

2020

Factors That Influence Violence and Homicidal Ideation Among Serial Offenders

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Walden University

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Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

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Jared Rogers

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Walden University
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Abstract

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by

Jared Rogers

MA of Forensic Psychology, [Walden University], 2017

BS of Psychology, [Argosy University], 2016

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Forensic Psychology

Walden University

November 2020

Abstract

Many studies have been conducted to identify sources of violence in serial killers, including environmental, biological, and mental disposition factors. However, serial killers' sexual fantasies had not been explored. The purpose of this qualitative descriptive phenomenological study was to understand how sexual fantasies influence serial killers' violent behavior. The theoretical framework consisted of ecological systems theory and social learning theory. Data from previously conducted interviews, serial killers' manifestos, and historical records were used to conduct a comparative analysis of the behaviors, techniques, and identification signatures of serial killers. Data were coded and categorized to identify the relationship between sexual fantasies and violent behavior. Results indicated that serial killers base their signatures and modus operandi on sexual fantasies developed through childhood traumatic experiences. Findings may be used to improve the profiling of suspects and mitigate the threat of serial killers' violent behavior resulting in positive social change.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my sons, Jagger, Bodhisattva, and Lennon, and my daughter, Lyriss Marie, who motivate me to strive for greatness. I will always be that inspiration for you and will continue to be a positive influence for you all. To my mother, Tena, and father, Randy Rogers, who raised me to always believe in myself and maintain the course. To my brother, Christian, for always looking out for me and pushing me to move forward. To my fiancé and best friend, Amanda, who reminds me daily of my potential and believes in me like no other. And to my friend and mentor, Dr. Christopher Bass, who has stuck with me and guided me throughout my doctoral venture. I truly appreciate each one of you and I dedicate this work to you.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Background

There have been many studies conducted to understand criminal behavior (Reid, 2017; Scruton, 2017; Thorpe, 2018). However, the one finding that each of the studies had in common was that no answers had been developed, only theories and possibilities. The background concerning my study was that all research conducted started with a theory and remained a theory. Even though some theories incorporated sexual gratification and fantasies, some form of categorical mental disposition quickly followed deflecting from the idea there is a relationship between sexual fantasies and violence. The purpose of this study was to examine whether not only mental dispositions drove people to conduct violent acts, but also sexual fantasies.

Silva, Ferrari, and Leong (2002) suggested that substantial progress has been made in the development of methods aimed at identifying and apprehending individuals who exhibit sexual homicidal behaviors. Silva et al. looked at the behaviors of Jeffrey Dahmer from a neuropsychiatric and developmental viewpoint; however, they neglected to address the possibility that Dahmer was acting on his true nature and sexual desires. To comprehend such an individual's heinous acts, one must understand not only environmental and biological factors but also their deepest desires that might trigger them to act out violently. By doing so, the true foundation of violence may be understood.

Problem Statement

Humans are no strangers to utilizing violence as a means of intimidation, self-advancement, and murder (Lee & Reid, 2018). Some have speculated that humans has

perpetuated the ability to conduct violence on one another. However, the source of violence has not been clarified. Violence may be a trait embedded in the human mind, or it may be enhanced by environmental factors causing a person to conduct violent acts. Violence may also be associated with some form of mental disposition causing a person to unwillingly conduct violent acts.

Thorpe (2018) addressed the link between violence and human nature. It is possible that human nature remains primitive, making the concept of violence a natural desire. Thorpe provided an in-depth examination into the relationship between violence and human nature including factors associated with natural human instincts. Lee and Reid (2018) stated that “serial killers are opportunists who target marginalized and vulnerable populations.” It is interesting to think about how a serial killer chooses which population is vulnerable. The killer may study the targeted population to determine what aspects of the victims categorize them as vulnerable, or the victims’ vulnerability may pique the sexual fantasies of the serial offender. One-way researchers have addressed these questions is by utilizing biological theories.

Understanding the neurobiological factors of violence may facilitate the understanding of how these factors play a role in violent behaviors. Miczek, Takahashi, Gobrogge, Hwa, and de Almeida (2015) stated that “projections from hypothalamic and mesencephalic neurons to the medial prefrontal cortex contain microcircuits that appear pivotal for the escalation of aggression. The neurotransmitters serotonin, glutamate and GABA have also been implicated concerning the escalation of aggression.” Understanding the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for executive functioning and

tends to control how aggression is used, may help researchers decipher what is innate and what is learned. The idea of sexual fantasy, which has also been suggested as an innate behavior and typically processed in the prefrontal cortex, has rarely if ever been linked with serial aggression. If one were to identify sexual fantasies as a human trait, a better understanding of the relationship between violence and sexual fantasies may lead to a foundation of determining the serial offender's attraction to their victims. Humans have a tendency to act in the manner in which they are made to act. If a violent disposition is the cause of violent behavior, the violent disposition could be classified as a biological issue or possibly a human trait. If violence is a human or biological trait, it may be associated with sexual fantasies. The purpose of this study was to address this issue.

Reid (2017) examined biologically based developmental theories for serial homicide. Such theories addressed the effects of life events and how such events alter a person's path turning them to violent conduct. Another factor addressed in recent research is the age of serial offenders. Researching a younger population may provide a better understanding of the age at which sexual fantasies might begin to influence violent behavior.

Soron, Srabony, and Chowdhury (2018) discussed mental health issues that have been related to aggression. Soron et al. stated that depression is one of the major mental health issues identified with aggression. Soron et al. also noted that "The burden of depression is frequently underestimated in the developing world due to lack of evidence from proper research and sociocultural stigma." Understanding the difference between clinical depression and other forms of mood disorder is critical in improving the

understanding of the relationship between mental health issues and aggression.

According to the bio-psychosocial framework, disorders like depression are complicated in their etiology. Although depression may be a biological disposition, consideration of environmental factors might help to explain the onset or course of the disorder. For example, Soron et al. (2018) stated that

among the biological factors genetic influence and positive family history [are] noteworthy. The other important factors are psychosocial factors (e.g. quality of attachment, relation between parents, family support, self-esteem, and cognitions pattern) and several environmental factors (parental loss, divorce, physical/sexual abuse and illness or death of parents).

A thorough examination of the network of biological and psychological factors must be taken into consideration.

One example of how psychological factors provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between mental health issues and aggression is personality. Personality disorders may alter a person's behavior toward violence and aggression. Several personality disorders have been associated with aggressive behavior. Bipolar disorder, antisocial disorder, and borderline and histrionic personality disorders have been noted in the literature. Sexual fetishism has also been mentioned, especially bondage, discipline, sadism, and masochism. Weiser (2018) found that individuals with schizophrenia are more likely to be violent than the general population. The need for gratification may be the dominant factor in a person's external behavior.

Pu et al. (2017) identified other psychological concepts to consider:

“psychopathic traits of conduct disorder (CD) have a core callous-unemotional (CU) component and an impulsive-antisocial component.” However, it is not clear what other factors may distinguish a psychopath from an individual categorized as normal. As Pu et al. suggested, perhaps the core callous-unemotional component separates a serial offender from an individual considered the societal norm. The current study addressed what separates serial offenders from normal categorized individuals.

Researchers have endeavored to establish a relationship between violence and neurodevelopmental disorder. To clarify what factors constitute a neurodevelopmental disorder, researchers have considered the definition of the disorder and the factors accompanying the disorder. Raine (2019) stated

A neurodevelopmental disorder has its origins in childhood, frequently before grade school; is characterized by abnormalities throughout development in brain structure and function; is accompanied by neurocognitive impairments; has a significant genetic basis; runs a relatively stable course throughout development without remission or relapse; and continues into adult life, resulting in impaired social, academic, or occupational functioning.

Saxbe et al. (2018) included social concepts to address the issue: “community violence exposure is a common stressor, known to compromise youth cognitive and emotional development.” Saxbe et al. examined the relationship between community violence and a youth’s cognitive development and brain functionality. Saxbe et al.’s study included 22 adolescents with reported exposure to community violence (witnessing

a beating or illegal drug use, hearing gunshots, or other forms of community violence). The findings indicated a positive relationship between exposure to community violence and developmental brain functionality, and suggested that exposure to community violence may lead a person to commit violent acts. However, it is not clear how exposure to community violence may influence sexual fantasies once the youth reaches puberty, when sexual gratification becomes prominent.

Ray (2018) perceived violence as a result of what happens when integrative institutions and values break down. Institutions and members of society may have allowed their morals and values to promote violent human behavior. When addressing the issue of violence, it is imperative to consider different definitions. For example, one definition may include physical assault, rape, aggression, mental abuse, or actions conducted to protect one's self or family. No matter the definition used to describe violence, it can be viewed as a plague on society, often reinforced by religious dogma.

The relationship between organized religion and aggression or violence has been well established. Although there are approximately 4,200 different religions in the world, I focused on the top two religions practiced in the United States: Islam and Christianity. Many might find it hard to believe that religion causes violent behaviors; however, there is evidence to support this premise. Three arguments support the premise that religion and violence have a relationship.

Ibrahim (2018) noted that "there is far more violence in the Bible than in the Qur'an." Christians and Muslims have been at war for centuries. Ibrahim addressed the Crusades and how the idea of Islam imposing itself by the sword is fiction when it was

the Christians who were fighting holy wars against Islam. Perhaps religion is linked to the pursuit of power, which causes people to conduct violence to obtain the power. There is historical evidence of violent or aggressive behavior in each religion. Stories involving figures acquiring land, wives, or kingdoms have supported the aggression ideology that has defined each religion. Although religion cannot be blamed for aggression, a relationship apparently exists between violent human behavior and organized religion.

Clarke (2019) provided a different view on the influence of religion on human behavior:

It is sometimes argued that a lack of religion makes people less moral than they would be otherwise, and, therefore more inclined to violence. It is argued that religion makes people tolerant, and it is sometimes argued that religion makes people intolerant, which can drive violence.

However, religion has been a tool in not only wars throughout the centuries but also in individual violence and cult ceremonies. Christianity and Islam also have in revered texts and stories of sexual aggression and assault.

Sexual assault is often viewed as violence with various motives. However, research indicated that violence associated with sexual assault typically focuses on modus operandi and victim selection (Marsh, 2018). However, the internal desires that drove the victim selection have not been addressed, including possible factors such as religious masochistic teachings, physical attributes, the scent of the victim, or the way the victim carried themselves. Another factor that may influence victim selection is sexual fantasies. For example, a serial offender may look at a targeted population through the lens of

sexual fantasies and then look for vulnerability within that population, or the serial killer may find what they believe to be a vulnerable population and try to accommodate their sexual fantasies within that population. Understanding victim selection is imperative in the research to discover how sexual fantasies influence violence. The purpose of the current study was to explore the connection between violence and sexual fantasies.

Sexual fantasies may be related to the desire for dominance, pain, or violence. Without a better understanding the mindset of violent individuals, this relationship cannot be confidently asserted. Van Bommel, Uzieblo, Bogaerts, and Garofalo (2018) examined the associations between psychopathic traits and deviant sexual interests. Van Bommel et al. found that “relationship analysis supported the positive link between psychopathic traits and deviant sexual interests.” The current study focused on the relationship between violence and sexual fantasies among prominent serial killers.

Serial killers are often portrayed as similar, which is not supported by the evidence. Sharma (2018) stated that

The worldview that portrays a serial killer as being a white male, an evil monster with unusual appearance, having dysfunctional relationships, engaging in animal torture or being sexually or physically abused in childhood, and therefore, sadistically killing for sexual gratification should be challenged.

Researchers have found that contemporary serial killers live among society members as seemingly normal individuals. Serial killers may go to work, have a family, own a pet, and conduct normal behaviors as individuals without homicidal tendencies. However, many do not consider these normal behaviors with thinking of serial killers.

Annually, the statistics concerning the men and women who fall into the category of victims of serial offenders continue to rise. In 2017, the total reported murders were 17,284 (Statista Research Department, 2019). However, the effects of violent acts do not stop with the victim; the problem continues to alter the lives of those surrounding the victim. One issue to consider is how to categorize a serial offender's sexual fantasies that drive them to commit acts of violence.

Although some serial killers act alone, others (Gerald and Charlene Gallego, Fred and Rosemary West) act in tandem. Gurian (2017) studies 508 cases (738 total offenders) consisting of solo males, solo females, and partnered serial killers to examine statistical differences and similarities in offending patterns. The current study addressed the association between serial killers' sexual fantasies and violent conduct. The exploration of this relationship may lead to further research on the subject.

Pettigrew (2019) noted that hybristophilia is the attraction and sexual arousal to the criminal acts of another, and described how hybristophilia entralls other individuals to assist in heinous acts of violence. Pettigrew recommended further research to understand how a person's sexual fantasies may alter the sexual fantasies of another and how that might lead to violence. Pettigrew provided a rationale regarding why serial offenders often work with an accomplice; however, Pettigrew did not explore the offenders' sexual fantasies, which were addressed in the current study.

When conducting a study on serial offenders, it is imperative to research all aspects of offenses. Higgs, Carter, Tully, and Browne (2017) conducted a study of 700 sexual murderers focusing on three types of murder; grievance murder, sexualized

murder, and rape. Higgs et al. distinguished the different types of sexual assault and how the offenders' sexual desires influenced their violent actions. The current study also addressed different types of sexual assault and how such assaults might be linked to offenders' sexual fantasies.

One issue associated with the study of serial offenders and their victims is how a researcher ascertains the truth regarding an offender's sexual fantasies and how such fantasies influence their violent actions. Pettigrew (2019) stated that "existing literature on the killing method of choice for sexually motivated serial killers suggests strangulation as the preferable means of homicide when the victim is female." However, Pettigrew also provided evidence that firearms and different forms of knives (blades) are preferable methods of causing death. The lack of compelling evidence regarding violent tendencies, choice of victims, and methods of causing death warranted further exploration of the relationship between violence and sexual fantasies.

Chi, Lin, Jin, Xu, and Qi (2017) examined the patterns of crimes to discover an association between the crimes and the factors that influenced them. Williams (2019) stated that "serial homicide for personal gratification is, often commonly assumed to be driven by an underlying psychiatric compulsion, characterized by loss of control." Such control might be the main factor in the desire to commit violence, and the violence may be linked to sexual fantasies. The notion of compulsion is supported by the fact that it takes a specific number of murders with similar characteristics to become a serial killer.

