

# **Homicide Studies: Ten Years After Its Inception**

## **Proceedings of the 2007 Homicide Research Working Group Annual Symposium**

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# **Acknowledgements**

The Homicide Research Working Group (HRWG) is an international and interdisciplinary organization of volunteers dedicated to cooperation among researchers and practitioners who are trying to understand and limit lethal violence. The HRWG has the following goals:

- to forge links between research, epidemiology and practical programs to reduce levels of mortality from violence;
- to promote improved data quality and the linking of diverse homicide data sources;
- to foster collaborative, interdisciplinary research on lethal and non-lethal violence;
- to encourage more efficient sharing of techniques for measuring and analyzing homicide;
- to create and maintain a communication network among those collecting, maintaining and analyzing homicide data sets; and
- to generate a stronger working relationship among homicide researchers.

Homicide Research Working Group publications, which include the *Proceedings* of each annual Intensive Workshop (beginning in 1992), the *HRWG Newsletter*, and the contents of issues of the journal *Homicide Studies* (beginning in 1997), may be downloaded from the HRWG web site, which is maintained by the Inter-University Consortium of Political and Social Research, at the following address: <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/HRWG/>

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## OVERVIEW AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 18<sup>th</sup> Homicide Research Working Group (HRWG) intensive workshop participants met at the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension in Minneapolis, Minnesota, from June 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, 2007, to explore the theme, *Homicide Studies: Ten Years After Its Inception*. This volume includes the proceedings resulting from that workshop.

The HRWG is best described as an interdisciplinary and international group of homicide academicians and practitioners, who first met in 1991 with the goals of:

- forging links among research, epidemiology, and practical programs to reduce levels of mortality from violence
- encouraging more efficient sharing of techniques for measuring and analyzing homicide
- promoting improved data quality and the linking of diverse homicide data sources
- fostering collaborative, interdisciplinary research on lethal and non-lethal violence
- creating and maintain a communication network among those collecting, maintaining and analyzing homicide datasets, and
- generating a strong working relationship among homicide researchers

HRWG members from a variety of disciplines, e.g., criminology, criminal justice, sociology, nursing and political science, attended the three-day workshop. As the culture of this group requires, presenters offered up their preliminary research papers in 10-15 minute sound bites that participants then chewed up and spit out in the form of questions for approximately 15-30 minutes per paper. This method allows authors to gather input from experts in the field prior to completion of their research project and is the strength of the HRWG's annual workshops.

The success of the Minneapolis meeting was due, in large part, to the Center for Homicide Research. Both Dallas Drake and Joe Shulka, as well as their student interns from the Center, who served as the Local Arrangements Committee, provided a setting that was conducive to the hard work that proves to be the norm of HRWG Annual Meeting participants. For the second year, members had the opportunity to continue their discussions and form collaborative relationships at a Hospitality Room in the conference hotel. Attendees will remember Hospitality Room events such as celebrating Tom Petee's birthday, "Trunk Monkeys," and the "Save Paris Hilton" movement.

A highlight of this meeting was a "field trip" to the Mall of America. There was no shopping, but that wasn't the purpose of the trip. Instead, we toured the sophisticated security system at the Mall and learned that nearly all public areas are videotaped at all times that the Mall is open and that that surveillance could drill down to the point of allowing the camera viewer to read a book held by a person waiting for the bus outside the Mall. It was a truly impressive security system and an enjoyable event.

In addition to the main program, a pre-conference focusing on cold case murders was also presented by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension personnel. For those of

us who chose to attend this event, we left with a greater understanding of cold cases and homicide investigation.

The most essential contribution to these proceedings was provided, of course, by the Workshop participants. The papers in this volume are the primary products of the HRWG Annual Meeting. This year the program included papers on serial murder; crime spikes and dips; the development and use of new datasets, e.g., NIBRS; the exploration of methods to handle missing data; and a variety of other important topics, which have been compiled for you in this volume.

As the program chair, I want to thank all of the authors, who provided their papers to Gabrielle Salfati, the editor of these proceedings, and Katharina Gruenberg, who also worked on these proceedings.

As this is being written, the HRWG is planning the mid-year meeting, which is held each year at the American Society of Criminology. As always, we will have a reception focused on attracting new HRWG members and collaboration among current members. We are also actively setting up next year's Annual Workshop to be held in Huntsville, Texas, at Sam Houston University. The focus of this meeting will be on offenders. Thus, enduring progress is being made by HRWG members, who will continue to develop important questions related to lethal and non-lethal violence, find answers to many of those questions, and link the answers to practical strategies for intervention and prevention.

Lin Huff-Corzine  
Program Chair

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## **Chapter One:**

# **Pre-conference Workshop: Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) – Three Case Study Murder Investigations.**

### **Presenters:**

Terry Smith, retired from the BCA

Everett Doolittle, retired from the BCA

Dan Ahlquist, BCA

## **Katie Poirier Murder Investigation**

### **Terry Smith**

Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Senior Special Agent in Charge(retired)

Abducted by a stranger from a convenience store in Moose Lake Minnesota, on May 26, 1999, Katie Poirier's young life came to a violent end at the hands of a cunning career criminal. The identity of the suspect was initially barely visible on the dated surveillance equipment in use at the convenience store. Enhancement of the video tape revealed the suspect's physical identity that, coupled with witness information, directed the investigators to focus in on Donald Bloom. A search of Bloom's hunting property located in the area of the abduction revealed a fire pit containing numerous chard bone fragments. Forensic anthropologists working alongside investigators from the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension discovered human bones and teeth. This case presentation will discuss the investigation of a violent and cunning career criminal who had done everything he could to conceal his identity, his past, and the violent murder of Katie Poirier.

### **Presenter Biography**

Terry Smith has been a police officer for nearly thirty-one years, having started his career as a uniformed officer with the Bloomington, MN, Police Department in January 1966. He began working death investigations as a crime scene technician for Bloomington in 1968. In 1973, Terry was hired as a Special Agent with the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension. Agent Smith was stationed at the Bureau's St. Paul office for 13 years where he worked in a number of different sections, including organized crime, narcotics, and general investigation. In 1986, Agent Smith was promoted to Special Agent in Charge of the BCA's Bemidji Regional Office. Agent Smith estimates that he has investigated more than two hundred deaths, including several high profile homicide cases, including the Katie Poirier abduction and murder investigation. He has taught many classes and seminars for homicide investigators, sharing his expertise so that others may carry on in the same fashion.

## **Serial Killer Joseph Ture**

### **Everett Doolittle**

Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Special Agent (retired)

Convicted for the brutal murder of Diane Edwards in 1980, a Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Cold Case unit investigation connected Ture to six additional murders. Connecting Ture to the brutal murder of Marlys Wohlenhaus in 1979, and Alice Huling along with three of her children Susan Huling, Patti Huling and Wayne Huling in 1978, resulted in multiple life sentences for Ture, guaranteeing pure evil will never be free again. This case presentation will discuss the process of reevaluating evidence already collected and the discovery of new evidence, both of which were critical to obtaining five additional first-degree murder convictions.

### **Presenter Biography**

Everett Doolittle began his law enforcement career in 1970 in rural Minnesota. Everett is a graduate of the FBI National Academy and holds a Masters Degree of Management and Administration. In 1982, Everett was hired by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension as a Special Agent where he was assigned to a number of different sections including the Cold Case Homicide Unit. This unit is charged with the duty of reviewing older homicides, or cold cases, and assisting local law enforcement agencies in re-opening and solving these crimes. In this section, Everett worked with local law enforcement in reviewing murder cases believed to be connected to Joseph Ture. Everett's extensive investigation connected Ture to five additional murders, which resulted in convictions. Everett is an experienced teacher and trainer, sharing his expertise and experience with others in a learning environment.

## **Dru Sjodin Murder Investigation**

### **Dan Ahlquist**

Bureau of Criminal Apprehension Special Agent

On November 22, 2003, Dru Sjodin was abducted by a stranger as she walked to her car in a shopping mall parking lot. Immediate clues in this case led Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension investigators to focus on Alfonso Rodriguez, a Level 3 Predatory Sex Offender who had been released from prison six months earlier and now lived in the area. Rodriguez was subsequently arrested and charged with the abduction of Sjodin, however, Sjodin had not yet been located. Rodriguez denied any involvement. On April 17, 2004 Dru's mutilated body was discovered in a ravine. Rodriguez eventually confessed to his involvement in this violent sexual assault and murder. The agent assigned to this case will discuss the inter-workings of this high profile murder investigation.

### **Presenter Biography**

Dan Ahlquist has been a police officer for fifteen years, beginning in 1982 when he started as a patrol officer with the Moorhead, Minnesota, Police Department. In 1987, Dan was hired by the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension as a Special Agent and continues in this capacity. Ahlquist is currently assigned to the general investigations unit where he has conducted and assisted many death investigations, including a number of high profile homicide investigations such as the Dru Sjodin Murder Investigation.

## **Chapter Two:**

### **Session 1: The History of Homicide and Homicide Investigation.**

**Moderator: Jay Corzine**

**Mass Legal Executions in the American West.** *Paul H. Blackman, Independence Institute and Vance McLaughlin, Jacksonville State University.*

**Robeson County, North Carolina Homicides: 1916 to 1941.** *Vance McLaughlin, Jacksonville State University.*

**History of Offender Profiling: The Role of Criminologists, Psychologists, Consulting Detectives, Medical Examiners, Forensic Experts, and the FBI.** *Kristen Welch, Sam Houston State University and Robert Keppel, Seattle University.*

**Discussion** recorded by Victoria Titterington

# MASS LEGAL EXECUTIONS IN THE AMERICAN WEST

Paul H. Blackman

Independence Institute

Vance McLaughlin

Jacksonville State University,

## ABSTRACT

Encouraged by the response to their exploratory study of American mass legal executions (MLEs) at the 2002 HRWG annual meeting, the authors decided to go into greater depth, emphasizing various aspects of the MLEs: geographical, chronological, demographic, etc. The first such study published was in the seventh volume of *Homicide Studies*, focusing on the mass executions of Blacks. This study turns to MLEs in the West, most of which involved members of other minority groups, beginning in the first decade of Spanish settlement of California in the 1770s. In addition to MLEs for Indian revolts, minorities involved included the only MLE of Asians, related to Tong wars, and of Hispanics involved in Pancho Villa's Mexican revolt. In the West, perhaps even more than in other MLEs, the incident may have been covered in, but the MLE missing from, history books. For non-Hispanic Whites to earn an MLE, it generally took what would now be viewed as an aggravated homicide, but will all participants eligible for execution.

## INTRODUCTION

Mass legal executions (MLEs) have been defined as the execution of four or more persons for the same criminal incident. The number was chosen based on criminological use of the same figure for the study of mass murder, and historical use of the same figure for a study of mass lynching. Previous research on MLEs has indicated that they tend to differ from ordinary executions in a variety of ways. First, MLEs are more apt to be applied in response to crimes of greatest concern to the society, or, sometimes, just to the ruling authorities. Second, MLEs are more apt to occur when those subject to criminal sanction are outsiders to the society trying and punishing them, either literally, as with pirates pillaging far from home, or figuratively, as with slaves feared to be plotting revolts in the society in which their politically-powerless lives are being led. During the colonial and antebellum era, MLEs disproportionately were used against blacks and Indians, particularly for crimes like slave revolt and Indian uprising. Other offenses often warranting such punishment included treason, mutiny and desertion, along with some aggravated murders. Following the Civil War, other ethnic minorities were more apt to be sentenced in such groups, but the crimes, with few exceptions, were what would be considered aggravated murders.

In the western part of what became the United States, MLEs have been relatively infrequent, perhaps accounting for approximately ten percent of the total number of such incidents. That reflects the lack of population during most of the period of European colonization and political control of what became about a quarter of the states during the period when MLEs

were most likely to occur. The West may have accounted for over 15% of the population when America's last MLE took place in 1960, but it accounted for less than 5% during most of the period when MLEs were relatively common. In a number of ways, western MLEs differ from others, emphasizing different aspects of the study of such executions.

With far more MLEs involving minority groups, especially Indians and Hispanics, western MLEs were more likely than others to involve incidents relatively well known historically even if the MLE was not so well remembered. The West provided the only known example of Asians legally executed en masse in America. And the Indians demonstrated one of the problems of determining what constitutes an MLE, with more uncertainty about the extent to which particular mass executions followed some evidence of due process of law, with a trial and conviction for an alleged offense prior to execution for the offense.

### **INDIAN UPRISINGS**

Overall, in antebellum America, Blacks and Indians comprised just over half of those executed in MLEs. But no Blacks have been involved in MLEs in the West. On the other hand, during the century from the founding of Spanish missions in California through 1873, only Indians were involved in western MLEs. As with MLEs elsewhere, the "criminal incidents" leading to the executions are often better known than the fact that they terminated with a mass execution. And, particularly with the earlier ones, there were some issues that make it arguable that, despite trial and conviction, the executions were not totally legal. In addition, particularly with regard to Indian uprisings, there were numerous incidents of summary executions or, not necessarily readily distinguishable, just murders of those captured in Indian uprisings. The latter, indeed, may have been more understandable to the Indians than the idea that they had committed a "crime" requiring a trial, evidence, conviction, and formal execution: killing captives was not all that unusual an experience for the Indians, nor something they would not have done themselves to some Indian and Caucasian captives.

The first Spanish mission in California, in San Diego, soon offended the local Indians enough so that many of the missionaries were murdered. A few years later, to suppress future uprisings, four Indian chiefs who had been captured were subject to exemplary trial and execution. The legal question was whether the commandant had the authority to execute persons without the approval of the governor. The uprising appears in more history books than its suppression. The same is true for the second MLE, following the Whitman Massacre in the Oregon territory. The killing by Cayuse Indians of 17 men, women, and children, eventually led to the Indians being forced to yield up those alleged to be involved, although more were probably involved than the five who were tried and executed. The legal issue, raised by defense attorneys and ignored by the jury and others, was whether murder was a crime: the year before the massacre, the British yielded Oregon to the United States, but Congress had not yet implemented a legal system defining crimes and their sanction. The massacre, combined with the discovery of gold in California, is credited with encouraging pioneers to switch generally from the Oregon to the California Trail.

Three other Indian uprisings led to MLEs, involving a total of 14 Indians, in Oregon and California in 1855, 1863, and 1873. In one incident, the execution was partly in response to the

only killing of an Army general in the Indian wars. In another, the civilian population insisted upon Indians being executed for killing Whites in response to the efforts of the White civilian population to exterminate by murder of the Indians living in the areas. In general, the Army wanted the Indians to refrain from robbery and murder of settlers and the settlers wanted to eradicate the Indian population; when the Indians resisted, the Army's job was to protect the settlers from the Indians, viewed more as a police action than a military action, with trial and execution deemed an appropriate response.

### **MLEs of NON-HISPANIC WHITES**

As with most post-Civil War MLEs in the United States, those of non-Hispanic Whites in the West generally involved aggravated homicide – with the main difference between those executions and contemporary executions for aggravated homicide being the willingness to execute those involved in a gang-related robbery even those who, personally, did not kill anyone. There were four such MLEs in the West, only one an incident where both the crime and the resulting execution are equally well known to history.

That was the first MLE of Caucasians, following the so-called Bisbee Massacre in Arizona territory – interestingly involving the armed robbery of a store co-owned by a relative of Barry Goldwater. The Bisbee incident began as the armed robbery of a store by five men, but the aggravated circumstances involved not merely the killing of persons in the store, and those noticing the robbery from the street and trying to take action, but the murder of a woman, who probably had no idea what was happening. And prior to the execution of those five robbers in Tombstone, the ringleader, who had organized the robbery but not taken part and thus escaped the death penalty, became the victim of Tombstone's first lynching.

The second MLE of non-Hispanic Whites, Nevada's only MLE, resulted from a 1905 train robbery and murder. The third and fourth had more clearly aggravating circumstances. In 1930 and 1938, California executed five Whites for prison riots in one of which a warden was killed. Murdering law enforcement officers has generally been an aggravating circumstance increasing the likelihood of an MLE occurring.

### **MLEs of HISPANICS**

Three MLE incidents in the West involved Hispanics, accounting for roughly one-quarter of the persons executed in such incidents. The first, as with two of the MLEs of non-Hispanic Whites, involved a law enforcement officer as victim: the assassination of a New Mexican Hispanic former sheriff in a political dispute. Four other Hispanics were convicted and executed. The third MLE of Hispanics, like the first of non-Hispanics, involved a botched store robbery and murder, but with only one man murdered, but with a woman, the storekeeper and murder-victim's wife, seriously injured. While one of the five perpetrators reportedly escaped from New Mexico to Mexico, the other four paid with their lives in 1922.

The other MLE involving Hispanics, like several others, involved an incident far better known than the resulting execution. Near the end of the period of Mexican political insurrections of the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Pancho Villa was on a losing streak in his efforts to build on his strength in Chihuahua, just south of the American border. Resenting American



support for his opponent, despite Villa's earlier efforts to appease Americans – and possibly responding to encouragement from Germans seeking to involve Americans in a war with Mexico during the First World War – Villa ordered his men to attack the New Mexican town of Columbus, just over the border. The attack is fairly well known, as is the American response, ordering General John J. Pershing on a punitive raid into Mexico in a vain effort to capture Villa. What most history books, American or Mexican, fail to notice is that six men in Villa's raiding party were captured, tried, and executed for the murders that occurred in the early morning raid in March of 1916.

