year old
  – Father made him kneel for hours in the corner

• 2 years old
  – Mother splits his head open with a crowbar during a beating

• 5 years old
  – Knocked unconscious when mother hits him in the head with a piece of wood

• 6 Years old
  – Beaten unconscious by his father
  – Made to wear his sister’s bloomers out to play

General Serial Killer Profile
Forensic History

• Triad
• Most have a criminal history
  – 83.9% were previously arrested
  – 72.3% had spent time in jail or prison
• Many received prior psychiatric treatment
• 19.4% spent time in a forensic unit prior to their series
• 7.2% killed prior to their serial killing
  – This is a difficult statistic to accurately compute

Categorizing the Serial Killer

• Killer
  – sex, race, age
  – IQ
  – psychopathology
• Crime Scene
  – type of weapon
  – use of torture
  – attempt to hide body
  – location
• Motive
  – sex
  – power
  – financial gain
• Victim
  – sex, race, age
  – occupation
  – personality
### Types of Serial Killers

#### Visionaries

- **Psychotic - told to kill**
  - paranoia, schizophrenia
  - 1% of killers are psychotic (Henn et al., 1976)
- **Examples**
  - Herbert Mullin
  - Miguel Rivera
  - Joseph Kallinger

#### Herbert Mullin

- **Crimes**
  - Operated during 1972-1973
  - Killed 13 in Santa Cruz, CA
  - Shot most of his victims
- **Vision**
  - Voices told him to shave his head and burn his penis with a cigarette (he obeyed)
  - Voices told him to kill in order to prevent a catastrophic earthquake
Joseph Kallinger

• Crimes
  – Operated during 1974-1975
  – Murdered 3 in NJ and PA (including one of his sons)
  – Robbed and assaulted many others
  – His 13 year old son was his accomplice
• Vision
  – Told by God (through a large floating head with tentacles) to murder young boys and sever their genitals

Harvey Carignan

• Crimes
  – Known as the “Want-ad Killer”
  – Operated in Seattle 1973-1974
  – Killed 3 (probably many more) by smashing their skull with a hammer
• Vision
  – Told by God to kill women
  – God didn’t tell him why

Types of Serial Killers

Missionaries

• Kill to “Clean-up” world
• Examples
  – Joseph Franklin
    • Killed interracial couples and African Americans
    • Wounded Vernon Jordan and Larry Flynt (Hustler Magazine)
  – Wolfgang Abel
    • Killed drug addicts
  – Axe Man of New Orleans
    • Killed 11 (most were Italian grocers)
  – Carroll Cole
Carroll Edward Cole

• Crimes
  – Operated during 1975-1980
  – Killed at least 13 women in several western states

• Mission
  – Rid the world of loose women
  – All his victims cheated on their significant-other with Cole

Types of Serial Killers

Hedonists

• Kill for fun or profit
• Subtypes
  – Lust Killers (kill for sexual gratification)
    • Organized
    • Disorganized
    • Mixed
  – Thrill Killers (kill for the thrill of killing)
  – Gain Killers
    • Contract Killers
    • Black Widows
    • Lethal Caretakers
    • Cost Cutters

Examples of Lust Killers

• Organized Killers
  – Ted Bundy
  – John Gacy
  – Chris Wilder
  – Kenneth Bianchi
  – Ed Kemper

• Disorganized Killers
  – Arthur Shawcross
  – Richard Chase
  – Jeffrey Dahmer
  – Danny Rolling
Hedonists-Gain Killers
Black Widows

• The Crime
  – Kill husbands, lovers, or relatives for financial gain
  – Almost always women
  – Almost 90% use poison to kill their victims

• Examples
  – Diana Lamber (killed her 6 children for insurance)
  – Nanny Hazel Doss (killed 4 husbands, 2 sisters, 1 mother)
  – Lydia Trueblood (killed 4 husbands, 1 child, brother in-law)
  – Amy Gilligan (killed 5 husbands, several patients)

Hedonists - Gain Killers
Cost Cutters

• Crime
  – Kill to save money

• Examples
  – Joseph Briggren
    • Killed 12 ranch hands when their pay was due
    • Fed the people to his prize-winning pigs
  – Georg Grossman
    • Killed over 50 people, put the meat into his hotdogs
  – Joe Ball