Keatley, Golightly, Shephard, Yaksic, and Reid (2018) utilized the history of a serial offender's life and the sequence of their violent offenses to link their violent

offenses with their sexual fantasies. Keatley et al. explored whether sexual fantasies influenced violent conduct based on a pattern of behavior. Reid, Katan, Ellithy, Della Stua, and Denisov (2019) conducted a study to trace the developmental mechanisms that shape the psychopathology that drives the motivations of sexual serial killers. Both studies addressed the link between a serial killer's violent tendencies and their past, which provided the foundation for the current study addressing the relationship between violence and sexual fantasies.

I explored the relationship between serial killers' violent actions and sexual fantasies by analyzing their manifestos (personal writings) and the case logs from their crimes. I utilized the writings of serial killer Gary M. Heidnik. Heidnik was a serial killer and rapist who abducted, tortured, and brutally raped multiple women while they were forcibly held in a basement. Heidnik, also known as a cannibal, wrote letters that he sent off to Dr. Jack Apsche throughout his stint in prison. I examined these writings to discover whether sexual fantasies played a role in Heidnik's acts. The link between violence and sexual fantasies cannot be established by developing a theory. The answers are with the offenders' personal writings.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand how sexual fantasies influence serial killers' violent behaviors. Every individual has some form of sexual fantasy that drives their violent conduct. However, what separates serial offenders from law-abiding citizens is the inability to restrain gratification. One example is pornography. With the development of the Internet, pornography consumption has increased. Those who enjoy

pornography may find gratification with the observation of pornography. However, others may develop a tolerance to pornography that elicits a need to find a more hands-on way of gratifying their sexual desires. Such hands-on methods might include masturbation outside of a neighbor's window or breaking into a person's home with the intent to touch. The key is discovering the strength of a person's sexual desires, the means of accommodating their gratification, and the lengths they will go to satisfy the next level of their gratification. The current study addressed the link between serial killers' violent acts and their sexual fantasies.

James, Beauregard, and Proulx (2019) conducted a study utilizing a population of serial sexual murderers and non-serial sexual murderers. James et al. found that sexual murderers are marginalized individuals who are dissatisfied with their lives and whose crimes are triggered by stressful events. However, James et al. did not address whether sexual fantasies influenced sexual murderers' actions. Many crimes that do not fall under the category of murder are often conducted because of stressful situations, such as stealing and reckless driving. However, murder is often based on the offender's need for gratification.

Many researchers have conducted studies trying to link violence and sexual fantasies in an attempt to associate sexual fantasies as a human trait. It is possible such a relationship exists. One way to understand such a relationship is to examine the manifestos and interviews with serial offenders. Even though sexual fantasies may be considered a human trait, many times human nature is considered primitive in that

humans fall into the attraction of their sexual fantasies and have no control over the embedded illusions provided by the fantasies.

Scruton (2017) noted that human nature is no more developed than animal nature in that humans have needs that are driven by emotional stability and instability, which is why they give into their sexual fantasies. Research addressing the link between violence and sexual fantasies was needed. One way to improve the understanding of the connection between sexual fantasies and violence is to explore the driving force such fantasies possess.

Research Questions

The first research question addressed the nature of a serial killer's sexual fantasies as a driving force of their violence. To answer this research question, I used certain theories to discover patterns concerning factors that play a role in the development of homicidal behavior. The second research question focused on a serial killer's lived experiences as a potential etiology of sexually violent behavior. Sexual acts have long been associated with serial killing. What has not been addressed in the literature is the role of sexual fantasies prior to the sexually violent act.

RQ1: How would a serial killer describe their sexual fantasies as a driving force to violent behavior?

RQ2: What are the lived experiences of serial killers that have driven them to sexually violent behavior?

Framework

One way to examine the link between violence and sexual fantasies is to analyze each offender. This understanding would result from examination of the offender's history, mental dispositions, environmental factors, and sexual desires that drive them to conduct violent acts in a specific fashion. Analysis of a serial offender must be individualized. Given that each offender's mind is unique, it is imperative not to categorize them. The key is to examine their uniqueness to discover what drives them to conduct violence and how it link with their sexual fantasies.

Keatley et al. (2018) provided a novel method for mapping the developmental sequence of serial offenders' life histories. The importance of utilizing the history of a serial offender is that it provides an opportunity to look inside their mind. One assumption in the current study was that a person's nature is the starting point of their sexual fantasies. Some offenders obtain gratification by displaying dominance, which often leads to a violent outcome.

It was necessary to mitigate researcher bias in the study. I analyzed interviews, manifestos, case studies, and observations of serial offenders already in prison. Plano Clark and Ivankova (2016) provided information about how mixed-methods approach may enhance research findings. Although this study was qualitative, I considered the possibility of including statistical findings to support any evidence that may emerge. This research was conducted to understand the commonalities and patterns of violent conduct related to sexual fantasies.

Theoretical Orientation

According to Bronfenbrenner (1994), “human development occurs in the midst of a vibrant, complex environment.” I utilized the ecological systems theory to conduct an analysis of serial killers. The ecological systems theory purports that from a psychological perspective, the environment is defined by social and cultural practices and institutions that provide most of the experiences that people have (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). The ecology of human development ranges from family to economic and political structures that have made an impact on the world of psychology concerning the effects of environmental surroundings on individuals’ development (Ceci, 2006).

The ecological systems theory supported my comparative analysis of serial killers’ behavior and motivation. Bronfenbrenner’s (1994) theory provided a foundation to examine the differences in culture, beliefs, way of life, and environment to identify the factors that contributed to serial killers’ violent tendencies. Bronfenbrenner developed a theory that helps researchers understand human behavior. Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory was used to conduct a comparative of serial murderers’ behavior and motivation.

Social learning theory was another foundation considered in this study. According to Akers and Jennings (2019), “social learning theory is a general theory of criminal and deviant behavior that has found consistent and robust empirical support for more than four decades.” According to social learning theory, behavior is based on the association or interaction with others within a social context (Nicholson & Higgins, 2017). For

example, if a person were to be consistently exposed to violent behavior, the chances of them committing violence as they develop becomes more probable.

Many researchers have utilized the social learning theory to examine different areas of behavior, such as substance abuse, disorders, and violence. The purpose of using social learning theory is to understand the environmental factors of the population being studied. I used social learning theory and ecological systems theory to examine the environmental surroundings of serial murders thorough a comparative analysis.

Nature of the Study

I used a qualitative approach. The interviews had already been conducted with known serial killers, which I used to conduct a comparative analysis of the factors that contribute to a serial killer's actions, including the gratification of sexual fantasies. I examined the differences and similarities in tactics, tools, and methodology of serial killers. Bhattacharjee (2018) found that a human's best and worst instincts are shown through extreme altruists and psychopaths. Bhattacharjee did not mention whether the extreme altruists or psychopaths display the best or the worst human instincts (behaviors), which leaves much to the imagination concerning which category of people is more prone to act inconsistently with societal norms.

My intent was to associate a serial killer's violent characteristics with preexisting sexual fantasies and environmental factors. The use of manifestos was another data collection technique used in this study. Serial offenders often document their violent endeavors along with their gratification after conducting violence. Examining the

manifestos of serial offenders allowed me to discover a relationship between violence and sexual fantasies.

Possible Types and Sources of Data

Sources of data that were utilized consisted of case studies, interviews, and manifestos. Also, useful information and experience of my dissertation committee were utilized. I used the Internet to look up public records of serial offenders. I also used Walden University's library to collect all possible evidence concerning violence and sexual fantasies.

Definitions

Cannibal: The eating of a person's flesh.

Child abuse: Inflicting harm on a child mentally, emotionally, or physically.

Control: The ability to influence another person.

Criminogenic: The desire to produce criminal acts.

Domination: Controlling or influencing another person or thing.

Ecological systems theory: Behavior based on one's environment.

Ephebophile: The act of being attracted to an adolescent.

Gratification: Satisfying a desire.

Hebephile: Preferring children sexually.

Homicidal ideation: Thoughts about homicide.

Hybristophilia: Sexual arousal toward criminal acts of another.

Modus operandi (MO): Method of doing something

Molestation: Assault and/or abuse in a sexual fashion.

Murder: The killing of another.

Necrophiliac: A strong sexual desire toward or obsession with dead bodies.

Neglect: Unproperly cared for.

Pedophile: An individual with strong sexual desires toward children.

Prefrontal cortex: Cerebral cortex covering the frontal lobe.

Qualitative: Measuring the quality of a topic.

Rape: The forceful act of sexual intercourse.

Sadistic: Gratification by inflicting pain on another.

Serial homicide: Homicide of three people by the same offender.

Serial killer: An individual that conducts a series of murders.

Sexual abuse: Unwanted sexual conduct.

Sexual fantasies: Fantasies based on sexual gratification.

Signature: Featured qualities of something or someone.

Social learning theory: Behavior based on the interaction with others.

Torture: Inflicting pain on someone as an act of punishment.

Violent behaviors: Behavior that inflicts harm on another.

Significance

To provide credible findings, a researcher must look past their personal perspectives and analyze the data objectively. I provided scholarly references to support the direction of this study, which was examining the link between serial killers' violent tendencies and their sexual fantasies. This study was not only a personal interest but also a professional interest. The driving force behind my interest in the study was discovering

whether sexual gratification is a strong motivator of violent behavior. Clarifying the link between violent behavior and sexual fantasies may be used to prevent future violent conduct. A better understanding of the foundation of violent tendencies may be used to prevent the emergence of serial offenders. Given the lack of understanding concerning the relationship between violence and sexual fantasies, this study was warranted.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The statistics concerning the men and women who are victims of serial offenders continue to rise. In 2017, the total reported murders were 17,284 (Statista Research Department, 2019). The effects of violent acts do not stop with the victims; the problem also alters the lives of those surrounding the victims.

The notion that all serial killers are similar could not be further from the truth. Hickey (2016) provided a compelling analysis of myths and facts of serial killers. A few myths that Hickey mentioned were that all serial murderers are White, male, insane, and lustful. Hickey (2016) also noted that

Overall, one of five serial killers are black, which has moved to 50% in recent years, nearly 17% are female, very few are legally insane, which insanity is a legal term, and several cases do not involve sexual assaults, torture, or sexual mutilations.

Sharma (2018) stated that

The worldview that portrays a serial killer as being a white male, an evil monster with unusual appearance, having dysfunctional relationships, engaging in animal torture or being sexually or physically abused in childhood, and therefore, sadistically killing for sexual gratification should be challenged.

Factual descriptions of serial killers, as Hickey (2016) noted, indicate that many serial killers live among society as normal individuals. They may go to work, have a family, own a pet, and conduct normal behaviors as other individuals without homicidal tendencies.

Although some serial killers act alone, a few (Gerald and Charlene Gallego, Fred and Rosemary West) act in tandem. It is not accurate to think serial offenders always act alone. There are many times serial offenders find themselves accompanied by an accomplice. Gurian (2017) conducted a quantitative study including 508 cases (738 total offenders) consisting of solo males, solo females, and partnered serial killers to examine statistical differences and similarities in offenders' patterns. Gurian found that serial killers do not always work alone.

Pettigrew (2019) suggested that hybristophilia, which is the attraction and sexual arousal to the criminal acts of another and how it enthralls other individuals to assist in heinous acts of violence, is crucial in the understanding of those who commit crimes. Pettigrew alluded to how one may influence the violent mindset of another, which can lead to violence. This study provided a glimpse into how serial offenders often work with an accomplice; however, Pettigrew did not examine the foundation of violent offenders' actions.

Considering previous theories is imperative when researching serial murderers. To continue this research, it is important to look at what shapes a serial killer. A comparative analysis of serial killers' sexual fantasies was needed to understand the foundation of a serial murderers' violent behavior.

It is difficult to place a categorical theory on violent offenders when every mind is unique. Even if two serial killers endure similar childhood traumas, it is not always similar traumas that drive one to conduct violence. As stated before, "The research into serial murder is in its infancy" (Hickey, 2016). Such a statement carries weight

concerning the research already conducted on serial killers. Although we have come far concerning theories that have built foundations for understanding violence and serial killers, we are far from developing factual evidence to provides the hallowed truth to a serial killer's violent birth.

When researching serial killers, the word insane is often utilized. However, even though we know the definition of insanity, how do we categorize one to be insane when we do not fully understand the capability of the human mind and what force it holds over the actions the human body can display? Hickey (2016) states, "As long as we continue to seek quick answers without first constructing a framework for the discussion of serial murderers' behavior, we will continue to treat the symptoms of the illness rather than the illness itself."

What we know if there are many theories and categories created to depict the personality, characteristics, and behaviors of serial killers. As stated by Hickey (2016), we seek quick answers. In saying that, perhaps, it is wise to slow down, stop looking for the usual path taken, and look for new perspectives and dynamics to provide a new foundation concerning the study of serial killers. Society has implemented what it believes to be the standards to be classified as normal. However, the question is, who gets to decide what normal is and how society should utilize its normal abilities?

One of the first concepts a learner that ventures into psychology will understand is, "Every mind is unique." If that is the case, how do so many individuals dwell in the category of normal? The world of psychology claims to understand the complex issues that drive one to cause violent acts, such as, childhood trauma (abuse and neglect), the

injury inflicted on one's head, PTSD, dissociation, and low self-esteem, just to name a few. However, what we are needing to learn is the truth of a serial killer's violent tendencies. Perhaps, human nature is the key concept. Human nature would be the only theory/classification that one would be able to associate to all individuals that carry out heinous acts of violence.

Each of the above-mentioned serial killers has similarities that may prove insightful concerning the foundation of their violence. Such similarities consist of child-abuse, neglect, and violent desires toward others. In saying that, let us take a look at these factors. Child abuse is conducted, usually, by a parent or guardian. To discover the root of such a factor, one would have to continue to research previous generations that lead up to the known serial killers. We as a society point fingers at those that conduct the acts; however, we seldom look to put blame on those that created the said individuals.

So, what do we know about serial killers and how they may differ concerning geographic locations? Not much. That is why we need to further the research into such an area. We can discover similarities and that one may classify as a driving force in a serial killer's heinous acts; however, it is in the differences that we may finally discover what truly separates serial killer's mindsets.

Serial Killers

Many people state theories as to what makes a serial killer. Willmott et al. (2017) states, "Three key elements necessary to be defined as a serial killer; (1) the existence of two or more forensically linked murders with or without a revealed intention of committing additional murder, (2) murders that are committed as a discrete event(s) by

the same person(s) over a period of time and (3) where the primary motive is personal gratification.” Although the three previously mentioned factors of a serial killer define what a serial killer is, it does not describe the foundation of the serial killer’s motives and desires.