### **MLE of ASIANS**

Only once in American history were Asians subject to a mass legal execution, and it occurred in Arizona, related to the Tong wars of the 1920s. With most Tong war actions in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York, the fact that the only resulting MLE occurred in Arizona could be related to the fact that the authorities in that state did not take kindly to five Tong warriors, four of whom were eventually executed, driving from LA to Kingman and imposing their problems on their state by killing a restaurateur belonging to an opposing Tong. It is also possible that similar executions did not occur in New York or California because, in addition to the difficulties of getting cooperation from the Chinese community, the authorities may not have cared when Chinese murdered other Chinese – in the same way southern Blacks in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, while subject to lynching for offenses so minor as looking wrong at some Whites, could murder fellow Blacks without threat from law enforcement.

### **CONCLUSION**

The different development of the West from most of the parts of the country, which had been settled earlier, changed the sorts of persons executed in MLEs, with much greater use of the sentences against minorities. But the general findings from other studies, that MLEs are especially likely to be imposed on societal outsiders and/or when the crimes are those that particularly offend society, remain. With MLE of Indians, what stands out is the extent to which the law was stretched and circumstances strained to justify executions.

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# Robeson County, North Carolina Homicides: 1916 to 1941

Vance McLaughlin

Professor-Jacksonville State University

## Introduction

Robeson County, in the southeastern section of North Carolina, is geographically the largest county in North Carolina. It is the shaded area in the map below:



The county is divided into twenty-nine townships: Alfordsville, Back Swamp, Britts, Burnt Swamp, East Howellsville, Fairmont, Gaddy, Lumber Bridge, Lumberton, Maxton, Orrum, Parkton, Pembroke, Philadelphus, Raft Swamp, Red Springs, Rennert, Rowland, Saddletree, Shannon, Smiths, Smyrna, St. Pauls, Sterlings, Thompson, Union, West Howellsville, Whitehouse, and Wishart.

Based on the 2000 census, Robeson County has a population of 123,399 people. The county seat is Lumberton, with a population of 20,795. No other community in the county has a population greater than 3,500 (Red Springs) giving the county a rural atmosphere. The median income of a household is \$28,202 and 29% of the inhabitants are under 18 years of age. There are seven state recognized Indian tribes in North Carolina. Fifty-one percent of the North Carolina Indian population resides in Robeson County with the vast majority identifying themselves as Lumbee.

Robeson County has a historical reputation as a violent place, much like Edgefield, South Carolina and Chicago during Prohibition. From 1994 to 1998, Robeson County had the highest homicide rate for any county in North Carolina. In this five year period, 134 homicides occurred in the county with 83 non-white male victims, 26 non-white female victims, 18 white male victims, and 7 white female victims. The homicide rate was 24 per 100,000.

Homicides occurring from 1916 to 1941 will be examined to determine if Robeson County's reputation as a violent place to live is a recent phenomenon or if there is a history of high homicide rates.

## Methodology

I was granted permission by the vital records division of Robeson County to search their files. Death certificates were bound in yearly books beginning with 1916. I began with that year and stopped at 1941. Over 19,000 death certificates were examined. If the death was classified as a

homicide, the following was recorded: name, race, age and sex of victim; date of homicide; township where homicide occurred, and cause of death were recorded. In most cases, the homicide was identified as accident, suicide, or homicide by the medical examiner. In 1930, the death certificates changed in an effort to gather additional facts concerning the homicide. The physicians filling them out, as a general rule, did not bother to include the information.

A second part of this study was to include Uniform Crime Report information concerning homicides in Robeson County from 1960 to 2004. The FBI Information Center furnished all the records received for those years. After going through the data set, it became apparent that the information was too incomplete to be used. Specifically, there were three types of deficiencies. First, there were a total of ten reporting law enforcement agencies identified during these years. In only four of these years did all ten agencies submit a crime report. Second, even when they submitted a crime report, in many cases it was not for the full twelve months. The Robeson County Sheriff's Office (RCSO) was the largest agency reporting and consistently reported the most homicides. In many cases they only reported the first six months of crime statistics. Third, the RCSO was a notoriously corrupt agency. When I began my research in 2003, BATFE agents informed me that the U.S. Attorney's Office would not accept any cases that originated with the RCSO. In 2004, the Sheriff was forced to resign in the middle of multiple investigations directed against the agency. Interestingly, the earlier death certificate data would appear to be more complete than the modern U.C.R. data.

## **Race**

In the United States, race may be the most statistically significant factor found in homicide. Often, the rates among both perpetrators and victims vary widely based on race. Concomitantly, the variable of race may be the most perplexing variable encountered. During the history of the country, the words used to classify race have morphed on the basis of pseudo-science and political demands.

The census reports have varied over time in the way the ancestry of citizens was classified. Such terms as foreign born white, native born whites, and colored have disappeared. White, black, and Hispanic are currently in vogue. In popular culture, the term Indian has given way to Native American. Both are misnomers. Columbus did not discover a new route to the Indies so Indian was not a correct name for the people he met. The ancestors of these "Indians" walked over a land bridge from Asia, thus not being native to this country. Slaves brought from Africa were first called Negroes (in polite society), then colored, then black, then African-American, and currently some want to impose African-in-America, supposedly to remind others that most of their ancestors did not emigrate voluntarily. The census relies on the self-definition of reporting individuals.

Examining race as a genetic trait would seem to be the most scientific way to categorize people, but is also problematic. The United States Government has been hesitant to do this. The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission that is supposed to investigate alleged legal discrimination has almost been mute on categorizing different races. Past history has not been positive to some of those who have been classified by pseudo-science. An example is that

during slavery in the United States, some states classified those with 1/8 African blood as octoroons, thus making them Negroes, thus allowing them to be enslaved.

Social construction may be more useful to criminologists in defining race. A social construct is an artifact established in a society because people agree to behave in a certain way. Those social scientists that consider this concept often find the taxonomy of racial classifications arrived by other means to be valid. In other words, race is how we and others see ourselves based on unwritten codes established by the society we live in. That is why African-American became acceptable by some, even though it speaks of a continent rather than a country. While whites may classify themselves as Irish, Italian, Polish, etc., blacks would argue for the purposes of discriminatory policy that whether their roots were in Uganda or Tanzania was immaterial. They were all from Africa. It is even more confusing when anthropologists have concluded that all human life originated in Africa.

In the United States, despite definitional challenges, race dominates the discussion in many policy considerations (eg. affirmative action, reparations) and criminological research (eg. racial profiling, death penalty imposition). In Robeson County, race is a key factor in communal life. The Lumbee Tribe calls Robeson County home.

The Lumbee Indian Tribe adds a number of layers to the already confusing concept of race. In an attempt to establish their identity, there have been a number of claims as to their origin. These range from being descendants from the lost colony of Roanoke to being the “relatives” of other tribes (Creek, Cherokee, Tuscarora). It is felt by some that the Lumbee Indians are an amalgamation of intermarriage among whites, blacks, and local tribes since the 1800s. There are others who feel that the Lumbees are “pure” race Indians.

While the Lumbee Indians are recognized by North Carolina as a tribe, the federal government does not grant any benefits. The government granted the Lumbees recognition in the Lumbee Act of 1956. The last paragraph reads:

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Indians now residing in Robeson and adjoining counties of North Carolina, originally found by the first white settlers on the Lumber River in Robeson County, and claiming joint descent from remnants of early American colonists and certain tribes of Indians originally inhabiting the coastal regions of North Carolina, shall, from and after the ratification of this Act, be known and designated as Lumbee Indians of North Carolina and shall continue to enjoy all rights, privileges and immunities enjoyed by them as citizens under the laws of the State of North Carolina and the United States. Nothing in this Act shall make such Indians eligible for any services performed by the United States for Indians because of their status as Indians, and none of the statutes of the United States which affect Indians because of their status as Indians shall be applicable to the Lumbee Indians.

Recently, some of those who have considered themselves Lumbee, have switched their racial identification to Tuscarora, in the hopes of securing federal benefits. The Tuscarora is a

federally recognized tribe, part o the larger New York State League of the Iroquois. Their ancestors were displaced from North Carolina after the 1712 Tuscarora War.

### Analysis

The census for the years of 1910, 1920, 1930, and 1940 was examined to determine the population based on race and sex in Robeson County. The 1940 census did not provide enough data to categorize the population. In addition, in 1910 and 1920, the category of ‘Indians, Chinese, Japanese, and persons of all other races’ was used. In 1930 and 1940, the category of “people of other races” was used. In Robeson County the only other persons seems to be Indians and that number was used. For the purposes of this paper, if more Indians were counted than there actually were, it would lower their homicide rate.

The Indians in Robeson County made up approximately 75% of the Indian population in North Carolina in the 1910, 1920, 1930, and 1940 census.

**Table 1: Population of Robeson County, North Carolina based on the United States Census for 1910, 1920, and 1930.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>WF</b>	<b>BM</b>	<b>BF</b>	<b>IM</b>	<b>IF</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1910</b>	11,814	11,717	11,083	11,435	2,933	2,963	51,945
<b>1920</b>	12,759	12,660	9,852	10,455	4,457	4,461	54,674
<b>1930</b>	15,606	15,717	11,005	11,779	6,238	6,167	66,512

**Table 2: Population of Robeson County, North Carolina based on the United States Census for 1940.**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>Indian</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1940</b>	38,022	38,838	34,658	25,573	16,629	76,860

Based on the death certificates, there were a total of 334 homicides in Robeson County from 1916 to 1941. Table 3 shows the race and sex of victims of homicides and separates homicides into murders, accidents, and suicides.

**Table 3: Race and Sex of Homicide Victim in Robeson, County, North Carolina from 1916 to 1941.**

	<b>Race/Sex</b>	<b>Murder</b>	<b>Accident</b>	<b>Suicide</b>	<b>Total</b>	
	<b>Black Male</b>	86	9	3	98	
	<b>White Male</b>	49	21	26	96	
	<b>Indian Male</b>	69	5	5	79	
	<b>Black Female</b>	20	5	1	26	
	<b>White Female</b>	8	3	8	19	
*There	<b>Indian Female</b>	10	4	1	15	was an
	<b>Total</b>	242*	47	44	333	

additional male homicide victim, but no race was recorded. One of the murders involved the death of a man in 1938 with the underlying cause listed as Mustard Gas that he inhaled during WWI. Two of the listed murders involved white males killed by law enforcement, two black males killed by law enforcement, two Indian males killed in different years during a raid on their stills. One white male police officer was killed and included.

When the accident and suicide categories are combined for each of the six race/sex classifications and then compared to the number of homicides, the following percentages were calculated: for both black males and Indian males, the combined number was 14% of the murders; for black females, 30%; Indian females, 50%; white males, 96%, and white females, 140%.

#### **Homicide Rate of Victims based on Race and Sex**

In Table 4, the homicide rate for victims was calculated by using ten year blocks: 1916 to 1925 and 1926 to 1936 and the census numbers for 1920 and 1930. The ten years of homicides were added together and then divided by ten to calculate an average. That was then factored into the population to provide a rate per 100,000.

**Table 4: The homicide rate of victims for ten year periods based on race and sex; and the total homicide rate for Robeson County.**

<b>Years</b>	<b>WM</b>	<b>WF</b>	<b>BM</b>	<b>BF</b>	<b>IM</b>	<b>IF</b>	<b>Total</b>
1916 to 1925	9	2	21	5	38	2	10
1926 to 1936	12	2	24	9	45	13	14

In Table 5, six years of data was collected from 1937 to 1941. Rates were calculated per 100,000 based on that data.

**Table 5: The homicide rate of victims for six years based on race; and the total homicide rate for Robeson County.**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Whites</b>	<b>Blacks</b>	<b>Indians</b>	<b>Total</b>
1937 to 1941	11.4	30	24	20

### **Discussion**

The number of accidents and suicides stayed relatively the same from 1916 to 1941 while the murder rate significantly increased. From 1916 to 1925, the homicide rate of white male victims was less than a third of the black male victims rate and the black male rate was just over half of the Indian male homicide rate. From 1926 to 1936, the homicide rate of white male victims was half the black male victims rate and the black male rate again was just over half of the Indian male rate.

From 1916 to 1925, the white female victim homicide rate was the same as the Indian female rate. In the next ten year period, the Indian female victim rate was over six times the white female victim rate.

It would appear, based on the years studied, that Robeson County does deserve its reputation as a violent place to live. It is probable that the Indian male victim rate of homicide has been high since records were kept beginning in 1916.

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## History of Offender Profiling: The Role of Criminologists, Psychologists, Consulting Detectives, Medical Examiners, Forensic Experts, and the FBI

*Is it not known that every deed is an outcome of the total character of the doer? Is it not considered that the deed and the character are correlative concepts, and that the character by means of which the deed is to be established cannot be inferred from the deed alone?*

*--Hans Gross, Criminal Investigation, 1934, pp.55.*

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study of offender profiling compels individuals to understand it in spite of the filters provided by enormously popular television shows, such as CSI, NYPD Blue, Millennium, Profiler, Law and Order, Missing without a Trace, and Cracker. These shows have produced myths that are accepted not only as factually true, but have provided eager students with a skewed view of the realities of pursuing a profession in “profiling.” When one looks back at the origin of profiling, the function of profiling has been around for over 100 years, but calling that function “criminal or psychological profiling” did not occur in the United States until the FBI’s Behavioral Science Unit in the mid 1970’s began training local law enforcement officers in the practical uses of criminal personality profiling.

Offender profiling has evolved over the past 100 years. The terminology, definitions, and approaches to profiling have also evolved. A look at the history and origin of offender profiling provides a basis for the questions, concerns, and research that develop out of profiling methods. History of Offender Profiling examines the origin and history of offender profiling. It highlights examples of profiles of key cases from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including profiles of Jack the Ripper, Peter Kurten, Adolph Hitler, the Mad Bomber, and the Boston Strangler. Authors Kristen Welch and Robert Keppel describe the contributions and the role of criminologists, psychologists, consulting detectives, medical examiners, forensic experts, and the FBI in the creation and evolution of modern profiling practices.

Despite claims that offender profiling has a relatively short history, there is clear and convincing evidence of early attempts at profiling in the nineteenth century. Historical references to criminal profiling techniques can be traced back to early 20<sup>th</sup> century profiles of the Boston Strangler and the Mad Bomber by Dr. James Brussel, the personality profile of Adolph Hitler constructed by Dr. Walter Langer, and the 1930 profile of the sadistic Vampire of Düsseldorf. A look at the 19<sup>th</sup> century provides several examples of offender profiling including profiles constructed by medical examiners Joseph Bell and Thomas Bond. An examination of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and the 19<sup>th</sup> century also reveals profiles based on the work of early

investigators, consulting detectives, and practitioners such as Hans Gross, Francois Vidocq, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. In addition, profiling has roots in criminology, including the work of criminal anthropologists Cesare Lombroso, and Ernst Kretschmer. While early criminologists posited the ideal that criminal psychology could be identified by physical characteristics, early practitioners made the connection between crime scenes and the offenders' personality and psychological makeup.

The use of profiling as an investigative tool by detectives, investigative consultants, and the FBI has garnered a great deal of attention in recent years. Profiling has become the focus of more than speculation, prompting research and a body of literature, as well as the true crime shows, fictional narratives, and movies. Little attention, however, has centered on the origin of the investigative technique known as offender profiling with researchers typically only touching on the subject briefly in a paragraph or two at the beginning of their publications. This paper summarizes the history of criminal profiling techniques and chronicles early profiling efforts in an attempt to add to the general understanding of these techniques.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The study of offender profiling compels us to understand it in spite of the filters provided by enormously popular television shows, such as CSI, Profiler, Law and Order, Missing without a Trace, and Cracker. These shows have produced myths that are accepted not only as factually true, but have provided eager students with a skewed view of the realities of pursuing a profession in "profiling". When one looks back at the origin of profiling, the function of profiling has been around for over 100 years, but calling that function "criminal or psychological profiling" did not occur in the United States until the FBI's Behavioral Science Unit in the mid 1970's began training local law enforcement officers in the practical uses of criminal personality profiling.

## **DEFINITION OF OFFENDER PROFILING**

There is a growing body of profiling literature on the various forms of profiling commonly used today, including investigative profiling, psychological profiling, psychiatric profiling, criminal profiling from crime scene analysis, and geographical profiling. As modern profiling techniques have evolved, so has the terminology. The practice used by law enforcement to identify suspects in unsolved crimes from crime scene characteristics has had several different names throughout history in addition to offender profiling, including: Applied Criminology, Psychological Profiling, Crime Scene Analysis, Crime Assessment, Crime Scene Assessment, Criminal Profiling, Criminal Personality Profiling, Criminal Investigative Analysis, Investigative Psychology, and Investigative Criminology.