Joe Ball

• Operated during the late 1930s
• Killed at least 5, probably 14, waitresses at his tavern (The Sociable Inn) in Texas
• Threw them into a pit with 5 alligators in the back of the tavern
Hedonists-Gain Killers
Lethal Caretakers - Profit

- The Crime
  - Kill patients for profit
  - Usually women

- Examples
  - Dorthea Puente killed 7 elderly to cash social security checks
  - Antoinette Scieri killed 12 elderly patients so that she could take their assets
  - Anna Hahn poisoned 5 elderly men she cared for to get their insurance

Types of Serial Killers
Power Seekers

- Kill to exert power over strangers

- Examples
  - Ted Bundy
  - David Berkowitz
  - Angelo Buono
  - Edward Kemper

Power Seekers
Angels of Death

- The Crime
  - Usually women
  - Kill patients for feelings of power and control

- Examples
  - Genene Jones - As a nurse, she killed between 11 and 46 babies by injecting them with a muscle relaxant
  - Terri Rachals killed 9 patients through injections of potassium chloride
  - David Harvey is an example of a male angel of death
  - Gwendolyn Graham and Catherine Wood
Gwendolyn Graham and Catherine Wood

- Killed 5 patients in Alpine Manor (a nursing home)
- Initial plan was to spell MURDER with the first letter in the last name of each victim
- Graham did all the killing and Wood kept watch

Power Seekers
Blue Beard Killers

- Males who kill their spouses
- Examples
  - Johann Hoch
  - Henri Landru
  - Harry Powers
  - James Watson

Henry Landu

- Romanced more than 300 women out of their money during the early 1900s in France
- Ran personal ads to meet his women
- Married and killed 10 of them
- Put their bodies in an oven to dispose of them
Lethal Caretakers
Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy

- **The Crime**
  - Kill or hurt others in order to be admired for curing them or to get sympathy for the death of a loved one
  - Mostly females
- **Examples**
  - Beverly Allitt injected insulin and potassium into 26 children (4 died, 9 had irreparable brain damage) over a 58-day period
  - Martha Woods - 27 respiratory attacks in 9 children resulted in 7 being killed (3 were her own children)

Types of Serial Killers
Revenge Killers

- **Kill for revenge**
- **Examples**
  - Martha Wise: Killed 3 family members opposing her marriage
  - Ellen Etheridge: Killed 4 of her 8 step-children because she was jealous of their relationship with her husband
  - Martha Johnson
    - Had 4 fights with her husband
    - After each fight, suffocated a child as revenge
    - Suffocated by laying on top of them (she weighed 250 pounds)

Types of Serial Killers
Antisocial Personalities

- **Definition**
  - Pattern of irresponsible or harmful behavior
  - Lack of conscience
  - Ignore social rules and laws
  - Impulsive
  - Fail to learn from punishment
- **Examples**
  - Gang Members
  - Criminals who kill for no reason
### The Crime Scene

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Characteristic</th>
<th>Disorganized</th>
<th>Organized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Body disfigured</td>
<td>hidden</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex after death</td>
<td>unsuccessful</td>
<td>successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weapons finds at scene</td>
<td>brings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viciousness torture</td>
<td>quick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophistication low</td>
<td>high, learns each time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Crime Scene

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crime Characteristic</th>
<th>Disorganized</th>
<th>Organized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totem not taken</td>
<td>taken</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows crime in news no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim high risk</td>
<td>low risk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gets to crime by walking, bus</td>
<td>drives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Killer Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Disorganized</th>
<th>Organized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residence</td>
<td>close to crime</td>
<td>further</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>less intelligent</td>
<td>intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>menial or unemployed</td>
<td>normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance</td>
<td>unattractive</td>
<td>attractive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-image</td>
<td>feels inferior</td>
<td>feels superior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>loner</td>
<td>outgoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Killer Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Disorganized</th>
<th>Organized</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Romance</td>
<td>lives alone</td>
<td>affairs, short relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>keeps inside</td>
<td>acts out, bully, class clown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth order</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>high</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habits</td>
<td>nighttime</td>
<td>daytime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childhood discipline</td>
<td>harsh</td>
<td>lax or inconsistent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial Killer Type</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Father’s work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcoholism, mental illness</td>
<td>unstable</td>
<td>stable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>