Ostrosky and Ardila (2017) states, “Criminology defines a serial killer as an individual who shows the following characteristics: kills on at least three occasions and with a certain period between each murder; establishes direct contact with the victim; uses a knife, strangles, or strikes, and seldom uses a firearm; and, finally, commits the crime as a sort of ritual in which he or she is stimulated, combining personal fantasies with death.” With the two previously mentioned references defining what defines a serial killer, only one resource goes on to speak of what is believed to be the most dangerous type of serial killers, the psychopathic killers because of his or her ability to professionally ability to produce false emotions. Ostrosky and Ardila (2017) state, “There are three firm ideas that rule serial killer’s minds: manipulation, domination, and control of the situation which begins with a fantasy and ends in depression.”

Although there are some similarities concerning the definition of a serial killer in the previously provided information, there are differences that may affect the true depiction of a serial killer. For example, one definition of a serial killer states that one of the key elements to a serial killer is one must perform two or more murders, where the second definition states one must conduct, at least, three murders. One definition speaks of tools used to conduct a murder mentioning that guns are not usually utilized, while the other shares no mention of weapons.

Where the similarities strike interest is with the fact that a serial killer conducts his or her heinous acts based on some form of motive based on personal gratification. Also, the fact that a timeframe is mentioned in both definitions of what makes a serial killer provides one theme. As stated by Ostrosky and Ardila (2017), which is backed by Willmott et al. (2017), each violent act conducted begins with a desire that is driven by a personal gratification (fantasy); however, tends to end in some form of depression, which provides a theme. In saying that, when a murder is conducted and a profile begins, is it wise to search for the individual's gratifying fantasy, or is it wise to search for his or her foundation concerning their depression?

Hickey (2016) associated three characteristics often found with serial killers; bedwetting (enuresis), animal cruelty, and arson (starting fires). Bedwetting, which falls under the category of enuresis, is one's inability to control his or her urination. To back such a claim, Hellman and Blackman (1966) found that enuresis was tied to aggression and fantasies of destruction in a study utilizing 84 prisoners where 31 were charged with aggressive crimes against the persona and 53 were charged with misdemeanors and minor felonies. Enuresis, in some cases, is considered to be an overt manifestation of internal turmoil usually caused by a disturbance in the home (Hickey, 2016).

One area of bedwetting that must be mentioned is the fact that any parent can attest that his or her child, at some point, faced some minor to a major form of bedwetting. To place focus on bedwetting as a factor of a serial killer's character might prove to be less than factual evidence. Hickey (2016) states, "For approximately 80% of children who suffer enuresis, the causes have biological roots and heredity is a major

contributing factor.” In saying that, to mention bedwetting as one of the three main characteristics of a serial killer is not backed by factual evidence, which places a gap in research. To back such information, Houts, Berman, and Abramson (1994) states, “Enuresis is, most often, caused by a failure of muscular responses that inhibit urination or by a hormonal imbalance that permits too much urine to accumulate during the night,” which teaches that many children, not only serial killers, face such an issue.

Animal cruelty is an aspect of serial killers that do not sit well with the public and those researching such individuals. It has been said even though some serial killers have taken enjoyment from hurting animals, many enjoy more the vivisection (conducting operations on live animals for experimental research) and exploration of dead animals (Hickey, 2016). In a study utilizing 102 males serving time in a federal penitentiary, Felthous and Kellert (1985) found that cruelty to animals during childhood occurred much more often among aggressive criminals than among nonaggressive criminals or non-criminals. In the above-mentioned study, Felthous and Kellert (1985) identified nine motivations for childhood cruelty to animals: to control the animal, to retaliate against the animal, to satisfy a prejudice against a specific species or breed, to express aggression through an animal, to enhance one’s aggressiveness, to shock people for amusement, to retaliate against another person, displacement of hostility from a person to an animal, and nonspecific sadism.

Even though many serial killers have admitted to the abuse of animals, it does not always mean that every serial killer has taken on violence toward an animal. However, when researching known and less than known serial killers, one might come across the

fact he or she had some violence toward animals. It is said that some serial killers who were physically or sexually abused seem to mimic their mistreatment on their companion animals (Gill, 1994).

According to Hickey (2016), the term fire-setting is more used to describe the actions of juveniles, whereas arson described the actions of an adult; however, each term is used interchangeably. Although we have all known or had that, at least, one friend that enjoyed blowing things up or setting things on fire, it does not mean he or she was or became a serial killer. Many juveniles that have conducted some form of setting fires have lacked in certain areas concerning his or her home life. In saying that, it is the absence of many home-environmental factors that drive one to conduct such aggressive acts.

Within juvenile fire-setters, noted family dysfunctions that play a role in a juvenile setting fires included low marital satisfaction, little or no display of affection, ineffectual role modeling, and excessive physical force in disciplining children (Hickey, 2016). Even though a large number of juveniles display some, if not all, of the behaviors listed under the most common psychological and behavioral problems in fire-setters, the signs remain factual concerning fire-setters. According to Hickey (2016), the following are the most common psychological and behavioral problems observed in the Fresno group of juvenile fire-setters: learning problems, poor school behavior, poor concentration, lying, excessive anger, fighting with siblings, disobedience, being influenced by peers, attention-seeking, impulsiveness, impatience, preoccupation with

fire, unhappiness in a dysfunctional family, and pronounced need for security and affection.

When thinking of a serial killer, one often thinks of the infamous Jack the Ripper from the streets of London in 1888. Society often celebrates or glorifies Jack the Ripper venturing away from the heinous acts of serial killing. Given that Jack the Ripper fits in the same category as the celebrity, perhaps, it is the perspective of society that may contribute to the self-perception a serial killer has of him or herself.

According to Simpson (2017), the murders conducted by Jack the Ripper stand at a particular nexus in the representation of true crime, where fact and legend immediately fused in popular media to create a terrifying new modern, urban mythology of a preternaturally cunning human super-predator: one who strikes from the shadows to commit ghastly murder with impunity and then retreats into that darkness until the next atrocity.” Such a perspective backs the theory of the United States compared to international countries that differ concerning the image of a serial killer.

Sexual Fantasies

To associate a serial killer with a sexual fantasy, it is important to understand the concept of sexual fantasy and gratification. Hickey (2016) stated, “Most serial killers known widely to the public have usually been involved sexually with their victims. This may include rape, sodomy, and an array of sexual tortures and deviations.” In saying that, it is not out of line to discover a relationship between violence and sexual fantasies for serial killers.

One factor to take into consideration when looking at a serial killer's sexual fantasies is to understand the definition and difference between a sex murderer and a lust murderer. According to Hickey (2016), the sex murderer kills often out of fear and a desire to silence his victim, whereas the lust murderer appears to harbor deep-seated fantasies. Many serial killers have admitted to venturing into the pornography material. Hickey (2016) wrote, "Some offenders admit to the occasional or frequent use of pornography, sometimes violent materials involving bondage and the torture of women and children. With this in mind, it is interesting to think about how a serial killer's sexual gratification peaks at some point and develops the need to move onto more concerning behaviors.

Sexual Violence

Sexual assault is often viewed as violence with various motives. However, research shows that violence associated with sexual assault typically focuses on modus operandi and victim selection (Marsh, 2018). In saying that, what internal desires drive the victim selection of the offender(s)? Was it the scent of the victim or the way the victim carried him or herself? Such a series of questions open the door to further research concerning violence and victim selection, which can be driven by one's sexual fantasies. For example, does a serial offender look at a targeted population that link with his or her sexual fantasies and then look for vulnerability within the said population? Or, does the serial killer find what he or she believes to be a vulnerable population and try to accommodate their truest desires with the said population? Perhaps, it is the physical

attributes of the victim that caught the attention of the offender, or a plethora of other possibilities.

Fritz Haarmann (The Butcher of Hannover)

Fritz Haarmann, also known as “The Butcher of Hannover,” was a known serial killer that also fell into the category of pedophile, serial rapist, cannibal, hebephile, and ephebophile. Haarmann was responsible for 24-27 murders and was eventually sentenced to death. Much like many other serial killers, Fritz Haarmann was exposed to a difficult childhood. According to Hickey (2016), Haarmann was a homosexual with a real sexual passion for picking up young males at railway stations. His psychopathic ability to manipulate others made the boys easy targets as he lured them to his apartment, where he tortured, sodomized, and killed them by biting through their throats (Hickey, 2016).

Hickey (2016) stated, “a “true hematolagniac” is a fantasy-driven psychopath and to be considered very dangerous. Such desires are founded in severe childhood abuse. The child may engage in auto-vampirism in tasting his own blood and during puberty. These acts are eventually sexualized and reinforced through masturbation. A progressive paraphilic stage during adolescence is the sexual arousal of eating animals and drinking their blood (zoophagia) while masturbating. The compulsive, fantasy-driven, sexual nature of this paraphilia creates a very dangerous adult.” Much like Peter Kürten, Fritz Haarmann found sexual gratification in blood and violence. Haarmann’s reign was between 1919-1924. Although he was apprehended and sentenced to death by guillotine in 1924, the damage had already been done. Fritz Haarmann once said, “Often, after I had killed, I pleaded to be put away in a military asylum, but not a madhouse. If [Hans] Grans

had really loved me he would have been able to save me. Believe me, I'm not ill – it's only that I occasionally have funny turns. I want to be beheaded. It'll only take a moment, then I'll be at peace.”

Albert Henry DeSalvo (The Boston Strangler)

Albert DeSalvo, also known as the “Boston Strangler,” was a known serial killer and rapist that conducted his heinous acts between 1962 and 1964. DeSalvo was one of the many serial killers that were raised in an abusive and poor environmental household. According to Hickey (2016), Albert DeSalvo learned to steal from stores from his alcoholic father whom he had watched on many occasions beat and abuse his mother.

Albert DeSalvo gradually developed his violent behavior starting with animals moving to women as his sexual desires began to take control. According to Hickey (2016), Albert DeSalvo was responsible for 13 killings of women who ranged in age; however, 60% were older women. DeSalvo's methods ranged from mostly stabbing to blows to the head and stabbing. Hickey (2016) stated, “Although DeSalvo was unsure of his motives for killing, he was even less sure why he suddenly stopped in January 1964. Perhaps, he felt he had given the supreme insult to society through the explicit humiliation of his last victims.”

According to Durden-Smith (2008), DeSalvo's attorney wrote about him stating, “Without a doubt, the victim of one of the most crushing sexual drives that psychiatric science has ever encountered.” Durden-Smith also speaks about the excessive demands DeSalvo had on his wife and how she did not care to submit to his kind of kissing, which was extensive as far as the body was concerned. Known as a serial killer and rapist,

Albert DeSalvo had such an extensive appetite for lust he could not control his thirst, which lead to his heinous actions.

Edmund Emil Kemper III

Born in 1948, Edmund Emil Kemper III began his reign of violence at the young age of 15 killing his grandmother. It is said that as a child, Kemper would act out his death pretending to be executed by an executioner or role-play his death in a gas chamber (Hickey, 2016). Kemper's childhood was anything but easy. Kemper was forced to live in the basement of his mother's home with only a small trap door as an exit, which usually was covered by a kitchen table (Hickey, 2016). Kemper struggled concerning a relationship with his mother. Kemper also struggled growing close with a male father figure given his mother married many times throughout his childhood.

Edmund Kemper III was eventually sent to live with his grandparents at the age of 13. When Kemper hit the age of 15, he began his violent streak by shooting his grandmother in the back of the head multiple times and then repeatedly stabbing her. Kemper waited for his grandfather to get home just to continue his violence by repeatedly shooting him on the front porch (Hickey, 2016). Throughout Kemper's childhood, he was deprived of love from his family. Often, Kemper would fantasize about killing his family. Given his jealousy of his sister, Kemper fantasized about killing her. In fact, according to Hickey (2016), Kemper eventually admitted to fantasizing about killing his family, especially his older sister because he felt she received more love than he did from their family (Hickey, 2016).

In 1970-1971, Kemper began giving rides to hitchhikers. Usually, these hitchhikers were young females. According to Hickey (2016), Kemper was psychologically preparing himself for future violent missions. Known for shooting, stabbing, and strangling, Kemper continued his reign of carnage at the age of 23. Eventually, Kemper would add eight more victims to his killing list. His methods became more gruesome as the killings continued. Hickey (2016) stated Kemper cannibalized, at least, two of his victims, slicing off parts of their legs and cooking the flesh in a macaroni casserole.

Looking at Kemper's methods, and knowing that was 6 feet 9 inches tall, 280 pounds, and his IQ was 136 (Hickey, 2016), he was showing his strength and ability to control his victims. In fact, on one Easter morning, Kemper killed his mother in her bedroom with a hammer and a large hunting knife he named "The General" (Hickey, 2016). Heinously, Kemper smashed his mother's head in, then slashed her throat. Once Kemper had conducted the previously mentioned violent act, he continued to cut out his mother's larynx and placed it in the garbage disposal (Hickey, 2016). Kemper would continue to dissect his mother's remains by detaching her head from her body and having sex with her dead body. Ed Kemper once said, "When I see a pretty girl walking down the street, I think two things: one part of me wants to take her home, be really nice and treat her right; the other part wonders what her head would look like on a stick."

Andrei Chikatilo (The Russian Ripper)

The Russian serial killer Andrei Chikatilo, a man of intelligence and modesty that loved to play chess, represents one of Europe's most prolific serial killers (Hickey, 2016).

Known as a serial killer, pedophile, enucleator, cannibal, necrophiliac, ephebophile, and hebephile, Chikatilo was responsible for 52-57 murders, Chikatilo enjoyed utilizing a knife for his heinous acts, which stimulated his sexual fantasies. An issue at that time was that Russia was not prone to providing the public with information concerning serial killers through any form of media. Given that Russia did not share such information, innocent people were murdered because of a lack of knowledge. According to Hickey (2016), Andrei Chikatilo is also known as the “Russian Ripper” brutally killed 14 young girls, 21 boys, and 18 women continuing his reign of horror for 12 years between 1978 and 1990.

As stated above, many factors contribute to one’s well-being including environmental factors. Andrei Romanovich Chikatilo was born on October 16, 1936, in Yablochnoye, a village in the heart of rural Ukraine in the USSR (Hickey, 2016). Andrei Chikatilo spent his childhood suffering from the agricultural collectivization policy instilled by Stalin which caused many health issues for the population. If one were to research the time of Andrei Chikatilo’s birth, he or she would learn how the effects of the famine caused by Stalin left Chikatilo’s childhood to be guided by deprivation.