For the purposes of clarity, the term offender profiling and Howard Teton's (1995) definition of this technique provided in *The Encyclopedia of Police Science* and used by the FBI's Behavioral Science Unit, will be adopted in this article. Special Agent Teton, often depicted as the father of modern profiling techniques, describes offender profiling as "a method of identifying the perpetrator of a crime based on an analysis of the nature of the offense and the manner in which it was committed" (Teton, 1995, p.475). The underlying assumption of offender profiling is that the crime and the crime scene reflect the habits and personality of the offender. Correspondingly, in *The Police Dictionary and Encyclopedia*, author John J. Faye provides the following definition of profiling:

Psychological profile: a description of the personality and characteristics of an individual based on an analysis of acts committed by the individual. The description may include age, race, sex, socioeconomic and marital status, educational level, arrest history, location of residence relative to the scene of the act, and certain personality traits. A profile is based on characteristic patterns of uniqueness that distinguish certain individuals from the general population. Regarding criminal acts, patterns are deduced from thoughtful analysis of wounds, weapon used, cause of death, position of the body. (1988: pp. 271–272)

Vernon Geberth (1981) defines a psychological profile as “an educated attempt to provide investigative agencies with specific information as to the type of individual who committed a certain crime” (p. 46). Similarly, Douglas, Ressler, Burgess, and Hartman (1986) describe the psychological profile as the identification of “the major personality and behavioral characteristics of an individual based upon an analysis of the crimes he or she has committed” (p. 405). The basic assumption of a psychological profile is that the crime scene reflects the personality and thoughts of the offender (Holmes & Holmes, 1998). The origin of the term profiling in reference to investigative techniques is unclear. The actual practice of criminal profiling precedes the use of the term. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) (2004) cites the earliest use of term profiling in an 1888 article in Scribners magazine by W.P.P. Longfellow entitled One of the Secrets of Good Profiling, in reference to the physical drawing of profiles. The OED also provides the following definition of the more modern technique of offender profiling:

Profiling (vbl. n): orig. and chiefly U.S. a. The recording, itemization, or analysis of a person’s known psychological, intellectual, and behavioral characteristics, esp. as documentation used (in schools, businesses, etc.) in the assessment of an individual’s capabilities; (also) the compilation of databases which store such information and that can be used to identify any particular sub-group of people. (Oxford English Dictionary, 2004)

The word profile may be traced back even earlier to Blount’s 1656 depiction of artistic representations in which places or objects are shown from a side view (Oxford English Dictionary, 2004). In all likelihood the use of the word profiling to apply to investigative techniques has grown out the use of profiles as character sketches of individuals’ personalities and histories. The use of the word profiling to describe the current investigative technique may have evolved from the 1734 use of the word profile to illustrate the compilation of a biographical sketch or character study as exemplified by R. North in J. L. Clifford’s 1969 Biography as an Art (Oxford English Dictionary, 2004). This is evidenced in the OED (2005) definition:

Profile: (n.)b. A biographical sketch or character study (common in journalistic use since 1920); a summary description or report. Individuals have been compositing what became popularly known as “profiles” of historical figures, writers, and famous figures for at least 200 years (Oxford English Dictionary, 2005).

The process of developing a report or a description of a person's characteristics based on crime scene characteristics would appear to be quite similar to the traditional definition of a profile as a biographical sketch of a person's characteristics, contributions, and life history. This is probably the strongest link to the modern use of the word profiling to identify the personality or psychological profile of individuals. Similarly, Special Agent Russell Vorpagel (1982), as a member of the FBI's Behavioral Sciences Unit, defined profiling as "a biographical sketch of behavioral patterns, trends, and tendencies" (p.156) of an offender in *Psychological Profiling and Crime Scene Behavioral Analysis: Painting Psychological Profiles: Charlatanism, Charisma, or a New Science?*

## **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The use of profiling as an investigative tool by detectives, investigative consultants, and the FBI has garnered a great deal of attention in recent years. Profiling has become the focus of more than speculation, prompting research and a body of literature, as well as the true crime shows, fictional narratives, and movies. Little attention, however, has centered on the origin of the investigative technique known as offender profiling with researchers typically only touching on the subject briefly in a paragraph or two at the beginning of their publications. Much of the credit for the development and evolution of offender profiling as a legitimate law enforcement tool has been given to the FBI. However, many in the field cite earlier examples of profiling techniques, pointing to Dr. James Brussels 1956 profile of the Mad Bomber (Douglas, et al., 1986; Oremod, 1996) and Dr. Thomas Bond's 1888 profile of Jack the Ripper (Canter, 2004). In addition, many criminologists and criminal justice professionals acknowledge the work of early criminal anthropologists Jacob Fries, Cesare Lombroso, and Ernst Kretschmer as early contributors to profiling techniques (Douglas et al., 1986, Ressler et al., 1986).

In *Psychological Services for Law Enforcement*, Theodore Blau (1994) reports examples of early profiling efforts similar to modern techniques in the beginning of the 19th century in the field of criminal anthropology. Similarly, former FBI Special Agent Howard Teton (1995), reports references in criminology literature to a "type of criminal psychology" as early as 1803 (p. 476). Several researchers have traced the origin of profiling to leading criminologists from the 19th and early 20th century (Blau, 1994; Brussel, 1968; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992; Teton, 1995). Criminal anthropology was a leading field in criminology in the United States from 1881 to 1911 (Henry & Einstadter, 1998), however criminal anthropology worldwide had an even earlier history. For example, Jacob Fries, who Howard Teton refers to as "the first student of criminology to relate the nature of crime to the personality of the individual", wrote a handbook on criminal anthropology in 1820 (Teton, 1995, p. 476).

Criminal anthropology is defined as "the scientific study of the relationship between human physical characteristics and criminality" (Schmalleger, 2004, p. 143). The basic premise of criminal anthropology is that the worst criminals are atavists, or genetic throwbacks from an earlier evolution, and are anatomically or physically different than other individuals (Henry & Einstadter, 1998; Lanier & Henry, 2004; Schmalleger, 2004). The leading criminologists in the field of criminal anthropology in the 19th and early 20th century argued that physical characteristics of offenders are linked to their criminal actions, that those who are criminal are genetic throwbacks in their physiology, thinking, and actions. In one of the first published works on criminal anthropology, *Anatomical Studies upon Brains of Criminals*, author Moriz Benedikt (1811) argued that the brains of criminals significantly deviated from the normal and that "man

acts, thinks, feels, desires, and acts according to the anatomical construction and physiological development of his brain” (p. vii; Henry & Einstadter, 1998).

The idea that criminals were physically and mentally distinct from law abiding individuals (Dugdale, 1877; Hooten, 1939; Lombroso, 1876; Lombroso-Ferrero, 1911; Talbot, 1898) was expanded on to include the belief that different types of criminals, those who commit different categories of crimes, are also physically different from each other. This led to different profiles of criminals from the atavistic born criminal to the gentleman or normal criminal (Boeis, 1893; Henry & Einstadter, 1998; Lombroso-Ferrero, 1911; Parson, 1911) and included distinctions for murderers and thieves (Lombroso-Ferrero, 1911; Schmalleger, 2004). Cesare Lombroso and Ernst Kretschmer were two of the leaders in creating typologies and profiles of criminals that are most frequently credited for inspiring contemporary profiling of criminals (Blau, 1994; Brussel, 1968; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992; Teton, 1995). In fact, some scholars and practitioners contend that early criminologists’ attempts to develop criminal types and physical characteristics attributed to criminality are the precursors to modern profiling techniques. Some modern profilers have credited their work in the field to these criminologists (Brussel, 1968; Ressler & Shachtman, 1992; Teton, 1995).

Robert Ressler points to the work of Ernst Kretschmer as an influence in the profiles he constructs (Ressler & Shachtman, 1992). Similarly, Dr. James Brussel (1968) credits Kretschmer for influencing the development of his profiles he constructed. Brussel incorporated physical characteristics into his profiles based on the idea that certain mental illnesses were associated with specific physical builds. This idea was directly descended from earlier criminologists, including Kretschmer. Kretschmer was a proponent of constitutional theories which “explain criminality by reference to offenders’ body types, genetics, or external observable physical characteristics” (Schmalleger, 2004). Kretschmer developed a typology of criminals and argued that a high correlation existed between body type, personality type, and criminality.

The research of criminologist Ernst Kretschmer played a role in the history profiling and influenced modern profilers, by its emphasis on the use of body types to identify offenders. In fact, Dr. James Brussel contends that he based his famous profile of the Mad Bomber in 1957 on Kretschmer’s work (Brussel, 1968, p. 33). Based on crime scene details, Brussel believed that the Mad Bomber was suffering from paranoia. Kretschmer’s study of ten thousand patients in mental hospitals indicated that 85% of patients suffering with paranoia had athletic body types, which lead Brussel to conclude that the Mad Bomber most likely had a symmetrical build (Brussel, 1968, pp. 32–33). While many believe the research of Lombroso and Kretschmer is dubious and unfounded at best, the underlying idea that characteristics of criminals can be classified to develop a list of traits that may lead to the identification of an offender has lead some experts to believe that Lombroso and Kretschmer contributed to what modern profiling is today.

The story of 19th century serial killer Jack the Ripper has inspired countless books and movies. It has grabbed the attention of investigators and the public for over 100 years, captivating the imagination and motivating a number of historical investigations into the unsolved murders. Today, the public is still enthralled with serial murders and this fascination has grown to include profiling techniques, as well as modern profilers (Keppel, Weis, Brown & Welch, 2005). It is not surprising, therefore, to find that some of the earliest known written profiles were developed in the investigation of a serial killer. Unlike the heroes and heroines in modern movies however, the 19th century profilers didn’t always get their man in the end. 19th century profilers typically relied more on crime scene details and information, whereas today’s

stars are portrayed with seemingly psychic powers that are almost infallible. In addition, the profilers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were typically medical examiners and forensic detectives, whose profiles didn't wrap up the investigation neatly with a validation of their work in the apprehension of the suspect. The following sections illustrate the profiling efforts in the 19th century by medical examiners and forensic detectives.

With the release of Scotland Yard's home office files on the Jack the Ripper Murders in the late 1990's, came the earliest known profile of a killer. In November of 1888, Dr. Thomas Bond, a coroner for the Crown, submitted a letter to Scotland Yard following the murder of Mary Jane Kelly, pursuant to a request for his opinion considering the murders of several women in the Whitechapel area of London. Based on his observations of the Kelly murder scene and his subsequent autopsy of her, Dr. Bond provided characteristics about the killer in a letter to the Home Office dated 14 November 1888, including the following profile of the murderer, commonly referred to as Jack the Ripper:

- All five murders were no doubt committed by the same hand.
- In each case the mutilation was inflicted by a person who had no scientific nor anatomical knowledge. In my opinion he does not even possess the technical knowledge of a butcher or horse slaughterer or any person accustomed to cutting up dead animals.
- The murderer must have been a man of physical strength and of great coolness and daring. There is no evidence that he had an accomplice. He must in my opinion be a man subject to periodical attacks of Homicidal and erotic mania. The character of the mutilations indicate that the man may be in a condition sexually, that may be called satyriasis. It is of course possible that the Homicidal impulse may have developed from a revengeful or brooding condition of the mind, or that Religious Mania may have been the original disease, but I do not think either hypothesis is likely. The murderer in external appearance is quite likely to be a quiet inoffensive looking man probably middle-aged and neatly and respectfully dressed. I think he must be in the habit of wearing a cloak or overcoat or he could hardly have escaped notice in the streets if the blood on his hands or clothes were visible.
- Assuming the murderer to be such a person as I have just described he would probably be solitary and eccentric in his habits, also he is most likely to be a man without regular occupation, but with some small income or pension. He is possibly living among respectable persons who have some knowledge of his character and habits and who may have grounds for suspicion that he is not quite right in his mind at times. Such persons would probably be unwilling to communicate suspicions to the Police for fear of trouble or notoriety, whereas if there were a prospect of reward it might overcome their scruples. (Evans & Skinner, 2001).

From this description of the perpetrator, the newspaper reporters drew erroneous conclusions and broadcast their own misinformed theory. Some of the conclusions and theories appear shocking and ludicrous today. The following comment was published in the Editorial column of the Manchester Evening News on Tuesday, 13 November 1888: "By the way, the theory is again revived that the perpetrator of the Whitechapel murders is probably a woman

suffering from religious mania” (Evans & Skinner, 2001). Dr. Bond’s profile was very similar to the profiles of serial killers developed today. It was based on evidence and information from the crime scene and incorporating characteristics revealed by Dr. Bond’s experience as an autopsy surgeon and his knowledge of violent crimes and crime scenes. This profile meets the earlier definition of profiling from the Oxford English Dictionary and the definition currently utilized by the FBI. It certainly meets Howard Teton’s criteria of profiling as a “process of determining various aspects of a criminal’s personality makeup from his or her choice of actions before, during, and after a criminal act” (1995, p. 475). While the accuracy of this profile of Jack the Ripper cannot be determined since the Whitechapel murders were never solved, it still earns Dr. Thomas Bond the title as the first profiler.

### CONCLUSION

Despite claims that offender profiling has a relatively short history, there is clear and convincing evidence of early attempts at profiling in the nineteenth century. While many credit the FBI with the concept of offender profiling, historical references to criminal profiling techniques can be traced back to early 20th century profiles of the Boston Strangler and the Mad Bomber by Dr. James Brussel, the personality profile of Adolph Hitler constructed by Dr. William Langer in 1943 and the 1930 profile of the sadistic Vampire of Drusseldorf constructed by Dr. Karl Berg. A look at the 19th century also provided examples of offender profiling including the profiles of medical examiners Joseph Bell and Thomas Bond. The 19th century and the late 18th century also provided profiles based on the work of early investigators, consulting detectives, and practitioners such as Hans Gross, Francois Vidocq, and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Profiling has its early roots in criminology, including the work of criminal anthropologists Lombroso, and Kretschmer. Early criminologists posited the ideal that criminal psychology could be identified by physical characteristics and early practitioners made the connection between crime scenes and the offenders’ personality and psychological makeup. Throughout the history of profiling, criminologists, psychiatrists, detectives, investigative consultants, scholars, and researchers have contributed to today’s profiling techniques. Although the exact origin of offender profiling cannot be easily pinpointed, it is clear that several individuals have played key roles in its evolution in the past century.

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## Discussion Notes.

### **Session 1: The History of Homicide and Homicide Investigation.**

**Moderator: Jay Corzine**

**Recorder: Victoria Titterington**

**Mass Legal Executions in the American West.** Paul H. Blackman, Independence Institute and Vance McLaughlin, Jacksonville State University.

Roland Chilton: Are there implications of your findings for the U.S. treatment of enemy combatants.

Paul Blackman: Part of this is a question of seeing was as crime versus crime as war.

Vance McLaughlin: The last known case where this is illustrated was the German saboteur (as related to the Trials at Guantanamo). Franklin Roosevelt is quoted as saying, "I'm going to see these people killed." His attorney general responded, "We shouldn't do this." Yet the federal government and Roosevelt were intent.

Dallas Drake: When legal governments are clashing, they might use mass legal executions as a solution. Have you considered this, for example in Lebanon, where two governments are competing?

Paul Blackman: There is some recent discussion/dispute about how this plays itself out in civil wars; in such cases, the two sides know each other and like each other but, because of the threat of counter-conflict, you have to completely annihilate the enemy, unlike in wars. So, they're not completely comparable.

Alan DeLine: It's good to bring up the correlation between police action and Guantanamo.

**Robeson County, North Carolina Homicides: 1916 to 1941.** Vance McLaughlin, Jacksonville State University.

Dwayne Smith: In our research on capital juror composition, Robeson County plays a prominent role; addressing only the race/ethnicity of the suspect or victim is inadequate. We must also reckon with the racial/ethnic composition of juries.

Vance McLaughlin: The race/ethnicity is self-identified (as with all of us), which keeps us back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. We self-identify and then adopt the characteristics and lifestyle of that group.

Dwayne Smith: It's also important to note that the state of North Carolina uses "Indian," rather than "Native American."

Darryl Roberts: It may also be noted that many Indian ships that came to Baltimore, including large numbers of Lumbees who now live there.

Candice Batton: Did you get any sense of how many cases were incorrectly classified by the medical examiners?

Vance McLaughlin: I didn't confirm it by looking at police reports or newspapers but my sense is that the medical examiners did a good job; much better than UCR. Where we do often have a problem is when children get killed and whether these are called homicides or accidents.

Tom McEwen: Mike Maltz has done some research on this, the problems with UCR.

Marc Riedel: You get into this same problem in biostatistics records.

Vance McLaughlin: Regarding Candice's question; as of 1935, what we see is that many more categories of homicide were added to the death certificate form but the medical examiners did not bother to fill them out.

Darryl Roberts: There are some recent papers/evidence that motor vehicle accidents are actually suicides. Did you find many motor vehicle accidents/deaths were individual persons in cars?

Vance McLaughlin: They had a motor vehicle accident classification but most had multiple occupants in the cars.

Jay Corzine: Florida actually has a classification called "vessel" homicides (for boating accidents), for example, an intoxicated driving a boat that results in a homicide.

**History of Offender Profiling: The Role of Criminologists, Psychologists, Consulting Detectives, Medical Examiners, Forensic Experts, and the FBI.** Kristen Welch, Sam Houston State University and Robert Keppel, Seattle University.

Marc Riedel: You mentioned VidocQ. or Comment Did he actually become a police official?

Kristen Welch: Yes. He was originally a criminal, a very skilled escape artist; he became a police informant, in the development of the Royal Surrete'. He was the original "plain clothes detective' and was successful in recruiting criminals to inform on other criminals.