Looking at the environmental factors that contributed to Andrei Chikatilo’s violent acts, much suffering and hardship may have driven his desire to conduct violence. According to Hickey (2016), Andrei Chikatilo’s older brother Stepan had been abducted and cannibalized during the Ukrainian famine of the 1930s, which caused many psychological issues to take place, including fearfulness and insecurities. Thinking about such information, the foundation of Chikatilo’s violent tendencies could have started at

an extremely young age pushing him to not only build violent fantasies but also build on methods that would allow him to find a way to achieve sexual gratification.

Andrei Chikatilo attempted to rape a nine-year-old girl in 1978 (Vidar, 2019). Because the nine-year-old girl would not consent to intercourse with Chikatilo, he began to stab her. Looking at the murder, putting the age of the victim aside, it is interesting to notice how Chikatilo tried to have consensual sex even though he was not able to have an erection with a nine-year-old girl who would not have, at that age, fully understood any sexual encounter. However, according to Hickey (2016), Andrei Chikatilo could never use his genitals to penetrate his victims. Once he would ejaculate onto his victims, he would use a twig to place his sperm into their vagina or anus (Hickey, 2016).

Looking at the murder of the above mentioned nine-year-old girl, the intent to rape, the stabbing, which lead to her death, it is important to notice the desire to control the victim and humiliate the victim. The nine-year-old girl had no chance of controlling the situation and had no chance of escaping the situation. Also, it is important to notice since Chikatilo was not able to sustain an erection, the nine-year-old girl would not have known such information even when presented with his genitalia, which would mean his victim would not have understood his inability to use his penis, or his handicap, for lack of better term.

Even though rape and murder are extremely discomforting topics to discuss, Chikatilo's violence became more gruesome. According to Vidar (2019), Chikatilo murdered again in 1982 killing seven people, 1983 killing four women and children, relocated to Novocherkassk and murdered two women in 1985, killed three young boys

in 1987, killed nine people in 1988, and murdered two women and seven boys in 1990. Throughout his murders, his methods began escalating to include mutilation and cannibalism. Also, an important fact is that no adult males were victimized by Chikatilo, which continues to lead one to believe in his desire to dominate. Andrei Chikatilo once said, “When I used my knife, it brought psychological relief. I know I have to be destroyed. I understand. I was a mistake of nature.”

John Edward Robinson (The Slave Master)

John Edward Robinson, also known as the “Slave Master” was an older male that enjoyed meeting his victims in an online Internet chatroom. Robinson’s name “Slave Master” came from his internet handle for sadomasochistic chatrooms. Responsible for 8 murders, multiple rapes, and assaults, Robinson’s method for killing was bludgeoning. According to Hickey (2016), Robinson lured, at least, five women to his Kansas home with promises of work or kinky sex.

Much like the other serial killer in this study, Robinson enjoyed the sexual degradation of women, which according to Hickey (2016), the Internet was a useful tool in procuring his victims. With a pattern of sexual dominance and the fact, Robinson bludgeoned his victims to death, his sexual fantasies enabled him to follow such dark desires and conduct these heinous acts.

Charles Albright (The Eyeball Serial Killer)

Charles Albright, also known as “The Eyeball Serial Killer,” was responsible for multiple murders of female prostitutes from 1990-1991. According to Hickey (2016), Albright was an intelligent man speaking multiple languages, a skilled painter, musician,

skilled taxidermist, and a biology teacher that was adored by women. Albright was said to have been a faithful family man; however, he had often made visits to prostitutes. His method for killing consisted of a .44-caliber handgun and was always directed toward prostitutes.

When Charles Albright was 51-years-old, he raped a 13-year-old girl yet, somehow, managed to minimize the incident (Hickey, 2016). Over time, Albright became much more aggressive to females. Hickey (2016) states, “He was a consummate liar and con man, a true Jekyll-and-Hyde personality.” One interesting aspect of Charles Albright was his obsession with human eyes. When the bodies were studied for autopsies, Albright’s victims were found to have no eyes because they were surgically removed. According to Hickey (2016), the victim’s eyes were never recovered. Now incarcerated, Albright still obsesses on his love for the human eye.

Wesley Allan Dodd (Sadistic Child Killer)

Wesley Allan Dodd, also known as “Sadistic Child Killer,” began his reign in 1974 with his gratification in abusing children. Dodd started exposing himself at an early age to local children around his neighborhood. Hickey (2016) said Dodd sought out children whom he knew and were close to him, and, at the age of 14, he molested his cousins who were 8 and 6-years-old. However, when Dodd became the age of 18, he began seeking out children he did not know to molest using money to lure the children to secluded places, where he would order them to take down their pants (Hickey, 2016).

Like many serial killers, Dodd’s sexual fantasies escalated from molestation to murder. Hickey (2016), wrote, “On September 4, 1989, Dodd accosted two brothers and

then molested and stabbed them to death. On October 29, 1989, Dodd lured a child away from a schoolyard and took him to his apartment, where he bound the boy, molested him, and later strangled him while he was sleeping. After the murder, he hung the child in a closet and took pictures of him.” Dodd’s sexual fantasies of sexually overtaking children and strangulation lead to his death by hanging on January 5, 1993.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative study was to understand how sexual fantasies play a role in serial offenders' violent behaviors by conducting a comparative analysis of the behavior, technique, and identification signatures of serial killers. A descriptive phenomenological design was used to determine the environmental factors that contribute to serial killers' sexually violent tendencies. Patterns concerning serial killers' methods were examined, and environmental factors that contributed to serial killers' antisocial behavior were explored. Because environment and time are important determinants of behavior, I used social learning theory and ecological systems theory were used to conduct the comparative analysis. The significance of sexual fantasy as an etiological factor was also investigated.

Research Design and Rationale

A qualitative descriptive phenomenological design was used to conduct the analysis. Although no live interviews were conducted in this study, previously conducted interviews, manifestos, and historical records were coded and analyzed to determine environmental differences and similarities that may have contributed to the violence committed.

A descriptive phenomenological design based on historical documentation was used to obtain a clearer understanding of factors that played a role in the development of serial killers' violence. Ravitch and Carl (2019) found that a phenomenological inquiry is used to understand the source of behavior. Ravitch and Carl noted that a person's reality

and behavior are developed by experiencing life through the perspective of their personal experiences.

The purpose was to understand how environmental factors and sexual fantasies contributed to serial killers' violent behavior. I examined the developmental milestones and key factors of a serial killer's childhood to identify the experiences that may have altered their perception of normal behavior. A primary goal of this research was to determine the influence of these environmental factors on the behavior of serial killers.

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in a qualitative study is the most crucial aspect when conducting thorough research. My role in this study was to obtain all factual evidence concerning the history of the selected serial killers, including geographical history, diagnosed mental disposition(s), sexual fantasies, subsequent acting-out behavior(s), and identification signatures. Another role was to identify factors that may have altered a serial killer's mental state. Lastly, coded data included methods used for the killings.

Methodology

The proposed serial killers used for this research were selected based on their popularity and social impact. Within the selected 7 serial killers, each one will have characteristics and signatures that stem from sexually gratifying violent acts. The chosen serial killers for this study have already been interviewed and studied by previous researchers; however, for different reasons and to support theories. This study will begin by utilizing already conducted interviews, and psychosocial evidence gathered to obtain a deeper look into the mind of those identified serial killers. Next, the researcher of this

study will use the manifestos of the chosen serial killers for this research to better understand historical and potentially sexual factors that may have altered the mental state of each serial killer.

This research is primarily based on the social learning theory and supported by the ecological systems theory to conduct a comparative analysis of selected serial killers. Many factors contribute to a serial killer's violent behavior, including physical trauma, deprivation, abuse, neglect, and socioeconomic status. A look into each of the previously mentioned factors that contribute to a serial killer's mental state will provide a better understanding of his/her choice of methods and victim selection. Both the social learning theory and ecological systems theory are the most suitable approaches for this qualitative study. The coding of key information and the analysis of manifestos, historical records, presentations of normative culture, and sexual fantasy will be included as methods of research used to compare and contrast identified serial killers.

Participant Selection Logic

This study will look into the time frame of each murder. Each serial killer selected for this study has a unique approach and unique signatures that defined their acts. Even though we are not utilizing live participants for this study, the history, manifestos, already conducted interviews, and methods will be crucial evidence for providing empirical results. Each serial killer for this study will be chosen not only because they are categorized as serial killers but also because each carry unique differences that may shed light on this common behavior (serial killing) for this comparative analysis.

Data Analysis Strategy

Many studies have been conducted in an attempt to link different theories with violent behavior (Keatley et al. (2018), Reid et al. (2019), Hickey (2016)). Each study has provided solid evidence concerning the foundation of violence. However, the goal is to further the research of those already conducted and fill in the gaps concerning the foundation of violence and subsequent compulsive actions. One major gap in the literature is the comparative analysis of the variables that led to acts of murder. Given this study is looking to analyze lived experiences to determine a foundation of violence, a descriptive phenomenology and thematic analysis based on the works completed by the previously mentioned researchers will be utilized.

Instrumentation

A coding protocol (see Appendix: Coding Protocol) will be used to gather data from the variety of sources. Data collected on this protocol form will then be imported into NVIVO. NVIVO version 12 will be utilized as the key Instrument for data analysis. The NVIVO software has been identified by the literature as a standard instrument for qualitative data analysis. The software application allows scholars the ability to Collect, Analyze/Organize unstructured and/or semi-structured data. Included in this application package are key functions that will prove helpful in this study. The software is sectioned off into the features; Analyze cases, which provides initial comparative analysis; Sets of data, which organizes and groups all similar data; Attributes and classifications, which outline those factors are distinctly different from other concepts; Nodes, which are codes to signify themes and subthemes; Queries; which allow

researchers to ask meaningful questions of the data collected; and Matrices, which help the researcher to cross-tabulate related information.

The researcher will obtain, organize, and code all factors gathered to study the chosen serial killers for this study. By utilizing the rich data of manifestos, and evidence gathered by previous researchers on serial killers and violence, the features of the NVIVO software will be employed. Thus far it has been found that every serial killer tends to leave behind some form of writing or signature mark that depicts his or her internal turmoil. The goal of including that data is to provide a more detailed analysis of historical facts that may shed light on factors associated with their violent tendencies. Other evidence that will be included and analyzed will consist of information given to the public from law enforcement agencies, and published writings on each of the chosen serial killers. Each serial killer chosen for this study provides a unique look into the mind of a violent murderer. Every piece of data included and analyzed will play a vital role in the development of this study.

Data Collection

As this study seeks to provide an in-depth look into the history and environment of chosen serial killers, there is the general hope of completing a thematic comparative analysis. All data (Manifestos, Historical accounts, etc.) will be collected and coded into NVIVO. No face-to-face participation will be conducted during this process. As mentioned earlier, this study will also include a detailed analysis of the histories and significance of childhood traumas both physically and mentally that may have contributed to a serial killer's violent desires.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Although this study will not utilize human subjects for any portion of this research, the writings and interviews of those selected serial killers will be used to complete this study. The sole concern related to trustworthiness would be with the writings (manifestos) of the chosen serial killers. It has been suggested by Hickey (2016), that given serial killers are known pathological or habitual liars, it is difficult to determine what words spoken by each serial killer are truth. Even with the manifestos, it may become an issue if one of the serial killers has a grandiose perception of self. However, this research is striving to obtain factual evidence and it is not believed this will pose a threat to conducting a solid research study. Using the published writings of previous researchers, such as Hickey (2016), issues of trustworthiness will not be an issue.

Ethical Procedures

Even though this study will not use participants, all ethical procedures will be respected and followed. With every aspect of this study, all considerations concerning ethical procedures will be adhered to. At every stage of this study, adherence to professionalism and ethics will be employed. It is not the intent of this researcher to violate or compromise any ethical procedures.

Summary

The population for this research are individuals that have impacted society in a detrimental fashion. Each serial killer has unique characteristics and signatures that separate them from other killers. The questions that will be answered include, (1) How

factors play a role in the development of one's homicidal ideation? (2) How the degree to which one's sexual fantasies play a role in homicidal ideation? (3) How factors influence the dynamic of a serial killer's method of killing? and (4) How do homicidal signatures help us to better understand one's lived experiences? To help us better understand these questions this study will identify 7 serial killers based on their popularity and social impact. This study will use a qualitative approach. A phenomenological and thematic analysis will be applied to conduct a study based on lived experiences of serial killer's history that may have contributed to their violent behavioral characteristics. A thematic analysis will be utilized to capture any patterns or themes that may show a relationship between variables found in the data collected.

This study will utilize the NVIVO qualitative statistics software package to analyze coded data from multiple sources. All sources will be collected, manipulated, and coded using qualitative research standards by the investigator. Each source of data collected will play a vital role in developing themes that will contribute to an empirical understanding of the behavioral etiology of serial killers.

Chapter 4: Findings

This study addressed the dynamics a serial killer displays when conducting a murder. From luring tactics to the methods of killing, serial killers demonstrate characteristics that represent their internal turmoil and history. Discovering patterns in serial killers that were associated with their sexual fantasies was the purpose of this study. I looked at the history, methods of killing, interviews, manifestos, and previously conducted interviews with each serial killer to identify patterns of sexual fantasies.

Many serial killers come from homes that inform their extreme physical, verbal, and emotional dispositions (Hickey, 2016). Abuse is carried by these individuals who become labeled as serial killers. This abuse drives their violent behavior. One of the first patterns noticed was the mental abuse each serial killer endured. One common form of abuse these serial killers endured was a series of experiences that impaired their mental state causing abandonment issues, mental anguish, internal turmoil, and anger (Hickey, 2016; Philbin & Philbin, 2009).

Segeren, Fassaert, de Wit, and Popma (2020) addressed the criminogenic factors associated with young adults' violent behavior. Segeren et al. noted that mental abuse is as detrimental, if not more, to a youth's mental development as physical and emotional abuse. Each serial killer in the current study experienced a pattern of abusive situations encountered in youth. In saying that, mental adaptation was most likely to occur based on the consistency of the abuse. If such a patterned mindset is built on sex or violence, the mental norm for such a mindset will focus on sexual or violent ideation, with the potential for it to dominate a developing mindset.

The process of researching patterns that reveal a serial killer's sexual fantasies started with focusing on the history of each offender. Hickey (2016) and Philbin and Philbin (2009) discovered patterns such as mental abuse, neglect, rejection by parents or authority figures, molestation, and humiliation by parental figures. These patterns influenced the development of a loss of control, pain, and a higher level of gratification concerning appeasing internal desires.