Marc Riedel: There is now an actual Vidocq Society. This is a small group of persons who provide assistance to the police.

Jamie Fox: In Howard Teton's research, there is a 77 percent agreement rate of profiles, when distinguishing between organized and disorganized killing.

Kristen Welch: In another study (about 1983), of 192 agencies, only 7-1/2 percent found profiling useful Most studies show that crime scene analysis is still a useful tool.

Vance McLaughlin: One of the main problems in court is that many of the FBI agents who testify are not from the Behavioral Science Unit (BSU). The initial jury believes them, but, upon appeal, this testimony does not hold up.

Kathleen Heide: Could you clarify the condition that was attributed to Jack the Ripper?

Kristen Welch: Satyriasis -This refers to an overactive or abnormal sexual appetite.

Tim Keen: What the BSU now uses is criminal investigative analysis, not “profiling.”

Was profiling useful to the witch hunters?

Kristen Welch: Yes, the so-called “witch prickers” used profiling to their purposes; these women included those who were midwives, those who had become Christians, those who were considered loudmouthed, etc.

Gabrielle Salfati: It’s a good idea to give courts more of the history and this is about good old-fashioned police investigative work. Research by Lawrence Allson indicates that 80 percent of information on profiling in court is unsubstantiated.

Kristen Welch: There are two reasons that judges have thrown profiling out: (1) it’s considered a “new” technique and (2) the reliability and validity of the technique is questionable. It has been allowed and successfully upheld as expert testimony, however, when the expert refers to the information as part of a crime scene analysis to show that cases are linked, via the modus operandi and signature.

Mark Zelig: As a forensic psychologist, I’ve written reports for a lot of these cases and this is the best 20-minutes history of this subject I’ve ever heard. Also, a useful tool is decision theory; in the end, we want to avoid false negatives.

Kristen Welch: Again, this tool is well-suited to identifying possibilities, as an investigative tool to identify suspects.

**Chapter Three:**  
**Session 2: Continuity and Change in Homicide.**

Moderator: Gary Jensen

**Murder in the Kingdom of the Mouse: The Orlando Homicide Spike of 2005-06.** *Jay Corzine, Lin Huff-Corzine, and Nicholas Libby, University of Central Florida.*

**Ten Years of NIBRS Reports and the Great American Crime Decline.** *Roland Chilton, University of Massachusetts-Amherst and Wendy Regoeczi, Cleveland State University.*

**Comparing Homicide in the Netherlands and England.** *Paul Smit, Ministry of Justice/WODC; Katharina Gruenberg, Lancaster University; and Kim Kraaijenbrink, Ministry of Justice/WODC.*

**Discussion** recorded by Chris Fisher

Homicides in Orlando, 2000-2006:  
A Descriptive Report  
(*in the program as Murder in the Kingdom of the Mouse: The Orlando Homicide Spike of 2005-06.*)

**Jay Corzine,**

**Lin Huff-Corzine,**

And

**Nicholas E. Libby**

University of Central Florida

**ABSTRACT**

From 2005 to 2006, Orlando, FL more than doubled its number of murders and its murder rate. This paper describes continuities and changes in the victims, suspects, and circumstances for Orlando murders from 2000 through 2006. We show that the homicide “spike” in Orlando was primarily due to an increase in robbery homicides. Additionally, there was a trend toward younger suspects than accompanied the increased level of homicides.

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This report provides a description of homicides<sup>1</sup> in the City of Orlando, Florida, with a focus on calendar year 2006. Although the impetus for this report is the sharp rise in the number of Orlando homicides beginning during the last half of 2005 and extending into 2006, numbers for earlier years, beginning with 2000, are included for comparative purposes. Knowing if there are changes in the characteristics of 2006 murders from the recent pattern in Orlando may provide important insights about the reason(s) for the spike in homicides. Therefore, the tables and figures in this report are organized to present annual data for the years 2000 through 2006.

Data for this report were provided by the Orlando Police Department (OPD) and are current as of January 2, 2007. It is very likely that some changes in the data will occur during the next several months. The changes will primarily result from additional suspects being identified by OPD and the clearance<sup>2</sup> of currently open cases through arrests or other means.

OPD data for each incident provide all known information about the homicide incidents, including the date; location; sex, race, and age of each victim; sex, race, and age of each suspect; the method of killing; the motive for the killing; and the case disposition. The numbers of victims and suspects in the file differs; specifically, there are 163 victims and 196 suspects or potential suspects. In some cases, a suspect has not been identified, and the actual number may be higher than 196 if multiple suspects are later identified for a homicide. The greater number of suspects than victims reflects the national pattern, that is, it is more likely for there to be multiple offenders than multiple victims in a homicide case. In fact, there have been three homicide cases with multiple victims (two in each case) and 19 cases with multiple suspects (from two to six) from 2000 through 2006 in Orlando. It is also important to note that

demographic information, i.e., age, sex, and race, will be more complete for victims than for offenders because, in most cases, these characteristics will be known as soon as the police have made a positive identification of the victim. On the other hand, suspects are sometimes not identified for weeks or months after a murder and, in some cases, they are never identified. Therefore, the demographic characteristics for a significant percentage of suspects in 2006 cases remain unknown at this time. Similarly, it is too soon to calculate a final clearance rate for 2006 homicide cases. Although many serious crimes, including murders, are cleared within a few hours or days after their occurrence, many criminal cases require a substantially longer period of time before the police are able to clear a case. And, some cases are not cleared.

From January 1, 2000, through December 31, 2006, there were 160 separate homicide incidents with a total of 163 victims known to the Orlando Police Department.

### **Annual Trends in Murder**

As shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, the annual number of homicides for the City of Orlando had been relatively stable for several years preceding 2006. The city had between 16 and 22 murder victims for the six years between 2000 and 2005, with the 49 homicides in 2006 representing a dramatic increase in the number of victims. Although this increase coincides with a rapid rise in the population of Orlando, 2006 also marked a major increase in the homicide rate, a measurement that controls for differences in population. With a census population of 185,951 in 2000, Orlando's homicide rate for that year was 11.29. Although the city's population increased significantly to an estimated 213,223 in 2005, the homicide rate for 2006 is 22.98, while that for 2005 was 10.31. Of course, all cities see annual fluctuations in crime levels, but a doubling of the homicide rate in one year is very unusual for a city as large as Orlando. It is clear that one or more factors that affect homicides changed in the city. For comparative purposes, the United States homicide rate for 2005 was 5.9, while that for the State of Florida was 5.0. The average homicide rate for cities with a populations between 100,000 and 249,999 was 8.2, and that for cities with populations between 250,000 and 499,999 was 12.9.<sup>3</sup>

Although it is obscured by the presentation of data by calendar years in Table 1, the recent increase in homicides actually began in the second half of 2005. More specifically, during the first six months of 2005, there were seven homicide victims in the City of Orlando, with an increase to 15 during the last six months of the year. The number of homicides doubled to 30 in the first six months of 2006, with another 19 occurring after the first of July. Overall, these numbers underscore that the widespread public perception of an increase in Orlando homicides that began in early 2006 reflected reality. Although there have been other periods with increased homicides in Orlando since the beginning of the decade, neither their duration nor intensity were of the same magnitude. Importantly, the number of homicides in 2006 dropped significantly in the last six months of the year. Although other factors may have played a role in this decline, on the basis of what is currently known, OPD's Operation Felony Focus that began in August and the deployment of patrol tactical squads by OPD in September are the most likely explanations for this decline.

### **Suspect Demographics**

Race. The race of suspects is detailed in Table 2 and Figure 2. Consistent with the race of victims, Blacks are over represented among homicide suspects in relation to their numbers in the Orlando population. The percentage of Black offenders in 2006 murders, however, is similar to most previous years since 2000.



Sex. Table 3 and Figure 3 present data on the sex composition of homicide suspects. Only seven of 157 suspects for whom sex is known are women. This should not be surprising. Although the percentage of women among homicide suspects in Orlando is less than the national average, males are strongly over represented among persons who kill others, both in the United States and other nations.

Age. Table 4 and Figure 4 clearly show that the majority of murder suspects in Orlando are in the two youngest age groups. Specifically, 65% of the suspects from 2000 through 2006 are between the ages of 0-30 (the youngest suspect during this period is a 13 year-old). This percentage is 76% for 2006, however, and it is alarming that 18 of 46, or 39%, of suspects for 2006 are 20 and younger. Although the percentage in this age group for 2006 is comparable to that for 2000, it is significantly higher than comparable numbers for more recent years.

It should be noted that the over representation of persons 20 and under as suspects in 2006 reflects, in part, the greater involvement of this age group in incidents with multiple suspects. Specifically, the 18 suspects were involved in nine separate incidents in 2006, and it is more likely that homicides involving persons 30 and under will involve multiple perpetrators. But the nine incidents compare with two in 2005 and four in 2004 committed by persons 20 and under. The violence committed by younger people in Orlando should be the focus of additional research. The involvement of at least 18 people under the age of 21 in 2006 murders is a cause for major concern for the police and the larger Orlando community. Additionally, 12 of the suspects between the ages of 21 and 30 are age 25 and under.

### **Victim Demographics**

Race. Victims' race is displayed in Table 5 and Figure 5. Over the period beginning in 2000, 62% of the murder victims in Orlando have been Black compared to an estimated 26.85% of the city population that was Black in 2000. These findings reflect national figures that show an over representation of Blacks among murder victims. Although the table includes separate figures for Whites and Hispanics, these data are should be interpreted with caution for years prior to 2006. Visual inspection of the OPD data identified some male victims with Hispanic surnames, but who were listed as White. Consultation with homicide detectives familiar with specific cases may be required before a valid identification of these individuals as White or Hispanic can be made. The same limitation applies to the race of suspects reported above.

Sex. In the United States, men are over represented among homicide victims and, not surprisingly, the same is true for the City of Orlando. As indicated in Table 6 and Figure 6, approximately three-fourths (77.8%) of victims are male.

Age. Table 7 and Figure 7 report the distribution of homicide victims grouped by age. Approximately one-half of homicide victims are found in the two youngest groups comprising persons 30 and younger. As with victim's race and sex, there are no important differences in the age distribution of victims from 2000 onward.

### **Weapons**

Table 8 and Figure 8 include data on the weapons used in Orlando homicides from 2000 through 2006. "Unarmed/Personal" is used to classify cases where deaths result from beating, kicking, or choking. "Blunt objects" refer to tire irons, baseball bats, pool cues, and any other object that is used as a club. Reflecting the pattern for the United States, the majority of murders in Orlando (71.2% for the seven years combined) are committed with guns. The percentage of 2006 homicides committed with firearms is similar to other years since 2000, so there is no

indication that the murder spike in 2006 reflected an increased use of firearms in robberies and other crimes. Whether there was an increase in the availability of illegal firearms or more lethal firearms, e.g., higher caliber guns, cannot be determined with available data but is a question worthy of further attention.

It is noteworthy that the percentage of guns used as murder weapons in Orlando murders is higher than the national average. There are annual fluctuations but, for the past several years, between 60 and 65 percent of all homicides in the United States are committed with firearms, with the corresponding statistic for Orlando being several percentage points higher.

### **Motives**

Table 9 and Figure 9 detail the motives for Orlando murders from 2000 on. Overall, the most common motives have been robberies (37.9%), arguments/disputes/ fights (14.3%), and domestic violence situations (19.3%). When interpreting the numbers in this table, however, it is important to remember that many murders have complex motives or circumstances that cannot be adequately represented by a single category. For example, a homicide resulting from an argument over drugs will typically be classified as an “argument/dispute/fight,” and a homicide resulting from the robbery of a drug dealer will typically be classified as a “robbery.” As indicated by these two examples, it is important to note that Table 9 underestimates the role of illegal drugs and drug dealing in Orlando murders. Data not shown indicate that, in 2006, 79.6% of the homicides in the City of Orlando were drug-related.<sup>4</sup>

An important change from 2005 to 2006 is the increase in both the number of murders associated with robberies, from four to 12, and their percentage among all murders, from 19% to 34.3%. The preliminary analysis supports the conclusion that an increase in killings during robberies is one of the factors behind the recent murder spike in Orlando. On the other hand, it is certainly not the only factor. The percentage of murders during robberies was higher in both 2000 and 2001 than in 2006.

For the other major motives, arguments/fights/disputes increased from zero incidents during the previous two years to ten in 2006. It is problematic that a city with a population of over 200,000 would have no murders linked to arguments for two years, and we will check with OPD to determine if there was a change in coding procedures. The percentage of domestic homicides is at its low point, with only 9% of homicides in 2006 falling into the category.

### **Clearances**

The disposition of homicide cases by year is shown in Table 10 and Figure 10. A total of 68.1% of murders from 2000 through 2006 have been cleared. It should be noted that OPD’s record compares very favorably with national data for murder clearances. In 2005, 62.1% of murders nationwide and 54.5% of murders in cities with populations of 250,000 to 499,999 were cleared (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2004). Although Orlando clearances were below the city’s seven-year average in 2005, 68% of 2006 homicide cases have been cleared, and this number will most likely increase as OPD has more time to work open cases.

### **Future Steps**

First, we are currently analyzing the location of Orlando homicides in relationship to weapon used, motives, and other characteristics. Along these lines, we have recently obtained the sector designations used by OPD to record the location of criminal cases. This will be an important step, especially for increasing our understanding of changes in murder patterns that are

linked to specific neighborhoods. Within the limits imposed by the data, we will provide answers to questions from OPD, the Mayor's Safe Orlando Task Force, and others.

Second, we will investigate the possibility of obtaining additional information from the OPD about homicide incidents that are not routinely collected as part of the United Crime Reports. Reflecting the predominance of firearms among murder weapons in Orlando, variables of particular interest include the caliber of crime guns, their origin, and their legal status.

For homicide victims killed by firearms, the location of the bullet wound(s) is also important in determining the offender's motivation. That is, both head wounds and multiple wounds are more indicative of an "execution" in which the killer purposely sought out the victim, rather than an unplanned confrontation that turned deadly. As a final suggestion, the relationship between the victim(s) and suspect(s), the victims' and suspects' educational backgrounds and criminal histories, especially prior arrest(s) for drug offenses, are important pieces of information in understanding the past histories of persons who are more likely to become involved in homicides in Orlando. This information may prove useful in designing intervention programs targeted toward specific demographic segments of the population.

Third, we recommend the establishment of an ongoing project to monitor homicides and perhaps other violent crimes in the City of Orlando with the Orlando Police Department and the Sociology Department at the University of Central Florida as primary partners. OPD would provide data and periodic consultations with UCF researchers. Faculty and advanced graduate students at UCF would maintain an up-to-date data set, analyze the data for trends, conduct analyses for OPD and other city agencies, and issue an annual report. In addition to providing periodic information on the nature of violent crime in Orlando and information to the OPD, it is hoped that this project could identify future murder spikes in their beginning stages to allow for early intervention and rapid reduction. The apparent success of OPD strategies, i.e., Operation Felony Focus and the deployment of the tactical squads, to reduce the recent increase in murders underscores that an early response is essential.

#### **Footnotes**

1. In this report, the term "homicide" is used in lieu of the legal terms "murder" or "murder and non-negligent manslaughter." Homicides include justifiable homicides as well as criminal ones.
2. A criminal case is cleared when (1) the suspect has been arrested, (2) the suspect has died, or (3) the homicide has been ruled as justifiable.
3. The estimated resident population of Orlando is between 100,000 and 249,999, but the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research estimates Orlando's daily service population as 320,000, placing it in the next higher category of cities used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Use of the service population is generally preferable to the resident population for the comparisons made in this report.
4. A homicide is classified as "drug-related" if the precipitating dispute or altercation is over drugs or if the victim(s) and/or suspect(s) have criminal histories involving drugs.