Transitioning from historical facts to the modus operandi was necessary to discover how sexual fantasies influenced violent and homicidal ideation. Within the chosen serial killers for this study, signature methods of conducting sexually violent acts were discovered. These methods showed a pattern in serial killers with similar historical abusive situations, including rape (sexual activity without consent), torture (inflicting pain on someone as punishment or swaying a victim to doing something demanded), control (directing someone's behavior), and assault (physical attacks and abuse).

Charles Albright, also known as the "Eyeball Serial Killer," faced a series of mental and emotional abuse as a child (Hickey, 2016) that built a pattern in his thought process allowing him to develop a higher and more violent sexual gratification level. Much like Wesley Allan Dodd, John Robinson, Andrei Chikatilo, Albert DeSalvo, Fritz Haarmann, and Ed Kemper, Charles Albright faced humiliating circumstances inflicted by parental figures that formed a violent pattern and placed a lower value concerning the life of another. Looking at sources, such as Hickey (2016), and Philbin and Philbin (2009), and theoretical foundations, such as the social learning theory, and the ecological systems theory, it was found that the environmental abuse endured by each serial killer

altered their mindset and detrimentally affected the development of their sexual desires to violent fashion.

Profiling Sexual Fantasies

Sexual fantasies differ from person to person. Some may fantasize about control and dominance, while others may fantasize about being controlled and being dominated. Noorishad, Levaque, Byers, and Shaughnessy (2019) wrote, “Sexual fantasies, interests, and experiences are three important aspects of human sexual expression that likely are related yet distinct.” In saying that, the types of sexual fantasies differ depending on one’s interests and experiences. Even though sexual fantasies, interests, and experiences are considered three different categories, each of them are linked by historical encounters experienced by a person.

There are many types of sexual fantasies. Sexual fantasies consist of multiple partners, control (dominance, rape), novelty (something adventurous), taboo (something uncommon), passionate (accommodating emotional desires), polygamy (open-relationship), online sexual activity (pornography), and gender differences (touching on same-sex interest) (Kahr, 2009), just to name a few. What separates the common individual with any form of sexual fantasy(s) and a serial killer is the compulsion that comes after the obsession. Another concept is sexual homicide. Malmquist (1996) stated, “Sexual homicide is a broad term that includes different types of sexual killing, such as rape killings, sexual lust killings, and killings after a sexual act in order to destroy evidence.” Hickey (2016) wrote, “Sexual serial killers tend to either kill after a rape or be

involved in lust murders. These sexual killers are more inclined than other solo male offenders to seek out strangers for victims.”

Many researchers have studied the prevalence and content of men’s aggressive sexual fantasies, including their link with rape-supportive cognition; however, little to no research has examined the link between imaginal ability and the use of such fantasies (Bartels, Harkins, & Beech, 2020). Where this study left a gap in research was with the population used to obtain results. Utilizing violent offenders, such as serial killers, is the key to understanding how one’s sexual fantasies turn to violence. Bartels, Harkins, and Beech (2020) touched on how it is normal for the average individual to have sexual fantasies to appease his or her sexual gratification, and how men are more prone to having aggressive fantasies, such as rape-related and sadistic themes. Where it becomes abnormal is when an individual takes his or her sexual fantasies and obsesses on the details of the said fantasies moving to a compulsion to gratify the overwhelming sensation to find some form of orgasmic ending.

Abramowitz and Reuman (2020) wrote, “Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) is characterized by unwanted intrusive thoughts that provoke anxiety or distress (i.e., obsessions) and ritualistic behaviors (i.e., compulsions) and extreme avoidance behavior performed to reduce distress. Obsessions and compulsions are often theme-based (e.g., contamination, harm) and functionally related.” When applying this disorder to serial killers, it is imperative to focus on the pattern-based behaviors each display. Incorporating the mental development of each serial killer as a youth, developing a pattern concerning violent conduct became a behavioral norm. Breaking down the

obsessive-compulsive patterns of each serial killer was a major key to unlocking the sexual fantasy behind each serial killer's violent endeavors.

As stated in chapter two, sexual assault is often viewed as violence with various motives. However, research shows that violence associated with sexual assault typically focuses on modus operandi and victim selection (Marsh, 2018). When we think about what drives one's sexual fantasies, the question becomes, where does each aspect of one's sexual fantasies stem? To truly understand a serial killer's sexual fantasies, we must look at the victim selection. Each aspect of a victim is a key source for understanding how the said aspect gratifies a serial killer's sexual fantasy.

Hickey (2016) stated, "Cases of serial killing share commonalities and characteristics. Anger, low self-esteem, fantasy, facilitation, and objectification of victims all are common denominators in understanding the general etiological roots of serial murder." Given the research conducted on each serial killer for this study, learning what historical encounters each serial killer faced tells the story of their sexual development. At specific moments in each serial killer's life a loss of control, inflicted pain, becoming a victim, and the learning concerning the value of another person is implemented.

The sexual fantasies of the serial killers chosen for this study consist of taking the power and control away from a victim. The gratification of inflicting pain on the chosen victim is a gratifying factor that appeases a serial killer's sexual fantasies. By conducting these acts, the internal gratification of a serial killer can be peaked, and a form of sexual relief can be discovered. At this point, the behavior of the assaulter is the goal of the

serial killers. The orgasmic ending comes with the signature each serial killer implements in their method of killing, such as rape and strangulation.

Sexual fantasies are an aspect of every individual. No matter one's beliefs, sexual fantasies are present in the mind. A study conducted on sexual fantasies utilized sixty-two participants between the ages of 21-45. According to Zurbriggen and Yost (2004), "Desire and pleasure were more closely linked in the fantasies of men than in the fantasies of women, for whom the two were distinct constructs. Although fantasies of submission were not associated with problematic attitudes for either gender, men's fantasies of dominance were associated with greater acceptance of rape myths. For women, greater rape myth acceptance was associated with emotional and romantic fantasy themes." This study found that dominance was stronger in men than women as well as submission and sexual pleasure and desire. Regardless of gender, Hickey (2016) states, "Serial murder can find its roots in stressors such as rejection, abandonment, loss, humiliation, and hatred."

Anzani and Prunas (2020) stated, "Sexual fantasies typically represent sexually arousing mental imagery and, thus, are thought to play a role in sexual activation and sexual desire." Apply such information with an obsessive nature and one can imagine not only the sexual imagery of one's desires but also the internal drive to accommodate the gratification that comes with appeasing the fantasies. The previous two studies depict the strength of sexual fantasies for individuals not categorized as a serial killer or even possess the qualifying characteristics of a serial killer: "(1) the existence of two or more forensically linked murders with or without a revealed intention of committing additional

murder, (2) murders that are committed as a discrete event(s) by the same person(s) over a period of time and (3) where the primary motive is personal gratification” (Willmott et al., 2017). While tying sexual fantasies to a serial killer’s violent conduct, it is important to note the normalcy of sexual desires. Allen, Katsikitis, Millear, and McKillop (2020), suggests, “Sexual fantasies are a common aspect of human experience and a prominent consideration in the conceptualization and treatment of harmful sexual behavior.”

Lived Experiences

Utilizing aspects of the social learning theory and the ecological systems theory, the goal was to uncover a link between lived experiences and the development of sexual fantasies. It is believed that sexual fantasies serve as a driving force to violent and homicidal ideation. Exposure to violence, neglect by parents, humiliation, abuse, abandonment, and experiencing torturous situations seem to lead us to the etiology of a serial killer mindset. Viewing abuse in the home was found to have an affiliation with future violent and homicidal behaviors pushed by a severe hatred. Humiliation founded feelings of sorrow and inadequacy, which caused a desire to control every situation.

While each serial killer has his or her signature and/or modus operandi, the creation of these characteristics was formed by the lived experiences each serial killer endured during his childhood. Based on the collection of information, certain key factors were found that help us to understand the importance of early influences of trauma (see Figure 1). This graph provides a depiction of influential factors each serial killer experienced as a child. These factors consist of violence (blue), neglect (orange), abuse (grey), abandonment (yellow), humiliation (blue), and torture (green).

Exposure of Early Influence

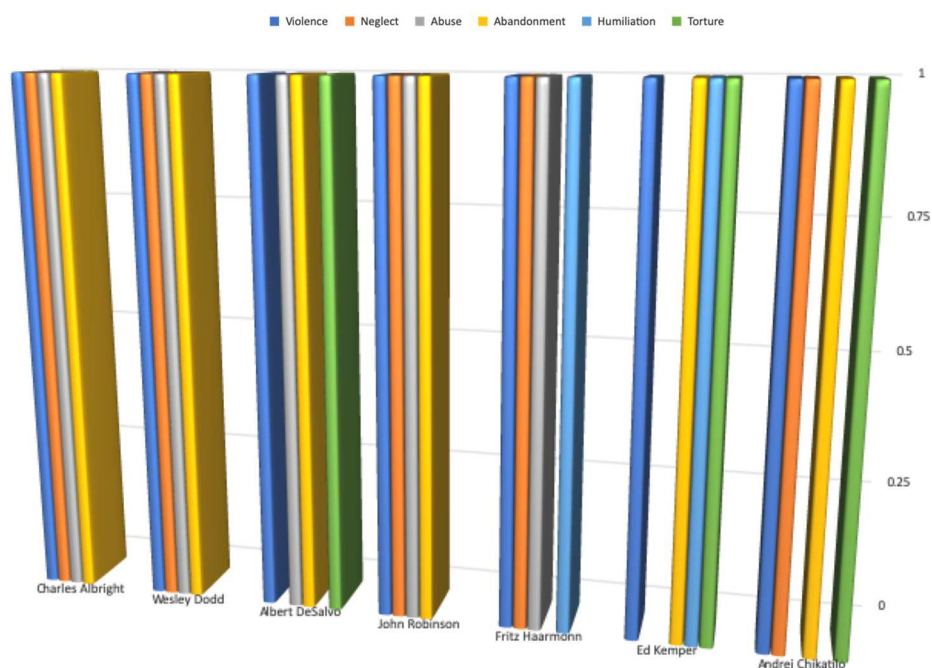


Figure 1. Exposure to early influence of childhood environmental factors.

Table 1

Childhood Exposure

Name	Category	Category	Category	Category
Charles Albright	Violence	Neglect	Abuse	Abandonment
Wesley Allan Dodd	Neglect	Abuse	Violence	Abandonment
Fritz Haarmann	Neglect	Abuse	Violence	Humiliation
Albert Henry DeSalvo	Violence	Abuse	Torture	Abandonment
John Edward Robinson	Violence	Abuse	Neglect	Abandonment
Edmund Emil Kemper III	Humiliation	Violence	Torture	Abandonment
Andrei Chikatilo	Violence	Torture	Neglect	Abandonment

Exposure to early traumatic experiences has proven to connect a concept concerning the link to adult violent and homicidal ideation to one's childhood environment. Exposure to violence brings a sense of normality to one's mindset when thoughts of conducting violence become dominant. Neglect is a factor that brings a sense of being alone, which becomes a settling point for sorrow. Abuse can range from physical, mental, and spiritual to emotional, which each aspect of abuse is just as significant as another. Abuse sets the tone to which a child begins to associate self-worth with future self. Abandonment also brings a sense of being alone and inflicts a loss of control. Humiliation devalues any form of self-respect a child may have building barriers that trap any type of positive potential. Torture is a factor that not only inflicts pain as punishment but also teaches how to take control from another and inflict pain on others.

Specific words, such as, "cold", "murder", "rape", and "severed" were spoken and coded. However, the term "victim" was spoken in a more emotional tone. It was the emphasis he placed on the term "victim" just 40 seconds into the interview that would predict his future actions. During the interview with Edmund Kemper, he stated, "When someone abandons himself to being a victim, he's gonna have to be one" (Interview with Ed Kemper, 2020). As a child, the torture, neglect, abuse, humiliation, abandonment, and violence he was exposed to set a course of violent and homicidal ideation for his future self, discovering sexual gratification for his violent and homicidal conduct.

Figure 2 depicts words spoken by Edmund Emil Kemper III commonly used to describe his lived experiences that provide a look into the exposure Kemper endured. These words are terms he used to describe his childhood and how he views the past when

thinking about it. In saying that, focusing on the second research question of this study, these are the terms that built the foundation of Kemper's violent and homicidal ideation.



Figure 2. Words used to depict the childhood lived experiences of Ed Kemper.

Andrei Chikatilo during his interview “Andrei Chikatilo” (2016), showed no remorse for his actions. He spoke of his history with sorrow placing himself, much like Kemper, in the seat of the victim. Speaking of his trials and tribulations being exposed to violence, torture, cannibalism, and neglect, Chikatilo developed sexual fantasies centering around inflicting similar experiences on his victims. As he grew, the fantasies began to develop in a violent and homicidal fashion. In an interview conducted with Andrei Chikatilo, he spoke of his childhood using a collection of words to define his environment, which he believes created his nature. Figure 3 provides a depiction of Chikatilo's chosen words to describe his childhood lived experiences.

These words provide a deeper look into the developed mindset and the foundation of experiences that assisted in the development of the said mindset. According to Durden-Smith (2008), mental dispositions are contributing factors in building a serial killer. While this concept holds merit, the fact is that environmental factors, such as abuse and humiliation, just to name a few, play a major role in the creation of a serial killer's violence and homicidal ideation.

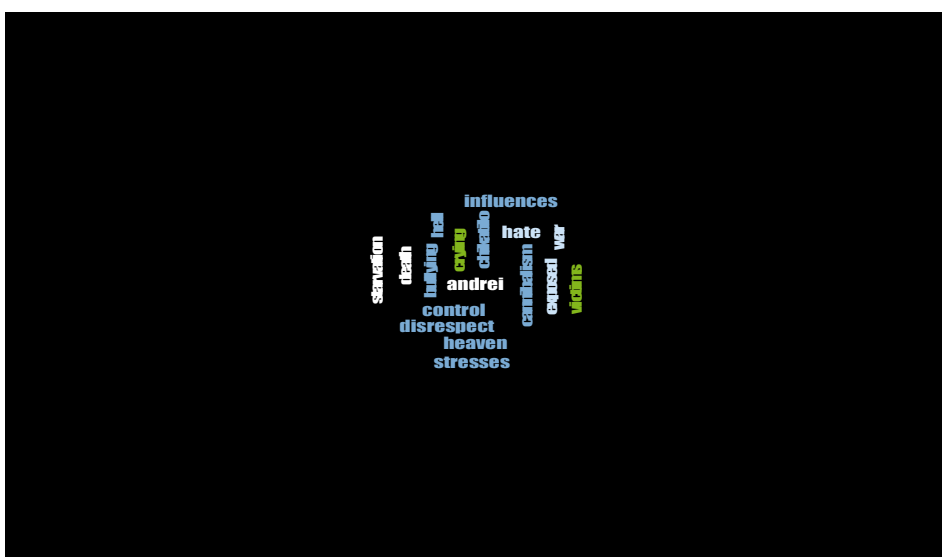


Figure 3. Words used to depict the childhood lived experiences of Andrei Chikatilo.