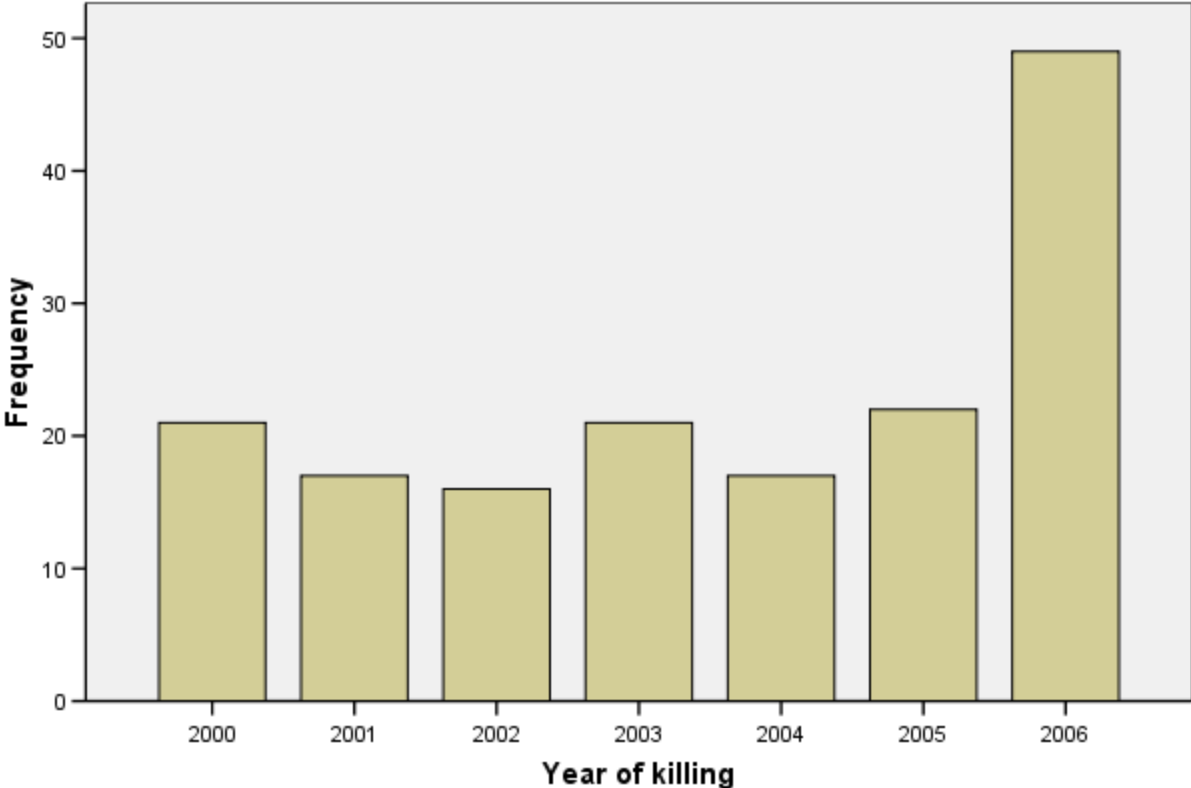
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Washington, D.C.: U. S. Government Printing Office.

**Table 1: Number of Homicide Victims by Year**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
2000	21	12.9	12.9	12.9
2001	17	10.4	10.4	23.3
2002	16	9.8	9.8	33.1
2003	21	12.9	12.9	46.0
2004	17	10.4	10.4	56.4
2005	22	13.5	13.5	69.9
2006	49	30.1	30.1	100.0
Total	163	100.0	100.0	

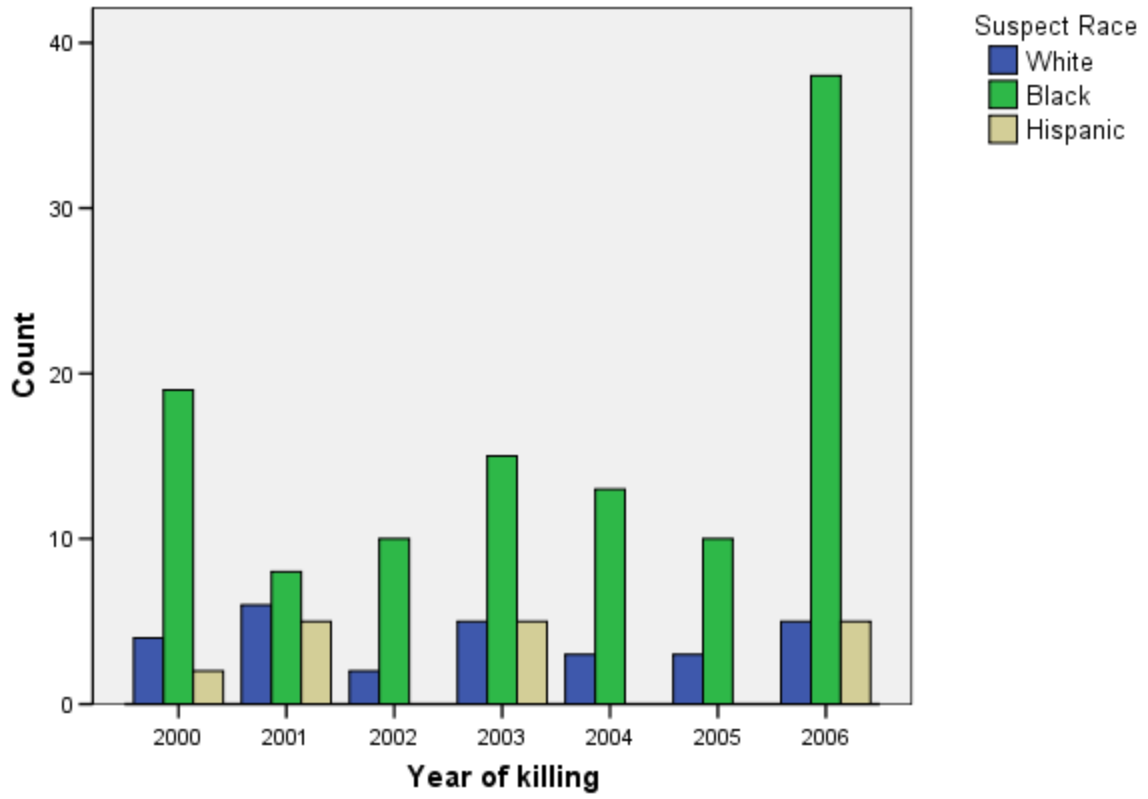
Figure 1: Number of Homicide Victims by Year



**Table 2: Suspect Race by Year**

			<i>Year of killing</i>						<i>Total</i>	
			<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	
<i>Suspect Race</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Count</i>	4	6	2	5	3	3	5	28
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	16.0%	31.6%	16.7%	20.0%	18.8%	23.1%	10.4%	17.7%
	<i>Black</i>	<i>Count</i>	19	8	10	15	13	10	38	113
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	76.0%	42.1%	83.3%	60.0%	81.3%	76.9%	79.2%	71.5%
	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Count</i>	2	5	0	5	0	0	5	17
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	8.0%	26.3%	.0%	20.0%	.0%	.0%	10.4%	10.8%
<i>Total</i>		<i>Count</i>	25	19	12	25	16	13	48	158
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 2: Suspect Race by Year

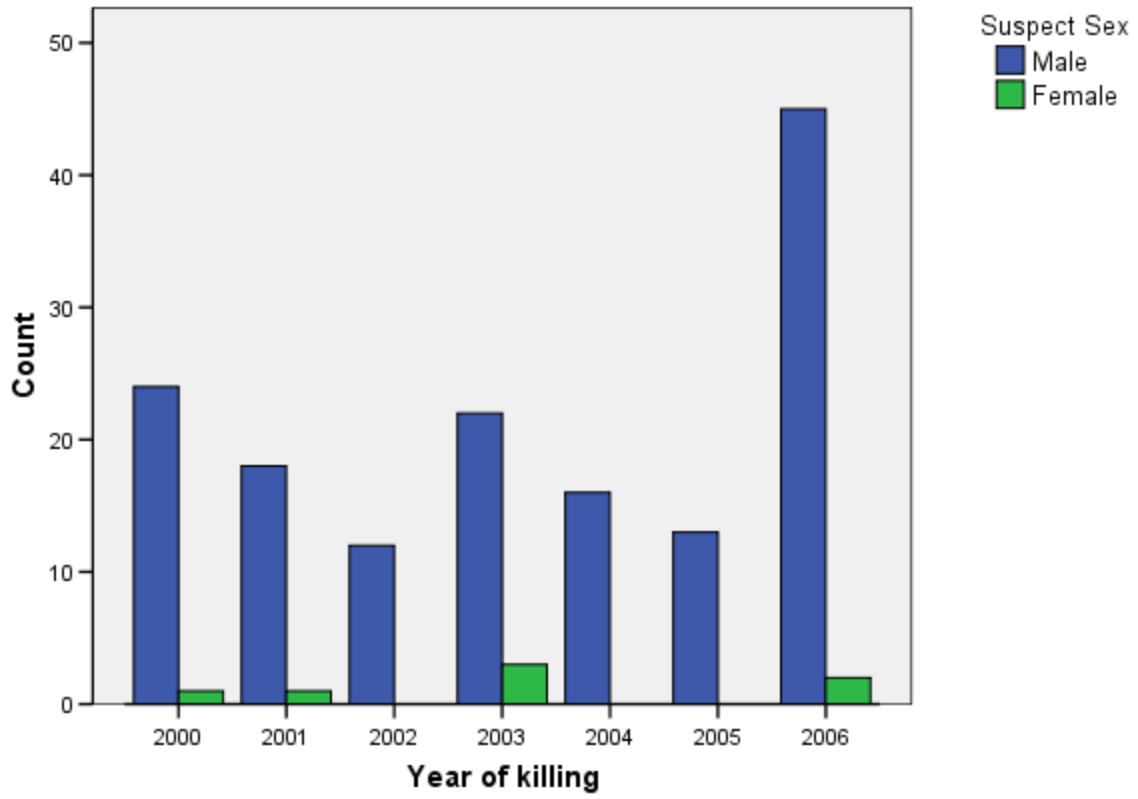


**Table 3: Suspect Sex by Year**

		<i>Year of killing</i>								<i>Total</i>
			<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	
<i>Suspect Sex</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Count</i>	24	18	12	22	16	13	45	150
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	96.0%	94.7%	100.0%	88.0%	100.0%	100.0%	95.7%	95.5%
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Count</i>	1	1	0	3	0	0	2	7
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	4.0%	5.3%	.0%	12.0%	.0%	.0%	4.3%	4.5%
<i>Total</i>		<i>Count</i>	25	19	12	25	16	13	47	157
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%



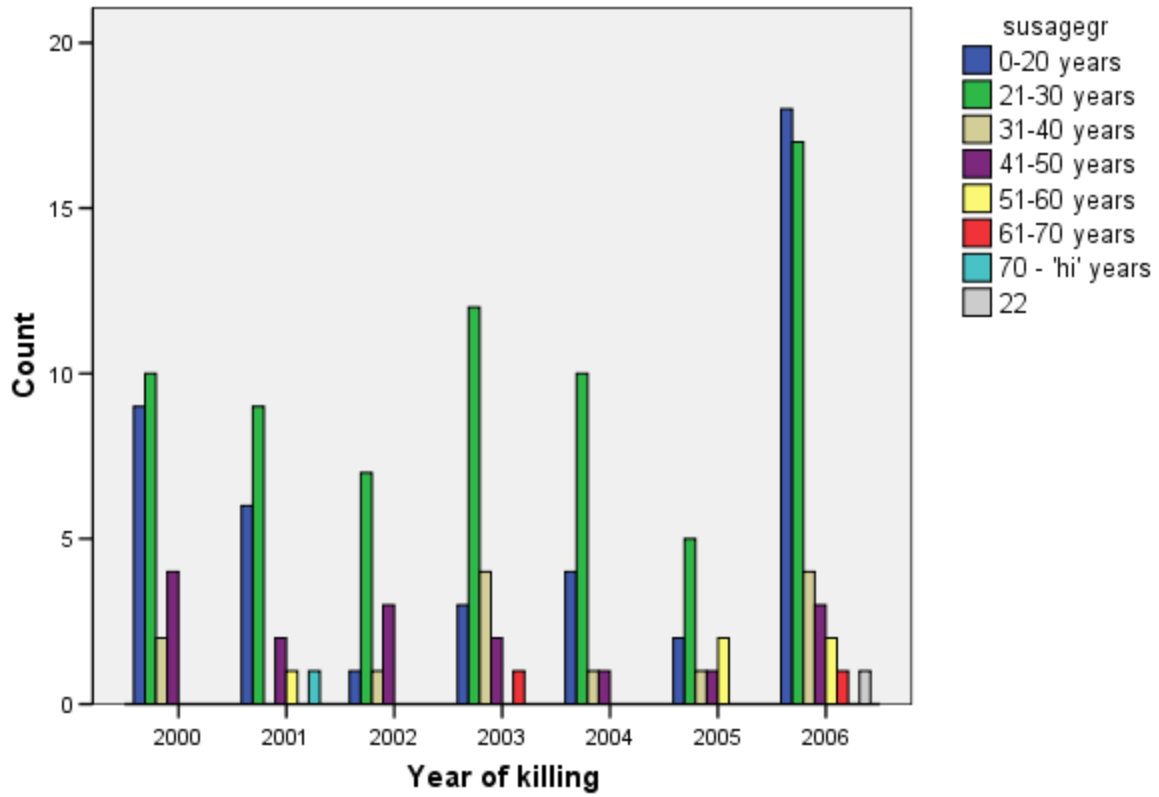
Figure 3: Suspect Sex by Year



**Table 4: Suspect Age Group by Year**

			Year of killing						Total		
			2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005		2006	
<i>Suspect Age Group</i>	0-20 years	<i>Count</i>	9	6	1	3	4	2	18	43	
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	36.0%	31.6%	8.3%	13.6%	25.0%	18.2%	39.1%	28.5%	
	21-30 years	<i>Count</i>	10	9	7	12	10	5	17	70	
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	40.0%	47.4%	58.3%	54.5%	62.5%	45.5%	37.0%	46.4%	
	31-40 years	<i>Count</i>	2	0	1	4	1	1	4	13	
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	8.0%	.0%	8.3%	18.2%	6.3%	9.1%	8.7%	8.6%	
	41-50 years	<i>Count</i>	4	2	3	2	1	1	3	16	
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	16.0%	10.5%	25.0%	9.1%	6.3%	9.1%	6.5%	10.6%	
	51-60 years	<i>Count</i>	0	1	0	0	0	2	2	5	
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	5.3%	.0%	.0%	.0%	18.2%	4.3%	3.3%	
	61-70 years	<i>Count</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	.0%	.0%	4.5%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	1.3%	
	70 - 'hi' years	<i>Count</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	5.3%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.7%	
	22	<i>Count</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	.7%	
	<i>Total</i>		<i>Count</i>	25	19	12	22	16	11	46	151
			<i>% within Year of killing</i>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

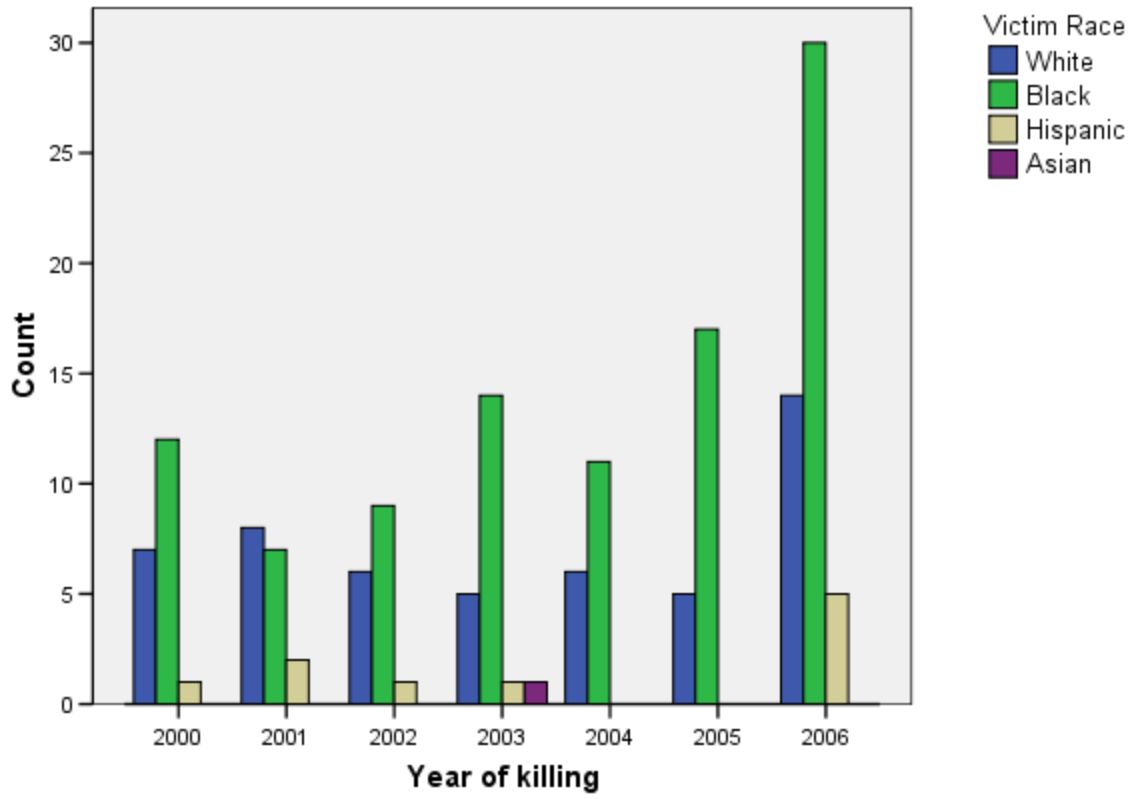
Figure 4: Suspect Age by Year



**Table 5: Victim Race by Year**

			<i>Year of killing</i>						<i>Total</i>	
			<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	
<i>Victim Race</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Count</i>	7	8	6	5	6	5	14	51
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	35.0%	47.1%	37.5%	23.8%	35.3%	22.7%	28.6%	31.5%
	<i>Black</i>	<i>Count</i>	12	7	9	14	11	17	30	100
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	60.0%	41.2%	56.3%	66.7%	64.7%	77.3%	61.2%	61.7%
	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>Count</i>	1	2	1	1	0	0	5	10
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	5.0%	11.8%	6.3%	4.8%	.0%	.0%	10.2%	6.2%
	<i>Asian</i>	<i>Count</i>	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	.0%	.0%	4.8%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.6%
<i>Total</i>		<i>Count</i>	20	17	16	21	17	22	49	162
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

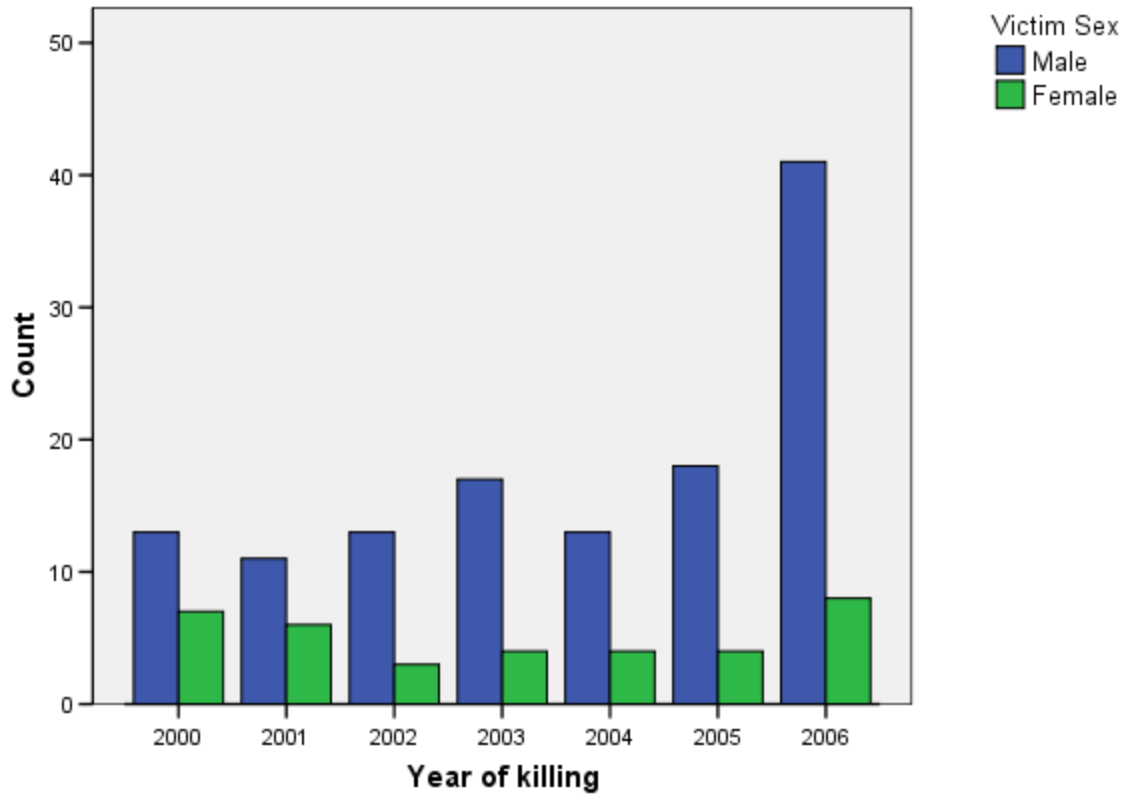
Figure 5: Victim Race by Year



**Table 6: Victim Sex by Year**

			<i>Year of killing</i>							<i>Total</i>
			<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	
<i>Victim Sex</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Count</i>	13	11	13	17	13	18	41	126
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	65.0%	64.7%	81.3%	81.0%	76.5%	81.8%	83.7%	77.8%
	<i>Female</i>	<i>Count</i>	7	6	3	4	4	4	8	36
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	35.0%	35.3%	18.8%	19.0%	23.5%	18.2%	16.3%	22.2%
<i>Total</i>		<i>Count</i>	20	17	16	21	17	22	49	162
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 6: Victim Sex by Year

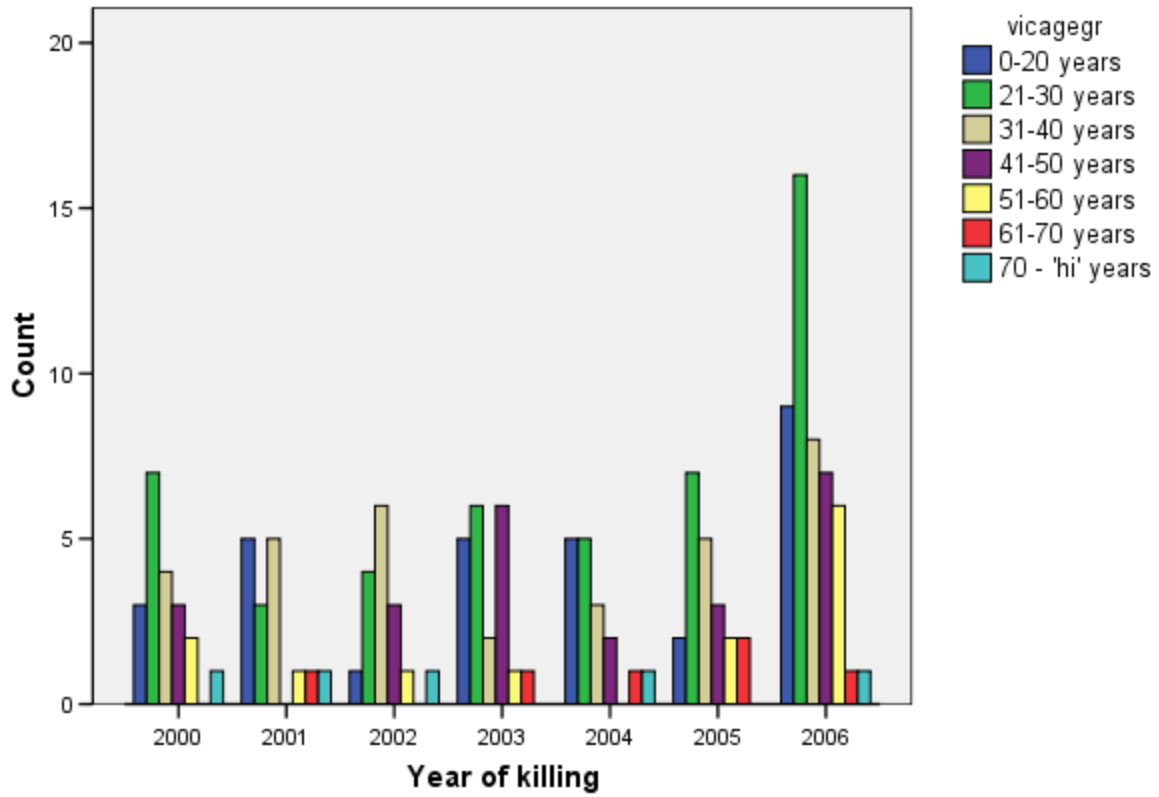


**Table 7: Victim Age Group by Year**

			Year of killing						Total		
			2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005		2006	
Victim Age Group	0-20 years	Count	3	5	1	5	5	2	9	30	
		% within Year of killing	15.0%	31.3%	6.3%	23.8%	29.4%	9.5%	18.8%	18.9%	
	21-30 years	Count	7	3	4	6	5	7	16	48	
		% within Year of killing	35.0%	18.8%	25.0%	28.6%	29.4%	33.3%	33.3%	30.2%	
	31-40 years	Count	4	5	6	2	3	5	8	33	
		% within Year of killing	20.0%	31.3%	37.5%	9.5%	17.6%	23.8%	16.7%	20.8%	
	41-50 years	Count	3	0	3	6	2	3	7	24	
		% within Year of killing	15.0%	.0%	18.8%	28.6%	11.8%	14.3%	14.6%	15.1%	
	51-60 years	Count	2	1	1	1	0	2	6	13	
		% within Year of killing	10.0%	6.3%	6.3%	4.8%	.0%	9.5%	12.5%	8.2%	
	61-70 years	Count	0	1	0	1	1	2	1	6	
		% within Year of killing	.0%	6.3%	.0%	4.8%	5.9%	9.5%	2.1%	3.8%	
	70 - 'hi' years	Count	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	5	
		% within Year of killing	5.0%	6.3%	6.3%	.0%	5.9%	.0%	2.1%	3.1%	
	Total		Count	20	16	16	21	17	21	48	159
			% within Year of killing	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%



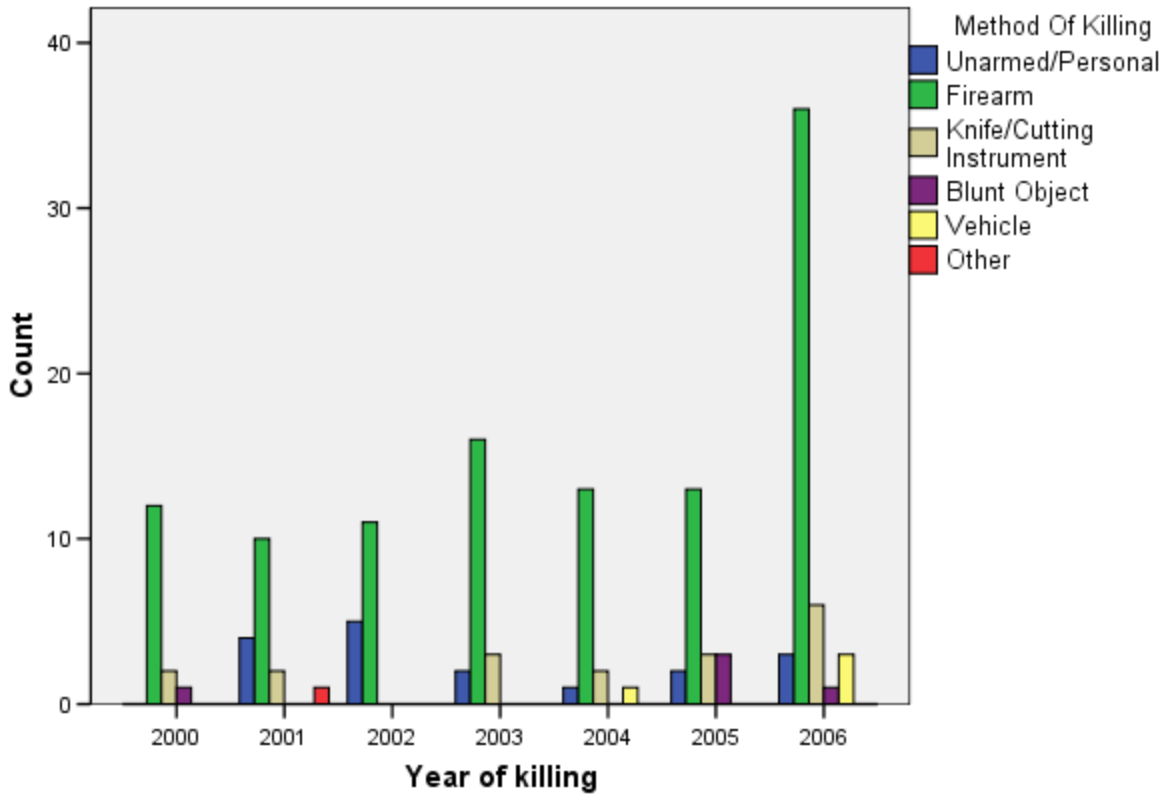
Figure 7: Victim Age Group by Year



**Table 8: Weapon Used by Year**

		<i>Year of killing</i>								<i>Total</i>
		<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>		
<i>Weapon Type</i>	<i>Unarmed/ Personal</i>	<i>Count</i>	0	4	5	2	1	2	3	17
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	23.5%	31.3%	9.5%	5.9%	9.5%	6.1%	10.9%
	<i>Firearm</i>	<i>Count</i>	12	10	11	16	13	13	36	111
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	80.0%	58.8%	68.8%	76.2%	76.5%	61.9%	73.5%	71.2%
	<i>Knife/Cutting Instrument</i>	<i>Count</i>	2	2	0	3	2	3	6	18
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	13.3%	11.8%	.0%	14.3%	11.8%	14.3%	12.2%	11.5%
	<i>Blunt Object</i>	<i>Count</i>	1	0	0	0	0	3	1	5
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	6.7%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	14.3%	2.0%	3.2%
	<i>Vehicle</i>	<i>Count</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	4
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	5.9%	.0%	6.1%	2.6%
	<i>Other</i>	<i>Count</i>	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	5.9%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.6%
<i>Total</i>		<i>Count</i>	15	17	16	21	17	21	49	156
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

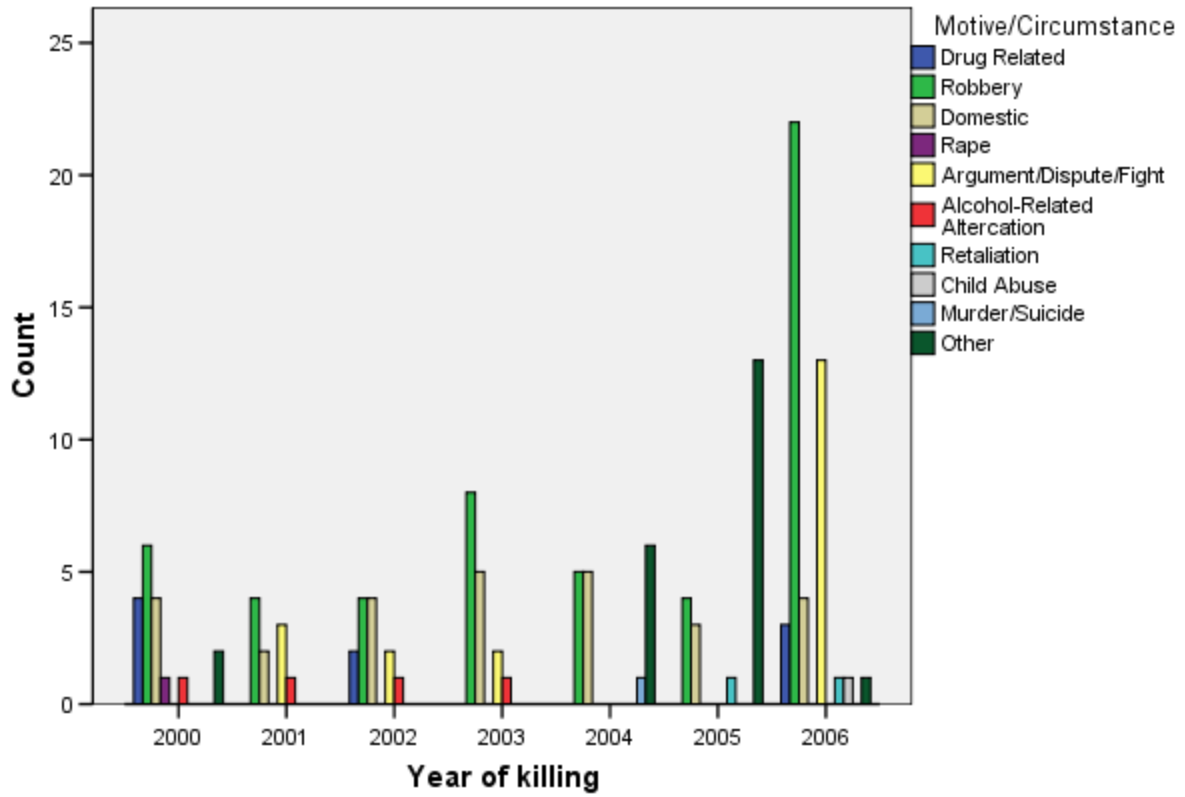
Figure 8: Weapon Used by Year



**Table 9: Motive for Homicide by Year**

		Year of killing							Total	
		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006		
<i>Motive</i>	<i>Drug Related</i>	<i>Count</i>	4	0	2	0	0	0	3	9
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	22.2%	.0%	15.4%	.0%	.0%	.0%	6.7%	6.4%
	<i>Robbery</i>	<i>Count</i>	6	4	4	8	5	4	22	53
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	33.3%	40.0%	30.8%	50.0%	29.4%	19.0%	48.9%	37.9%
	<i>Domestic</i>	<i>Count</i>	4	2	4	5	5	3	4	27
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	22.2%	20.0%	30.8%	31.3%	29.4%	14.3%	8.9%	19.3%
	<i>Rape</i>	<i>Count</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	5.6%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.7%
	<i>Argument/Dispute/ Fight</i>	<i>Count</i>	0	3	2	2	0	0	13	20
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	30.0%	15.4%	12.5%	.0%	.0%	28.9%	14.3%
	<i>Alcohol-Related Altercation</i>	<i>Count</i>	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	4
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	5.6%	10.0%	7.7%	6.3%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.9%
	<i>Retaliation</i>	<i>Count</i>	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	4.8%	2.2%	1.4%
	<i>Child Abuse</i>	<i>Count</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	2.2%	.7%
	<i>Murder/Suicide</i>	<i>Count</i>	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	5.9%	.0%	.0%	.7%
	<i>Other</i>	<i>Count</i>	2	0	0	0	6	13	1	22
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	11.1%	.0%	.0%	.0%	35.3%	61.9%	2.2%	15.7%
<i>Total</i>		<i>Count</i>	18	10	13	16	17	21	45	140
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