Charles Albright, along with Albert DeSalvo and John Robinson were among the few of the chosen serial killers in this study that did not care to be interviewed. All three of these serial killers spoke of their history to others that provided the information to the public. Through the information gathered by sources, such as, Hickey (2016), gathering information concerning childhood experiences and how each experience built a sexual gratification that only violence could please were possible.

Charles Albright suffered exposure to violence, neglect, and abuse as a child. Each one of these factors built a foundation of hate driving the inability to prevent his violent and homicidal ideation from taking over. Albert DeSalvo experienced violence, abuse, and torture throughout his childhood, which brought about a consistency of influencing violent and homicidal ideation to his mindset. John Robinson had a childhood full of violence, abuse, and neglect, which pushed him to develop a sadistic normality to his mindset. Each one of these serial killers conducted heinous acts to gratify sexual fantasies developed by the influential environmental factors of their childhood. Although these serial killers did not participate in an interview available to the public, the childhood experiences they endured were made public by the police cases and psychologists that studied their behaviors. Figures 4, 5, and 6 provide a depiction of their childhood environment.

Durden-Smith (2008) provided a look into the sexual drive Albert DeSalvo displayed writing, “Without a doubt, the victim of one of the most crushing sexual drives that psychiatric science has ever encountered.” Hickey (2016) provided a deeper look into the childhood of Albert DeSalvo stating, “Perhaps he could have been stopped, but the signs were ignored or missed.” DeSalvo’s childhood experiences created sexual fantasies that lead him to heinous actions ending in murder. Figure 4 is a list of words associated with Albert DeSalvo’s childhood.

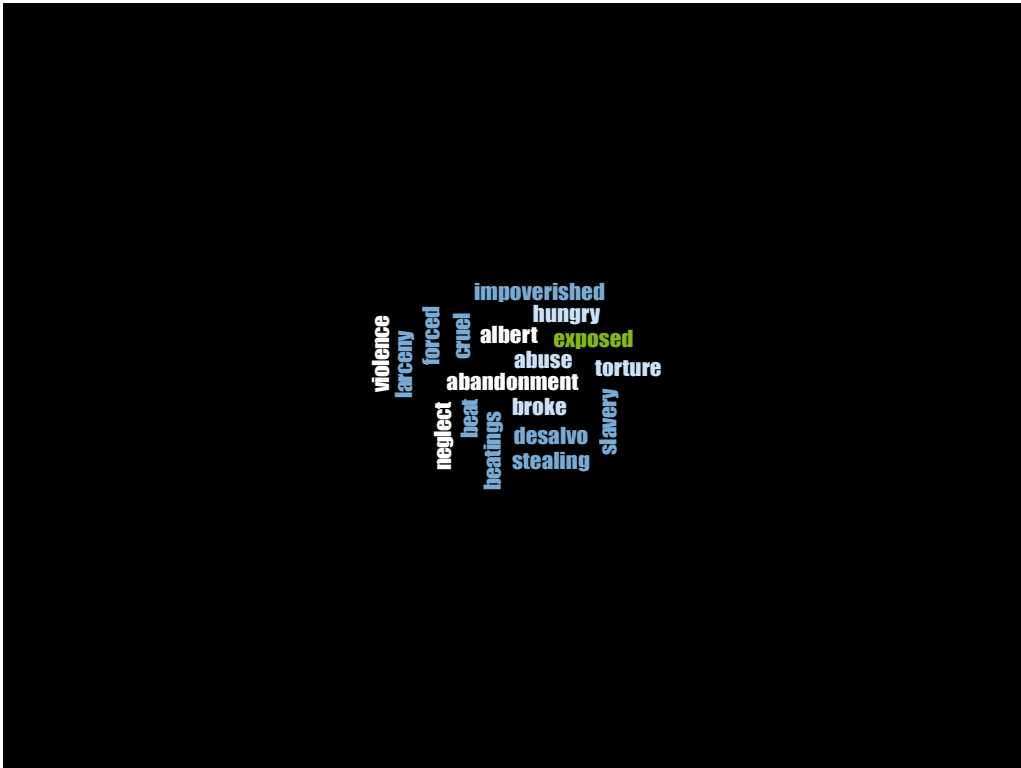


Figure 4. Words used to depict the childhood lived experiences of Albert DeSalvo.

Charles Albright, while not providing a public interview, was studied by professionals that took a look into his childhood. These professionals studied Albright in hopes to discover a link to the foundation of his violent and homicidal ideation. Hickey (2016) stated, As a child, he experienced mental and emotional abuse as well as rejection by his parents. A product of an unstable home, Charles developed an intense hatred for women.” This intense hatred would develop Albright’s sexual desire to pass on the abuse he endured as a child to his victims. Figure 5 provides a depiction of Albright’s childhood environment that would eventually lead him to heinous acts of violence.



Figure 5. Words used to depict the childhood lived experiences of Charles Albright.

John Robinson was an intelligent man that carried the weight of an extremely sadistic sexual drive. This sexual sadistic drive was the product of a rough childhood surrounded by mental, emotional, and physical abuse. As a child, Robinson grew up in the era of corruption and gang violence. In saying that, the acts of violence on the streets was no stranger to Robinson. Being neglected by his parents gave Robinson the desire to manipulate others into doing what he wanted them to do, which would eventually turn into him wanting them to conduct sexual acts.

John Robinson was a master manipulator with an extremely deep rooted sexual drive. As stated before, John Robinson had a childhood full of violence, abuse, and neglect, which pushed him to develop a sadistic normality to his mindset. Feeding off his childhood environment, Robinson developed a mindset driven by sexual fantasies that

lead him to violent and homicidal conduct. Figure 6 provides a depiction of the childhood of John Robinson.



Figure 6. Words used to depict the childhood lived experiences of John Robinson.

Wesley Allan Dodd was interviewed while incarcerated awaiting his death sentence. In the interview titled “Most Evil – Wesley Dodd” (2011), Dodd was very open about his sexual desires toward children. Dodd mentioned how his goal was to escape prison killing any guards that stood in his way and to find more children to rape and murder. Dodd’s behavior was cold and straight forward showing no remorse or desire to stop.

Dodd’s childhood was described as cold and unloving touching on the fact that he and his mother were not emotionally connected. Dodd experienced being tormented, neglected, unloved, abused, and bullied as a child. These emotions developed a loss of control in his mindset that drove him to be just as cold as his mother was to him toward

his victims. Figure 7 depicts the types of experiences Dodd faced in his childhood. These experiences built the foundation of Dodd's future heinous acts of violence.

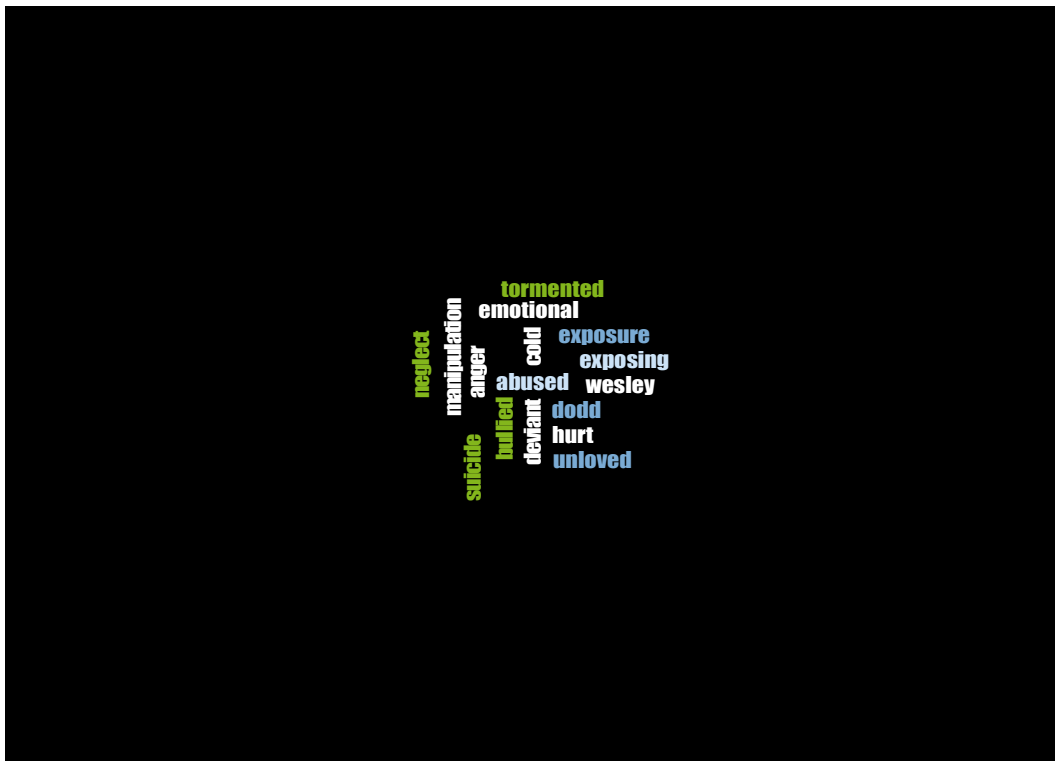


Figure 7. Words used to depict the childhood lived experiences of Wesley Allan Dodd.

Fritz Haarmann lived a childhood of neglect by his parents, abuse, exposure to violence, and humiliation. Each one of these factors provided guidelines for Haarmann's developing mindset. These factors contributed to his thought process of what normal behavior was, based on his early-life environment.

According to Hickey (2016), "Haarmann endured a very dysfunctional childhood and loathed his father." Haarmann's sexual fantasies drove him toward young males he encountered at railway stations. Haarmann, based on his childhood environmental influential factors, developed a mindset of sexual fantasies driven by control,

imagination, and gratification. Figure 8 provides a list of words that depict Haarmann's childhood environment.

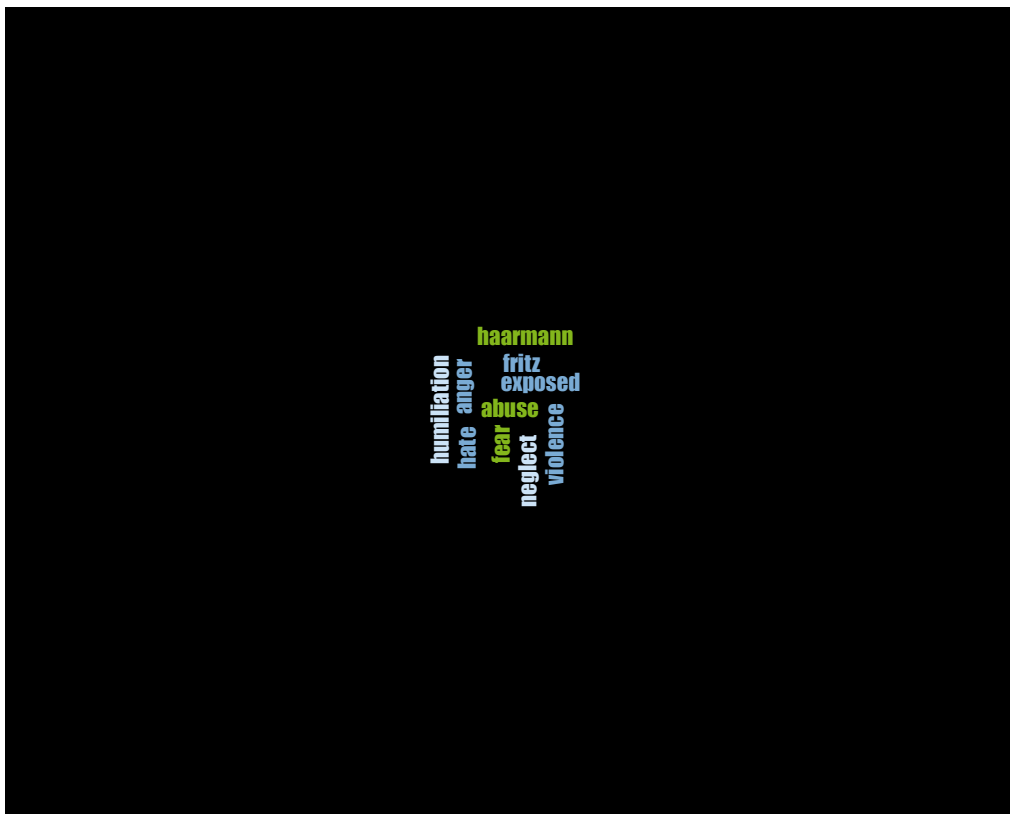


Figure 8. Words used to depict the childhood lived experiences of Fritz Haarmann.

Signatures and Modus Operandi

To understand the signatures and modus operandi of serial killers, it is imperative to know the difference. Hickey (2016) writes, “An MO (modus operandi) includes techniques to commit the crimes that may evolve as the offender becomes more skillful and confident in his crimes. Signatures are actions of the serial offender usually unnecessary to completing the murders.” Serial killers tend to have a calling card, or as stated above, a signature. Signatures include verbal and physical acts and are what make each crime and serial killer unique (Hickey, 2016).

Looking at the chosen serial killers for this study, patterns and signatures were present. In researching the history of these chosen serial killers, links between each serial killer's signature and modus operandi and their historical abusive encounters were existent. The seven serial killers chosen for this study each endured similar abusive childhoods that developed their mindset toward violent and homicidal ideation. Driving this violent and homicidal ideation were developed sexual fantasies based on the horrific childhood encounters endured by each offender. Hickey (2016) wrote, "Fantasies, possibly fueled by pornography or alcohol, reinforced by "routine" traumatization of day-to-day living, keep the serial killer caught up in a self-perpetuating cycle of fantasies, stalking, and violence."

With a history of behaviors closely aligned with key psychological disorders we can suggest that as it pertains to sexual fantasies, they can become obsessions. The actual murders themselves, modus operandi, and key signatures have the potential to serve as compulsions. As mentioned earlier, the notion of obsessive-compulsive disorders comes to mind and there appears to be a salient relationship between those who murder based on sexual fantasy and the clinical disorder. Future research investigating and profiling serial killers should include the idea of obsessive-compulsive disorder as a labeling feature common to those with this thought process in pattern and subsequent behavior.