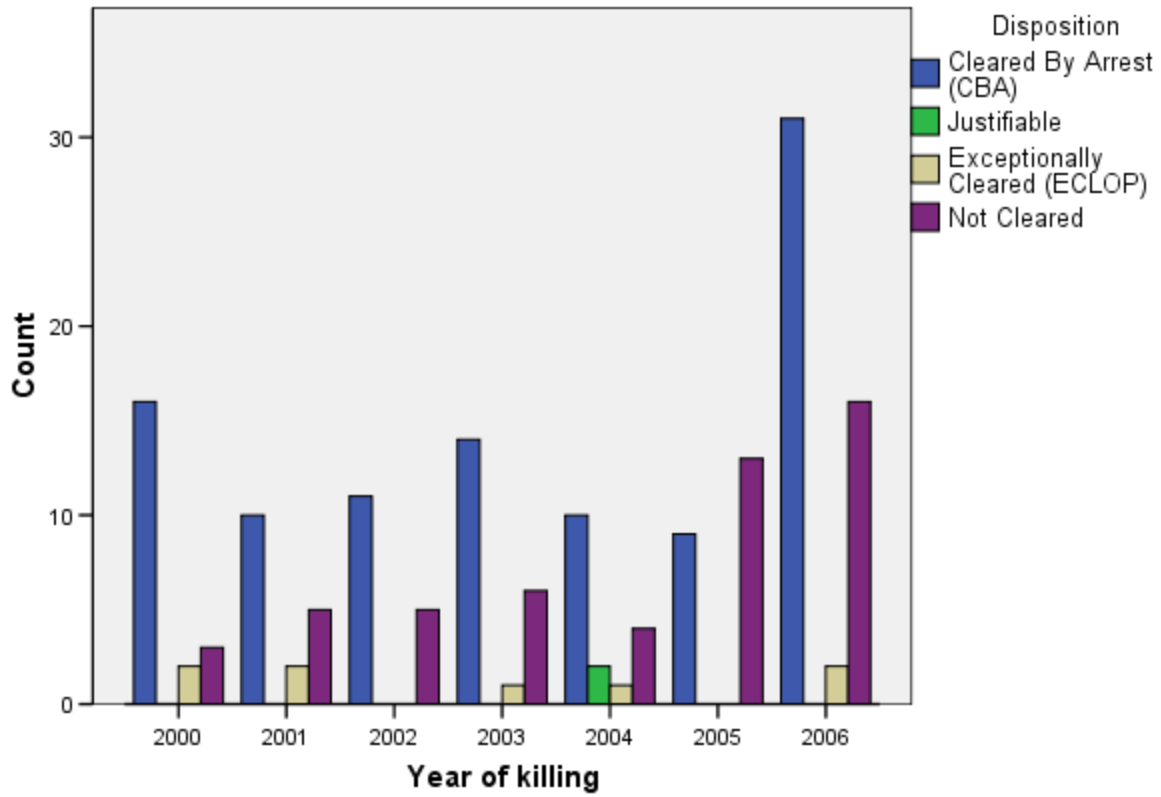
Figure 9: Motive for Homicide by Year



**Table10: Case Disposition by Year**

			<i>Year of killing</i>							<i>Total</i>
			2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	
<i>Disposition</i>	<i>Cleared By Arrest (CBA)</i>	<i>Count</i>	16	10	11	14	10	9	31	101
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	76.2%	58.8%	68.8%	66.7%	58.8%	40.9%	63.3%	62.0%
	<i>Justifiable</i>	<i>Count</i>	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	11.8%	.0%	.0%	1.2%
	<i>Exceptionally Cleared (ECLOP)</i>	<i>Count</i>	2	2	0	1	1	0	2	8
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	9.5%	11.8%	.0%	4.8%	5.9%	.0%	4.1%	4.9%
	<i>Not Cleared</i>	<i>Count</i>	3	5	5	6	4	13	16	52
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	14.3%	29.4%	31.3%	28.6%	23.5%	59.1%	32.7%	31.9%
<i>Total</i>		<i>Count</i>	21	17	16	21	17	22	49	163
		<i>% within Year of killing</i>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Figure 10: Disposition by Year



# Ten Years of NIBRS Reports and the Great American Crime Decline

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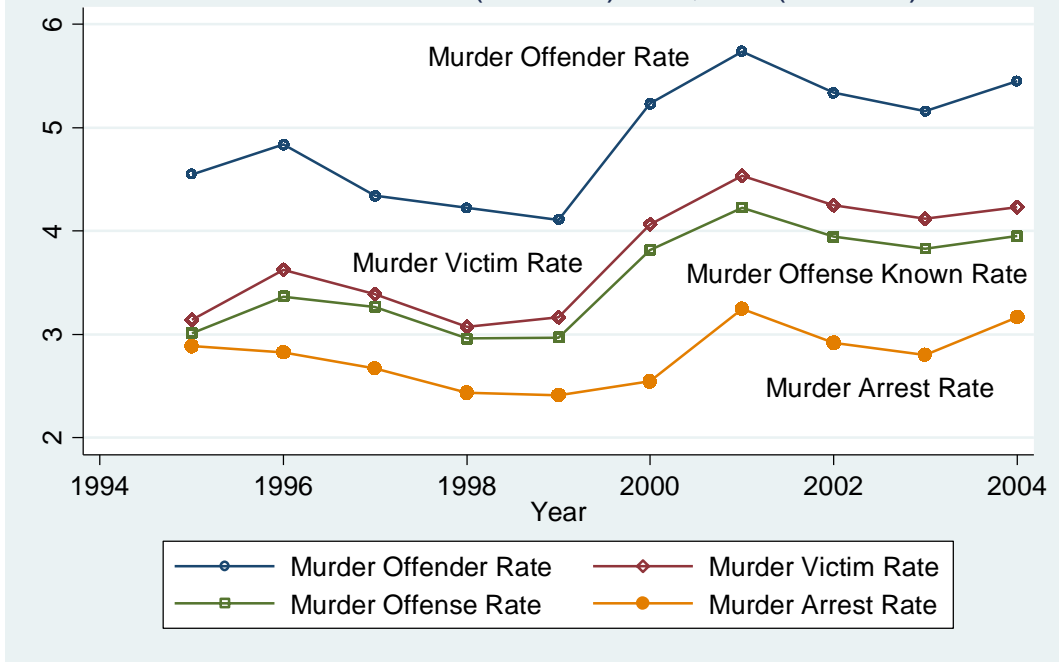
Homicide Research Working Group, Minneapolis     June 2007

## **Homicide Trends**

This examination of National Incident-Based Reporting System records for 1995 through 2004 is focused on the celebrated crime decline from 1993 to 2000. Nationally, homicide rates decreased from 1980 to 1985, increased from 1985 to 1991, and then decreased for the remainder of the 1990s. Robbery and aggravated assault rates declined as well. Franklin Zimring, in his book *The Great American Crime Decline* (2007) implies that crime decreased in all areas of the country and in cities of all sizes from about 1993 to 2000. Since NIBRS data are only available for 1995 through 2005, the basic question in this discussion concerns the extent to which the NIBRS crime patterns followed the national trends from 1995 or 1996 through 2000 or 2001. Figure 1 cannot be used to answer this question because of the impact on homicide rates of a steady increase in the number of police departments participating in the NIBRS program. This increasing participation makes interpretation difficult because the set of 2,192 places sending data in 2004 includes several large departments that did not send counts in 1995. The sharp increase in the murder rate from 1999 to 2001, for example, is best explained by the entrance of Memphis TN and Austin TX into the NIBRS program in 2000.

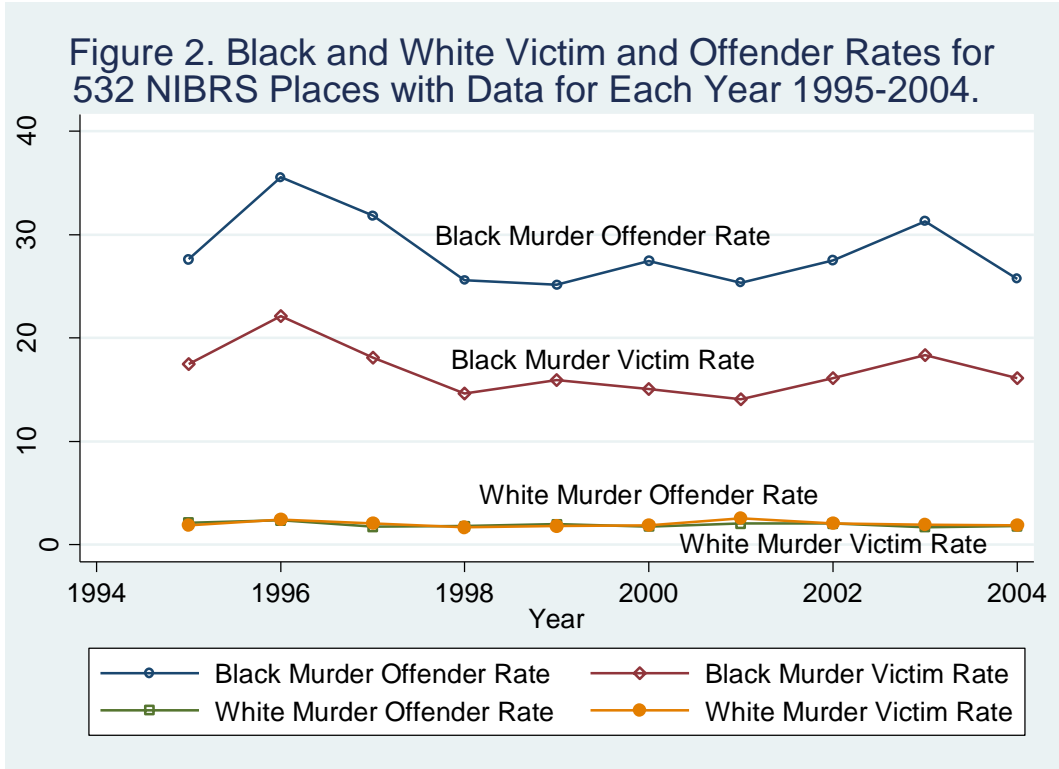


Figure 1. Murder Offender, Victim, Offense, and Arrest Rates for 613 Places (in 1995) to 2,192 (in 2004)



When the analysis is limited to those cities providing NIBRS data for each year from 1995 through 2004, a very different picture emerges. The basic difference between Figure 1 and Figure 2 is that the Figure 2 trends reflect only the reports of 532 cities for which NIBRS reports were available for the ten-year period.

For this reason, Figure 2 is a more useful presentation of NIBRS homicide rates for the period. But to underscore the difference between Tables 1 and 2, some background information might be useful. NIBRS is an ongoing effort to upgrade a Uniform Crime Reports program that was designed in 1929. The UCR program has been undergoing conversion from a paper and pencil summary statistics program to a computerized incident-based system (NIBRS) since about 1980. By the end of 2004, 4,525 police agencies in thirty states used NIBRS to send crime reports to the Uniform Crime Reports program. These agencies sent reports on 46 offenses committed in four and one-half million incidents and represent about 20 percent of the U.S population. Our long-term goal is to see if a comparison of the trends suggested by NIBRS with those suggested by the traditional UCR program will provide useful detail on the types of crime reported as increasing or decreasing and the periods of time involved. We think looking at the trends for specific offenses is a useful way to assess some explanations for changes in the crime rates. The race-specific trends shown in the tables provide additional insight into the changes in violent crime rates during the 1990s.



The victim and offender homicide rates in Figure 2 were computed by first summing, by race, the annual homicide victim and offender counts reported by 532 cities and towns, whose police departments sent NIBRS reports for every year from 1995 through 2004. These yearly totals were then divided by the total white or black population of the same set of cities to create homicide rates for each year. We created population estimates for the years between censuses by interpolating census counts from the 1990 and the 2000 census. The resulting ratios, of the annual homicide counts divided by the annual population estimates, were multiplied by 100,000 to create the annual homicide offense rates per 100,000 residents.

The first usable NIBRS data set had information from 1,255 police agencies for 1995. In 1996 1,487 police agencies sent NIBRS data. By 2004, the number of participating agencies had increased to 4,525. Over one thousand of the agencies reporting in 1995 were still reporting in 2004. Of the 1,158 agencies that sent NIBRS reports for 1995 through 2004, 532 were local city and town agencies. The others were state, county, and college police departments. This analysis is limited to city agencies to make the assignment of census counts simpler and more consistent. In Figure 1, where we used the increasing number of the cities and towns that reported each year, the counts and rates are based on reports from 613 places in 1995, 767 in 1996, and eventually 2,192 places in 2004. In Figure 1, each year's rates are rates computed for a different set of cities. We used the 532 cities and towns for which reports were available for 1995 through 2004 to concentrate on the same set of agencies for the ten-year period. The rates in Figure 2, and the figures that follow it were created using this set of 532 cities and towns.

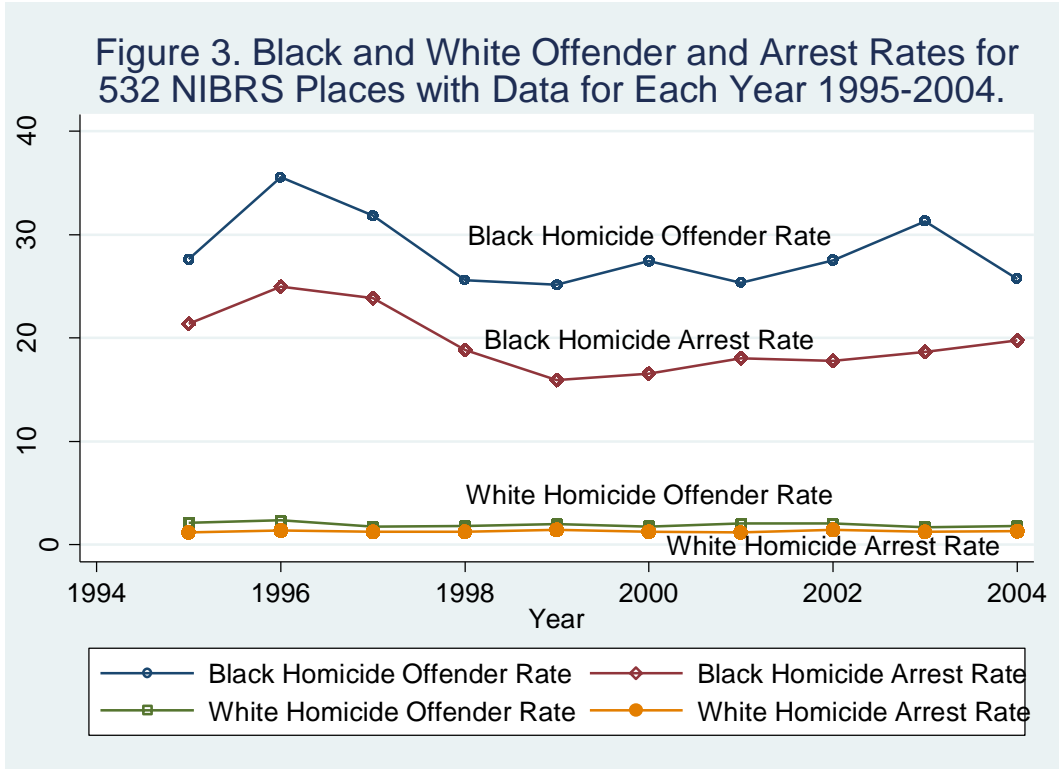


Figure 2, provides some the first answers to our questions about NIBRS places and the 1990s drop in violent crime. Although not continuous, the black homicide victim rate in Figure 2 dropped about 36 percent from 1996 to 2001. However, 34 percent of this decrease occurred from 1996 to 1998. After this two-year drop, the black homicide victim rate was relatively stable until it started up again after 2001. The white homicide victim rate followed a similar pattern. A 30 percent drop from 1996 to 1998 was followed by a fluctuating but almost stable rate through 2004. Disregarding race by using offense known rather than victim, offender, or arrest counts, the homicide offense rate for these 532 places fluctuated over the decade of reporting. The homicide offense known rate appears as a straight line in Figure 8 because it was essentially 3 per 100,000 residents for every year except 1996 when it is almost 4 per 100,000. None of the victim or offender rates in Figure 2 shows a consistent or sustained drop in homicide from 1995 to 2000.

The 1996 to 2001 decrease in the white homicide victim rate of about 23 percent in Figure 2 is not as large as the drop in the black rate, but more importantly it is much lower, on average, than the black homicide victim rate. The average black homicide victim rate for 1995 to 2001 was 17.2 per 100,000 black residents in comparison with an average white victims rate for the same period of 1.9 per 100,000. The chance of being a murder victim in this set of cities was nine times as high if you were black than if you were white. Still, because the white murder victim rate was so low and because about 85 percent of the residents of these cities were white, the offense known murder rate for these places was comparatively low from 1995 to 2000, with about 3 murders per 100,000 residents.