Each serial killer displayed signatures and a modus operandi that accommodated their sexual gratification. With a foundation of traumatic experiences as children, each serial killer's mindset was conditioned to view their signatures and modus operandi as

daily normalcy. Table 2, provides a look into the signatures and modus operandi of each serial killer.

Table 2

Signatures and Modus Operandi

Name	Category	Category	Category	Category	Category	Category
Charles Albright	Rape	Bludgeoning	Shooting	Collecting the eyes of victims	Torture	
Wesley Allan Dodd	Manipulation	Strangulation	Rape			
Fritz Haarmann	Torture	Manipulation	Biting the throats of victims			
Albert Henry DeSalvo	Molestation	Rape	Strangulation			
John Edward Robinson	Torture	Bludgeoning	Manipulation	Rape		
Edmund Emil Kemper III	Cannibalism	Necrophilia	Torture	Strangulation	Shooting	Decapitation
Andrei Chikatilo	Cannibalism	Necrophilia	Molestation	Torture	Strangulation	Manipulation

Charles Albright discovered his sexual fantasies were on an aggressive level.

Known for cutting out the eyes of his victims, Albright's modus operandi was linked with his sexual fantasies given his gratification was only met once his modus operandi had been completed. Hickey (2016) compared Charles Albright to Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde stating, "He became increasingly sexually aggressive with women. He was a consummate liar and con man, a true Jekyll-and-Hyde personality."

Figure 9 provides a depiction of Charles Albright's signature and modus operandi along with the desires that surround them. Each one of these terms contributed to the

actions of Charles Albright's behavior based on his sexual desires. Albright's modus operandi is considered his orgasmic ending. By accommodating his obsession with his victim's eyes, Charles Albright was able to reach his sexual gratification by acting out his sexual fantasies.

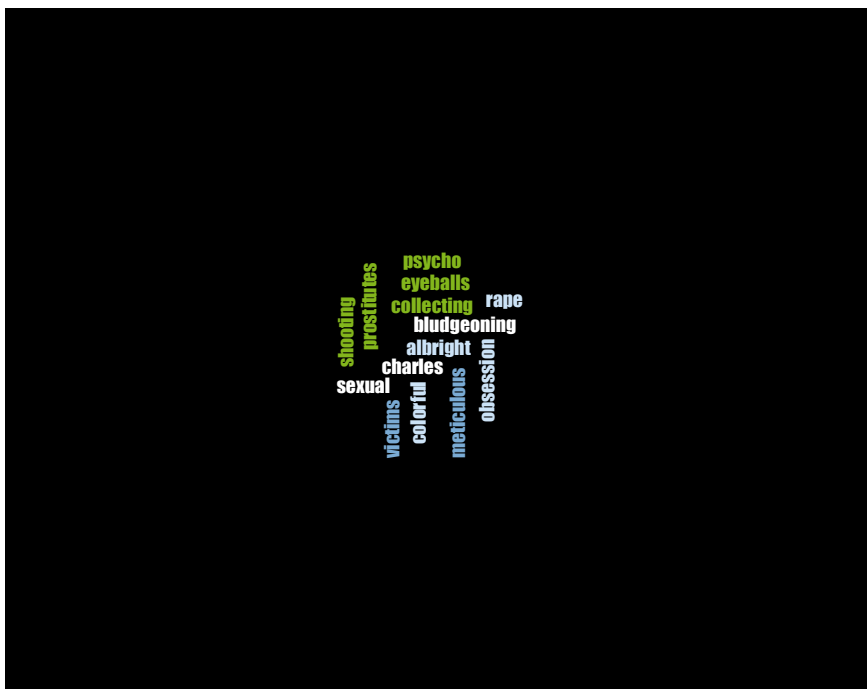


Figure 9. Signatures and modus operandi of Charles Albright.

Wesley Allan Dodd is considered one of the most sadistic child serial killers. With no apologies, Wesley Dodd acted out his sexual fantasies by abducting, molesting, and murdering young children. In an interview titled "Most Evil – Wesley Dodd" (2011), Dodd spoke on his desire to continue to molest and murder children with no interest in stopping his actions. His sexual fantasies directed him to lure his victims using money to secluded places, ordering them to undress, and either stab them to death or use

strangulation as his method of killing. Figure 10 provides a depiction of Dodd's signature and modus operandi and the terms that surround them.



Figure 10. Signatures and modus operandi of Wesley Allan Dodd.

Fritz Haarmann became known for torturing his victims. His sexual gratification, or orgasmic ending, was met by biting through the throats of his victims. His manipulation would give him the ability to lure his victims to a location where he could act on his sexual fantasies. Hickey (2016) wrote, “Although as a homosexual he lived with another man, Haarmann’s real sexual passion was for young males whom he found at the railway stations. His psychopathic ability to manipulate others made the boys easy targets as he lured them to his apartment, where he tortured, sodomized, and killed them by biting through their throats.”

Given the circumstances Haarmann endured as a child, his sexual fantasies developed to his adult years driving him to violent and homicidal behavior. Biting through the throats of his victims not only gave him control and power but also a means of satisfying his sexual fantasies. Figure 11 provides a depiction of the terms used to define Haarmann's signature and modus operandi and the surrounding influences that drove his heinous behavior.

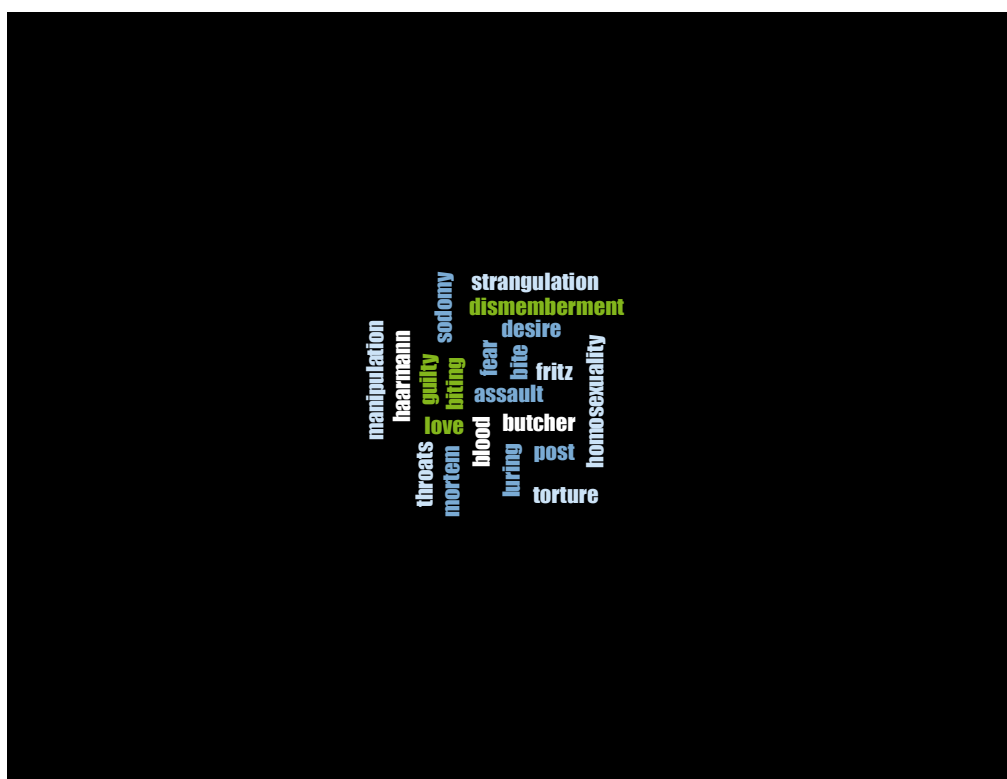


Figure 11. Signatures and modus operandi of Fritz Haarmann.

Albert DeSalvo lived a childhood of extreme abusive conditions. Each abusive environmental factor DeSalvo endured added more strength to his violent and homicidal mindset. DeSalvo was known for molestation, rape, and strangulation as a means of killing his victims. DeSalvo's sexual fantasies drove him to violently rape his victims

before strangulation. The interesting factor is that DeSalvo suddenly stopped killing his victims; however, he continued to break into the homes of women, tied them up, and raped them. Figure 12 provides a depiction of DeSalvo's signature and modus operandi and the terms he used with them.

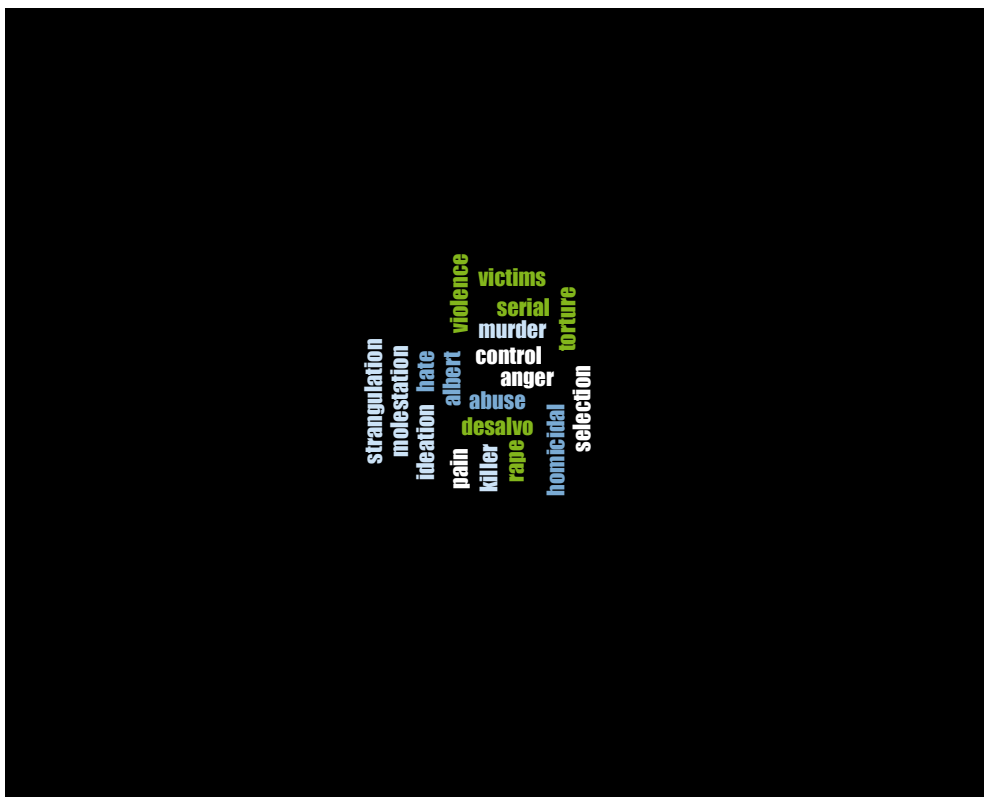


Figure 12. Signatures and modus operandi of Albert DeSalvo.

John Edward Robinson made his connections to his victims on the Internet. His sexual fantasies began with his ability to manipulate his prey luring them into meeting face-to-face. Once his victims would meet, Robinson would torture, rape, and kill them. Robinson's childhood experiences drove him to seek out women he could control, which were usually women in seek of some form of assistance. Robinson's modus operandi consisted of torture moving on to bludgeoning as a killing method and placing the body

in steel drums in storage lockers. Figure 13 provides a depiction of the signature and modus operandi of John Robinson as well as associated words.



Figure 13. Signatures and modus operandi of John Edward Robinson.

Ed Kemper has become one of the most researched serial killers. Kemper suffered an extremely traumatic childhood. His mindset began to believe his abnormal thoughts of murderous intent was a normal sense of nature. His modus operandi consisted of strangulation, rape, decapitation, necrophilia, and cannibalism. Kemper's behavior was not abnormal to him. Kemper was questioned about killing his grandmother and responded with, "I just wondered how it would feel to shoot grandma" (Hickey, 2016).

Figure 14 provides a list of words that describe Kemper's signature and modus operandi with associated terms.

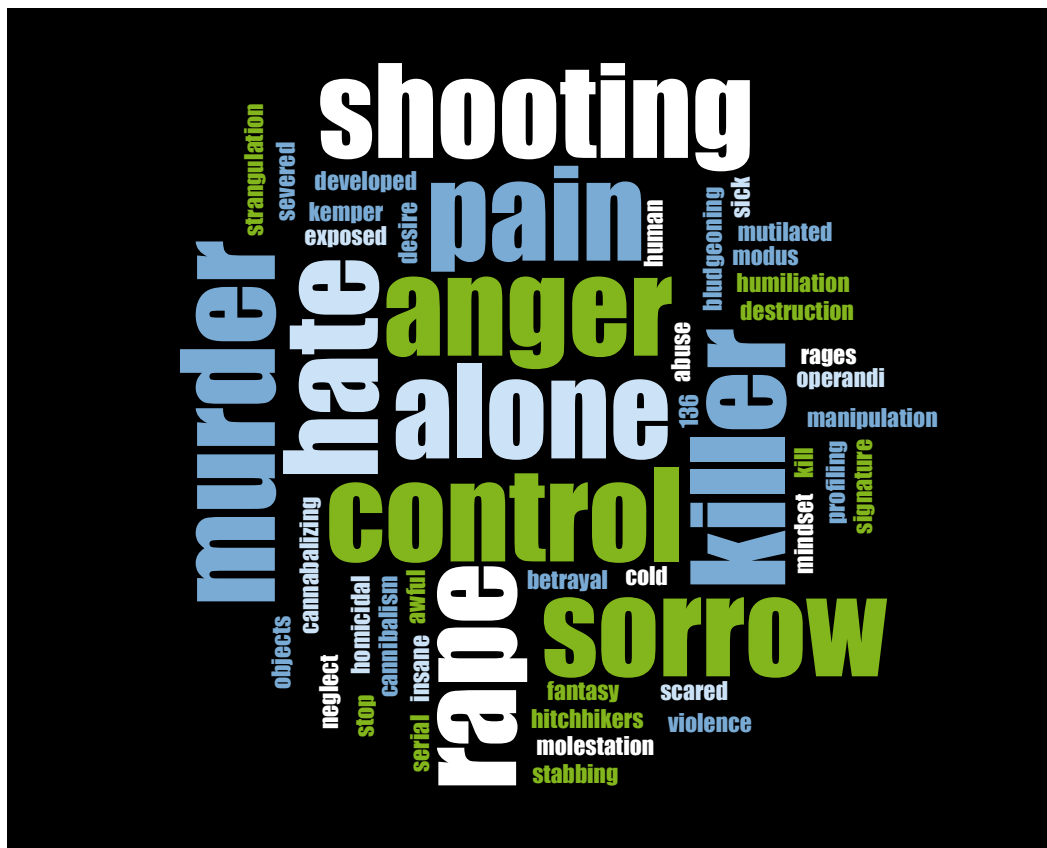


Figure 14. Signatures and modus operandi of Ed Kemper.

Andrei Chikatilo had a sense of inferiority. During his attacks, Chikatilo would not allow his victims to look at him during his performance and even stabbed one victim repeatedly in her eyes because looking at him would disturb his paraphilic fantasies (Hickey, 2016). Chikatilo carried a hero complex and, because of his childhood environment, he developed fantasies of cannibalism, molestation, and murder. Figure 15 provides a depiction of Andrei Chikatilo's signature and modus operandi with terms surrounding both factors.

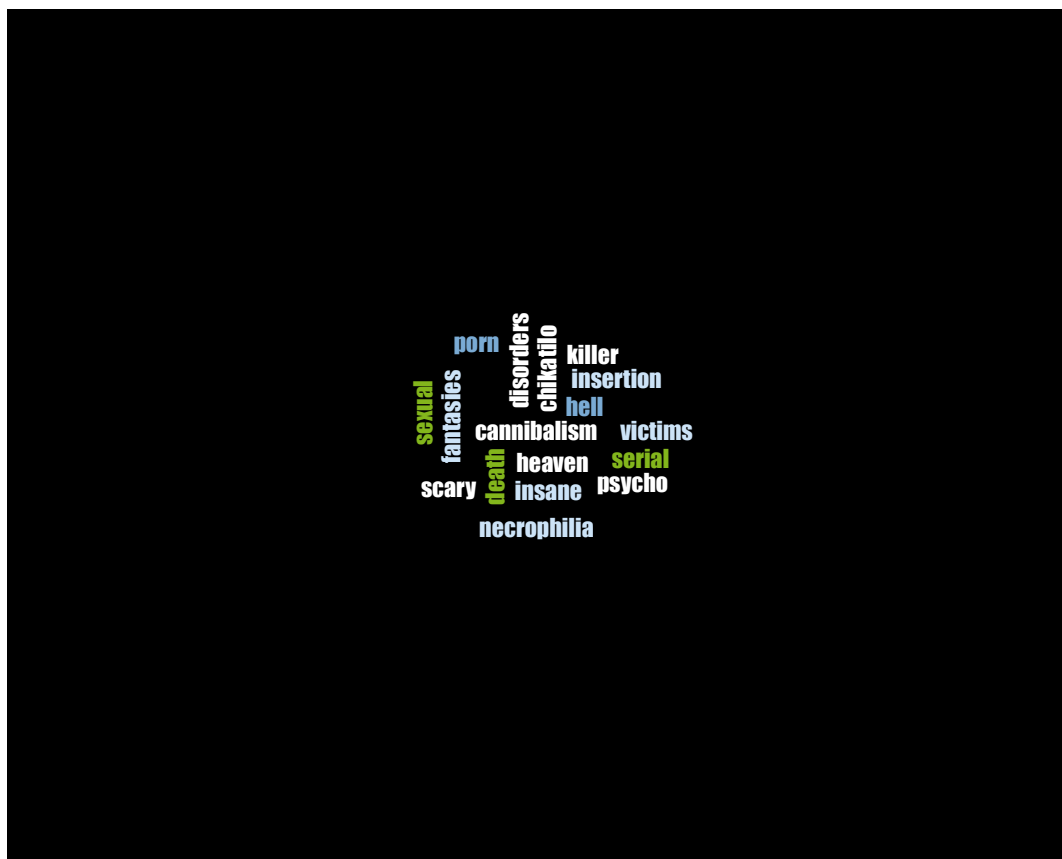


Figure 15. Signatures and modus operandi of Andrei Chikatilo.

Summary

There has been much discussion on the lived experiences of each subject of study. Chapter 5 will describe the link between each serial killer chosen for this study and the influential factors that built their signature and modus operandi. There appears to be a clear relationship based on childhood traumatic experiences endured and ultimate behavior. It is believed that these serial killers acted out their sexual fantasies based on childhood experiences and illustrated by their signature and modus operandi. This study sought to discover how the social learning theory and the ecological systems theory work together in explaining the link in violence and childhood environments. In saying that,

the question of how a serial killer would describe his or her sexual fantasies as a driving force to violent behavior will be further discussed.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Choosing appropriate sources for data collection is an important aspect of research. The methods chosen for this study consisted of articles on serial killers, published books on serial killers, manifestos written by serial killers, interviews previously conducted with serial killers, and police reports on serial killers. Each source proved beneficial to the completion of this study.

There were many published articles that provided educational and scientific information on serial killers and their foundation of violence. One area that had not been thoroughly researched was the possibility of sexual fantasies as a driving force of the violence. Information gathered from articles from previous researchers provided evidence that serial killers' sexual fantasies may be linked to their violent behavior.

Articles used in this research included Akers and Jennings (2019) who focused on the social learning theory of crime and deviance, and Bronfenbrenner (1994) who focused on the ecological models of human development. These sources provided the theoretical orientation for this study. I used social learning theory and ecological systems theory to examine patterns of experiences in serial killers' lives that may have contributed to their violent behavior. These theories provided the foundation to examine serial killers' prior encounters, especially sexual encounters, that may have altered their mindset and drove them to violence.

The second source used to obtain evidence for this study was published books on serial killers. Although there have been many books published on serial killers, the three that provided the most evidence regarding the history of serial killers' lives were Hickey

(2016), Durden-Smith (2008), and Philbin and Philbin (2009). Hickey provided not only historical events that took place in certain serial killers' lives but also described methods each serial killer used to conduct their violent acts. Studying these sources enabled me to discover patterns regarding how sexual fantasies influenced serial killers' thought process and their method of sexual luring and killing.

Philbin and Philbin's (2009) work on serial killers not only focused on the cases of each murder performed but also on the history of the serial killer behind each violent act. Studying the stories and facts on serial killers, I was able to discover patterns that supported the patterns discovered in Hickey (2016). Philbin and Philbin's research was vital because of the historical data on each serial killer and their methods of killing.

The last book used for data collection is Durden-Smith (2008). Providing historical facts on 100 of the world's most infamous criminals, Durden-Smith (2008) implemented sound knowledge backing Philbin and Philbin (2009), and Hickey (2016) concerning the historical events that took place in certain serial killer's lives and how each encounter impacted their developed behavior. Building a strong base for discovering factors that influence violence and homicidal ideation, each published book used as a resource played a vital role in developing factual evidence. The use of the above-mentioned published books may have been the most beneficial factor incorporated in this research. The majority of serial killers have historical occurrences that built the foundation to not only a signature concerning the luring tactics of victims but also their modus operandi.

The last source used for this research was based on police reports on serial killers and the crime scenes associated with each serial killer. Fortunately, many police reports were mentioned in the articles, and published books used to obtain the evidence for this research. The importance behind the police reports was in the evidence obtained by detectives and other law enforcement agencies, the methods used for killing, and the profiles given to the public based on the police discoveries at each crime scene. Fortunately, each serial killer has a specific pattern he or she sticks with when conducting any violent act. Incorporating such a source of data helped to discover patterns that tied to sexual desires behind a serial killer's violent and homicidal tendencies.

Limitations of the Study

One major limitation was not being able to speak with live serial killers. Although the sources used to conduct this study are sound, obtaining factual evidence concerning the link between sexual fantasies and violent and homicidal ideation would have been more in-depth. It is always important, if possible, to obtain knowledge from the actual offender when researching his or her characteristic, history, and sexual desires. Even though sound evidence was discovered in this study, the ability to have access to actual serial killers would have provided a less limited study.

Another limitation was the fact this study used older research to obtain evidence. The authors of all sources used are credible; however, new evidence seems to be presenting itself more and more. Because of the uniqueness of this study, discovering already conducted research on this topic proved difficult. Unfortunately, no mind is alike.

In saying that, it is imperative to continue this type of research to ensure new and useful information continues to be accessible.

The sources used for this research proved useful concerning the history of each serial killer. Also, these used sources provided a solid look into the methods of killing for each serial killer. Another limitation was the lack of accessibility to the friends and family of each serial killer. To better know the offender, one must look at the people that surrounded the said offender. If this study would have had the opportunity to interview some of the people that surrounded the serial killers, a larger amount of information would have been obtained giving a deeper look into the foundation of each serial killer's violent and homicidal ideation.

The act of speculation is an ongoing trend amongst researchers looking to link some categorical terms with a serial killer's desire to kill. The theory there is a link between sexual fantasies and the violent and homicidal ideation in serial killers proved factual. However, without addressing the limitations of this study, obtaining more supportive evidence is less than probable. Live participant interviews must take place to pass the limitation of speculation.

Even though patterns were discovered that tie with one's sexual fantasies, the limitation is the research is basing such a theory off the history of a serial killer. Again, without thoroughly interviewing a live participant, obtaining such knowledge is difficult. Unfortunately, no actual sexual fantasies were mentioned in any of the sources used to conduct this study. Even though links were made, the sexual desires of the serial killers remain unspoken. Throughout the entire research process, no serial killer admitted to

having any form of sexual fantasies. In saying that, through an interview process, which was not able to take place in this research, obtaining such evidence would have been probable.

This study discovered a trifecta when coding all the data. Looking at the exposure (the beginning), the desire (the middle mind), and the carrying out of sexual fantasies (the orgasmic ending), a new approach was able to be implemented to discover any links between sexual fantasies and violent and homicidal ideation. Unfortunately, this research was only able to utilize resources available to the public. Again, to build a better profile of sexual fantasies and the influence they have on violent and homicidal ideation must come from the true source, which is the serial killer.

Another limitation of this research was no female serial killers were used to conduct this study, nor any younger demographic individuals. To better understand how sexual fantasies play a role in violent and homicidal ideation, one must incorporate all genders and ethnicities. By doing so, developing patterns would be more efficient. Including the younger demographic would allow researchers to obtain knowledge concerning the birth of sexual fantasies. Sexual desires begin at a young age. With that said, interviewing young offenders would open the door to a better look into how sexual fantasies influence violent and homicidal ideation.

Recommendations

The goals for future studies concerning discovering a link between sexual fantasies and violent and homicidal ideation begin with understanding patterns that start with the beginning of time. Murder is no stranger to our society. Unfortunately, the

conversation of murder is an ongoing trend throughout many households in today's society. Because of that, it is a goal to implement more research toward this topic to better understand the driving force behind serial killers.

To be able to tie murder and societally accepted normal mindsets, we would have travel back to the beginning of time to discover patterns linked to such a theory. Obtaining and analyzing more manifestos and conducting more studies on a wider range of serial killers would further this research. Taking this study internationally and conducting a comparative analysis between locations and time periods would allow broadening the scope of our understanding concerning the link between sexual fantasies and violent and homicidal ideation. Finally, intellectual and psycho-social assessment screenings on serial killers could provide a more in-depth understanding of thinking and subsequent behavior.

Developed Feelings of Serial Killers Based on Attributes

Figure 16 provides a depiction of attributes and developed feelings in serial killers based on their experiences. This study utilized seven serial killers with a sexual driving force. Each serial killer possessed specific qualities that link with their childhood traumatic experiences. Figure 16 provides a better idea of commonalities the seven serial killers chosen for this research endured through childhood that could change the dynamic of profiling.

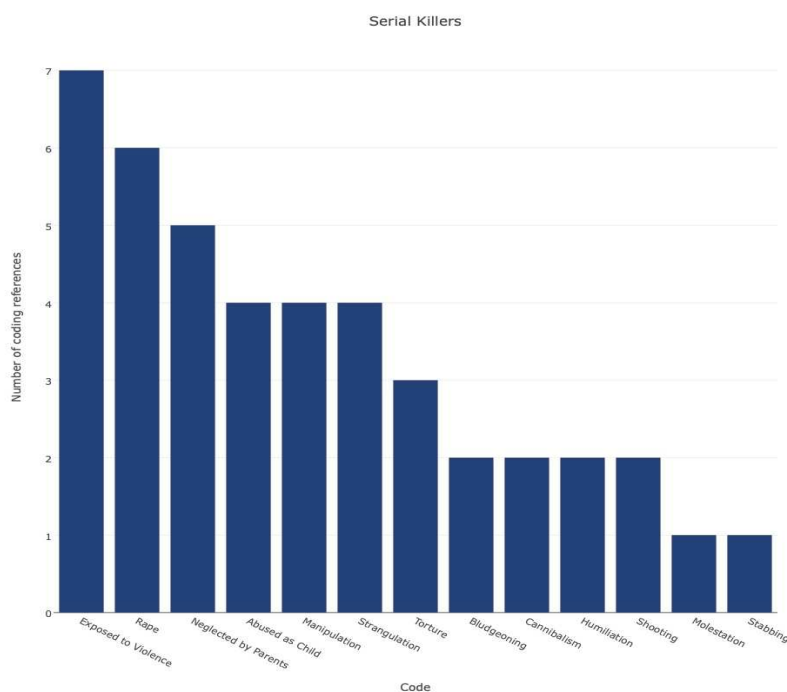


Figure 16. Serial killers and characteristics.

The Middle Mind (Desires)

It has been concluded that serial killers base their signatures and modus operandi on sexual fantasies developed through childhood traumatic experiences. When a serial killer experiences violence in the home, or the degrading of women, just to name a few, such behavior becomes a conditioned part of their mindset (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). As their mind develops from childhood into adulthood, the said normality becomes the base of their thinking. Such thinking turns into obsessions quickly moving to compulsions. Once the compulsions are in full force, the patterns begin to develop concerning methods of luring, abusing, and killing.

Carrying out the sexual fantasies falls under the compulsion category. Starting with the obsession, serial killers tend to move on to acting on their sexual desires.

Performing the signature and/or modus operandi is what satisfies the overwhelming desire to conduct heinous acts. Only by conducting such heinous acts is a serial killer's mind allowed the opportunity to rest given they have reached their orgasmic ending. Unfortunately, the sexual fantasies continue to dwell and grow in the minds of a serial killer, which is what makes them continue to seek out gratification to satisfy their sexual fantasies' appetite.

Implications

This study has shed light on the foundation of violence in serial killers. Looking to better society, the dynamic for profiling will be enhanced by incorporating such information. Looking at future research on this topic, and using more serial killers to conduct this study on would open to door to unlocking the mystery of what makes serial killers tick. We must also look at the younger demographic to implement an assessment for their behavior based on history and current behavior. By implementing this research and the future of this research in current profiling, we may be able to prevent future violent occurrences from taking place. I believe the results of this study will provide the future of profiling not only serial killers but also the minds of all criminals.

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