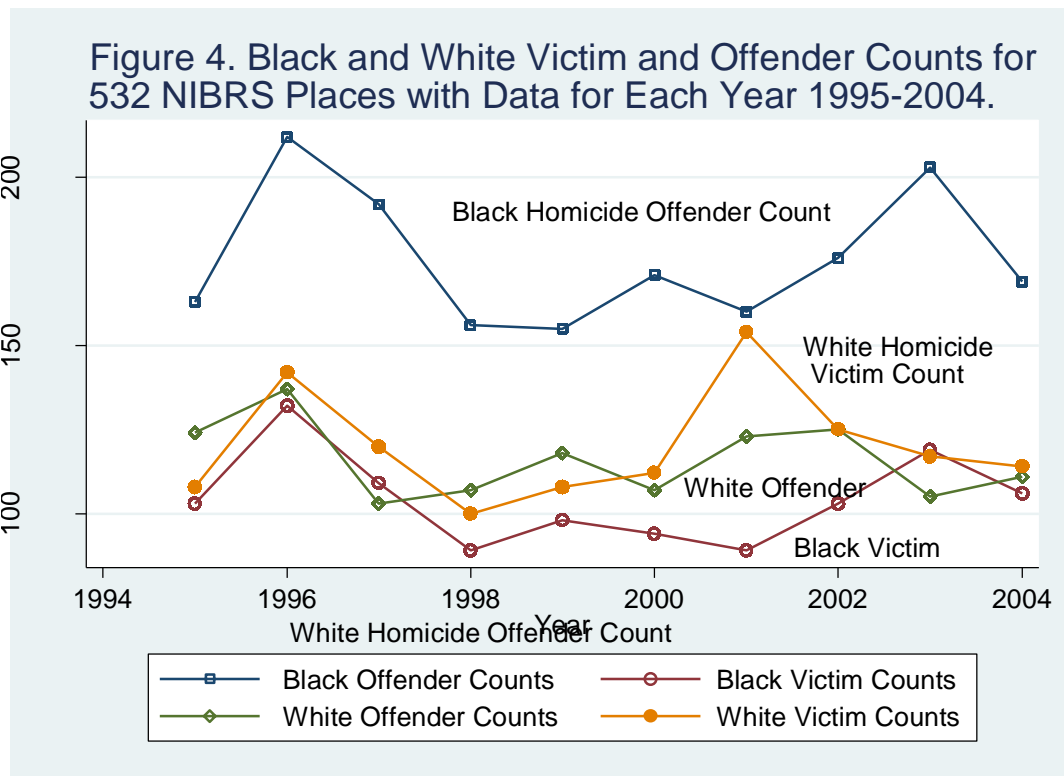
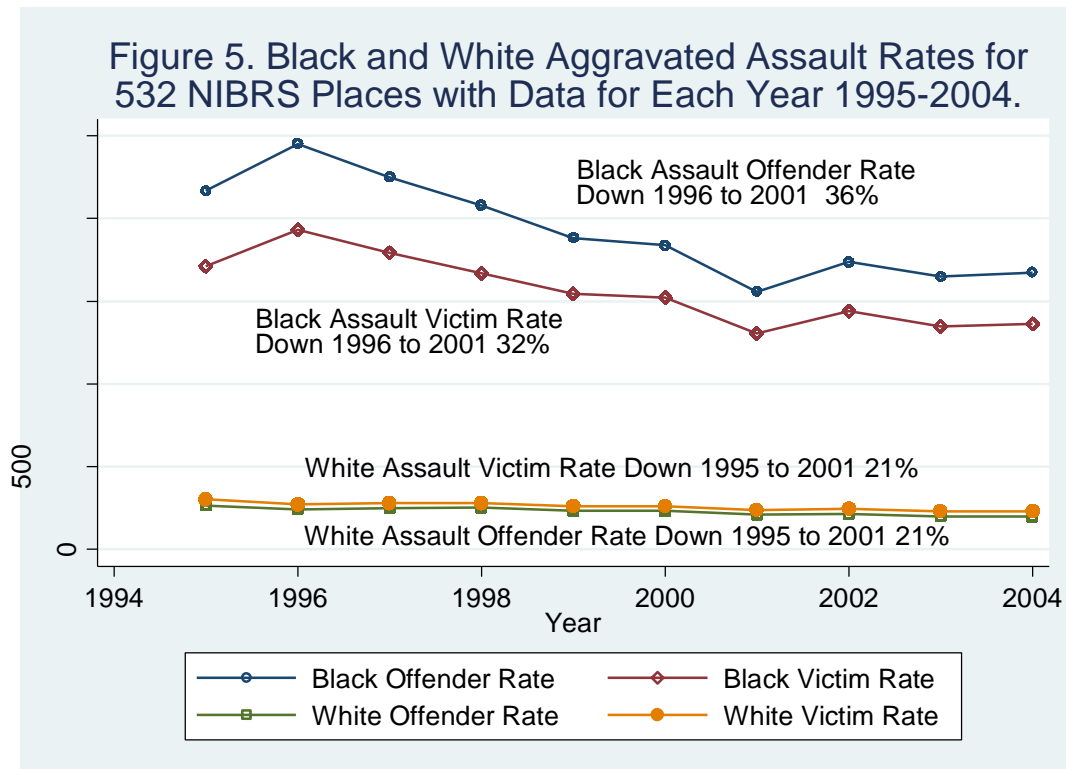


Figure 3, on page 3 above, shows that similar, but slightly different, patterns appear for murder arrest rates. The homicide offender rates, shown in Figure 2, are repeated in Figure 3 with the fluctuations described above. The pattern for the black homicide arrest rate has some of the same features as the black homicide offender rate. There was a 36% drop in the black homicide arrest rate in the three-year period from 1996 to 1999, but black homicide arrest rates increased from 1999 to 2004. The black arrest rate increased by about 17 percent from 1995 to 1996. Moreover, the drop in white homicide arrest rates from 1996 to 2001 was only 15 percent, and the trend fluctuated from 1.2 to 1.4 for the decade. The average black murder arrest rate for 1995 to 2000 (20.26) was over 15 times as high as the average white arrest rate for the same period (1.30).

Figure 4 shows some of the complexity of the trends by comparing black and white homicide counts rather than rates. A careful examination of the patterns in Figure 1 will show that for most of the period the white homicide victim count was higher than the black homicide victim count. Only in 2003 did the black victim count exceed the white victim count. However, the black homicide offender count exceeds the relatively low and stable white homicide offender count. The patterns in Figure 4 indicate that the white victim count fluctuated widely, and that no consistent 1995 to 2000 drop occurred. In addition, the white offender counts show no consistent decrease in white murder offenders. Both black and white victim counts dropped sharply from 1996 to 1998, but the white victim count slowly increased after 1998 and rose sharply before returning to a 1997 level in 2004.

## Aggravated Assault

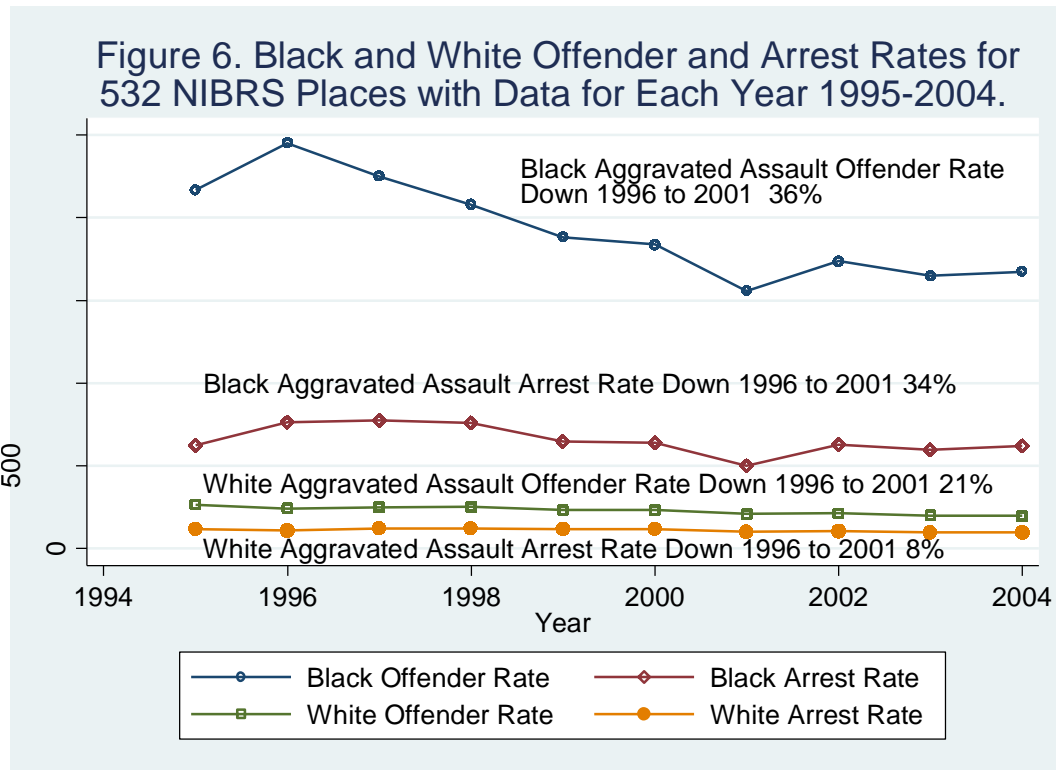
Of the violent crime rates discussed in this presentation (murder, robbery, and aggravated assault) the largest 1990s decreases are for aggravated assault rates. As shown in Figure 5, the black aggravated assault offender rate decreased by about 36 percent



from 1996 to 2001. The white and black aggravated assault NIBRS victim rates dropped as well but from very different levels. The black assault victim rate dropped by 32 percent from 1,934 per 100,000 black residents in 1996 to 1,306 in 2001. The white assault victim rate dropped from around 272 victimizations per 100,000 white residents in 1996 to about 239 in 2001. For the ten year period from 1995 to 2004 white assault rates were down by about 21 percent and black assault rates by about 20 percent.

The more consistent and more sustained decrease in assault rates when compared to the trends in murders rates raises some interesting questions. When assaults were increasing but not murders, one explanation was a lethality argument that suggested that trauma centers prevented the assaults from becoming lethal (Harris et al., 2002). Do decreasing assault rates and stable murder rates suggest that trauma centers were becoming less effective in these 532 cities over the decade? Or are some of the larger cities in this set closing trauma centers in response to their cost and shrinking municipal budgets? At least part of the answer can be provided by looking at the extent of injury reported in the assaults, something we still need to do. Assaults can be classified as aggravated if a weapon is present even if it is not used and no injury occurs. They can be

coded as aggravated if serious personal injury is caused by the attack. Since NIBRS has an extent of injury variable, we should be able to see if serious injury assaults decreased over the decade. In addition, we will look at the trends for simple assault as another possible explanation for some of the drop in aggravated assaults. A shift in the proportion of all assaults classified as aggravated might change the trend for aggravated assaults.

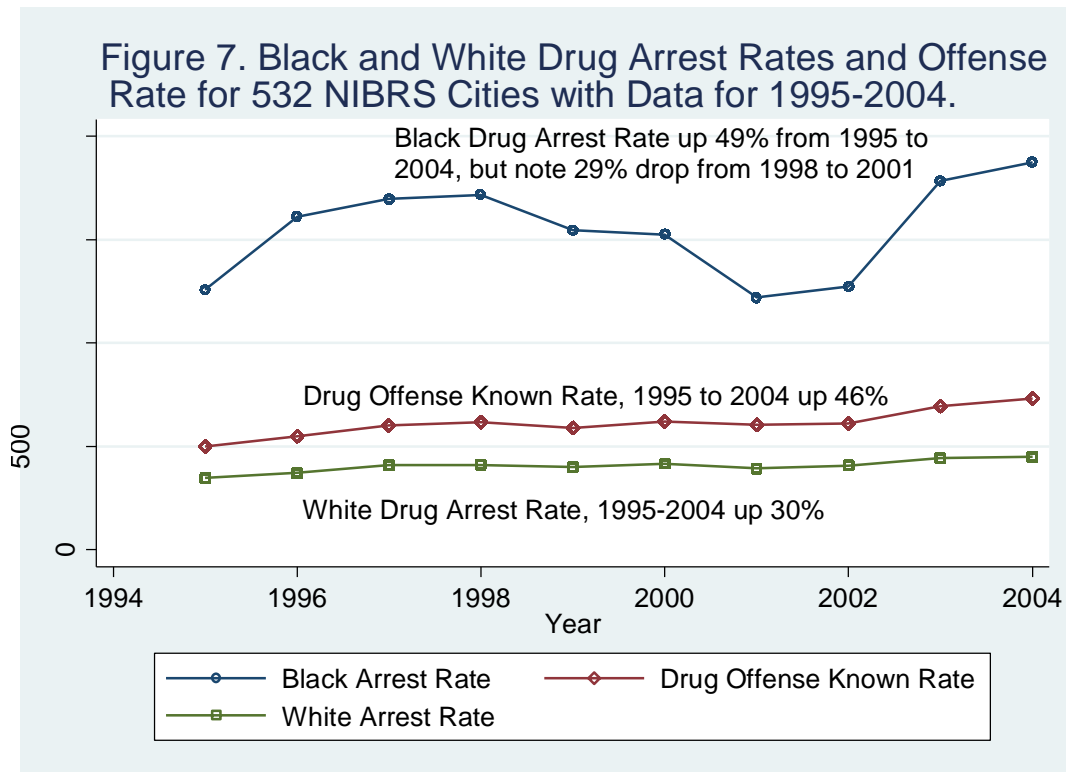


Another interesting pattern emerges in Figure 6 for the rate at which offenders described as black were arrested for aggravated assault. Although Figure 5 shows a decrease in the black victim rate for assault, Figure 6 suggests that the black assault arrest rate did not drop consistently from 1995 to 2000 but increased from 1995 to 1996 and remained high in 1997 before falling from 1998 to 2001. This raises another interesting question: Why are white aggravated assault arrest rates relatively low and stable while black aggravated assault arrest rates fluctuate at a very high level? Whatever the explanation, the NIBRS aggravated assault offense known pattern comes closest to paralleling the national drop in violent crime.

### Drug Offenses

With the introduction of drug offenses in Figure 7, more interesting questions arise, and we see why it is a mistake to talk about a drop in crime during the 1990s. The drug offense known rate did not drop but increased from 1995 to 2001. There were small drops in the offense known drug rate in 1999 and 2001, but in general this rate increased from 1995 to 2004. Moreover, with the exception of 1999 and 2001, the white drug arrest rate increased slowly but

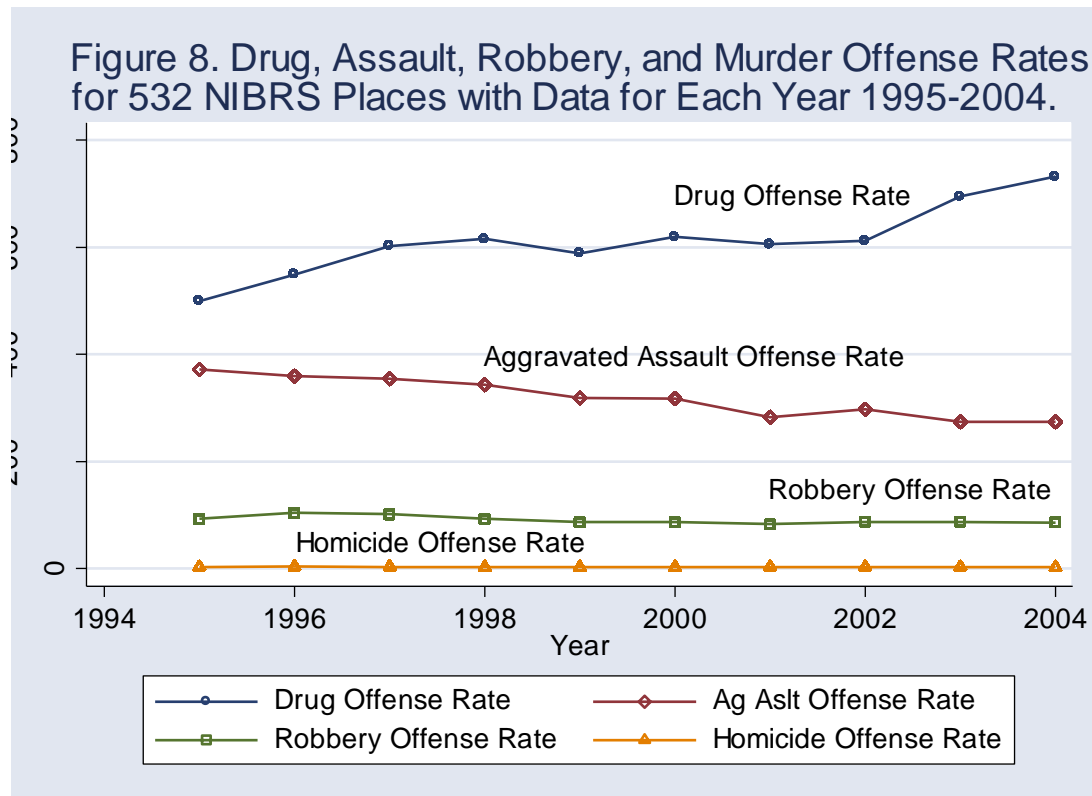
steadily from 1995 to 2001. However, the black drug arrest rate is different. It increased from 1995 to 1998, dropped from 1998 to 2001, and then increased to 2004. These fluctuations occurred at very high levels in comparison with the white drug arrest rate, and the final result was an increase in the black drug arrest rate from 1995 to 2004 of 49 percent.



Based on the NIBRS trends shown in Figures 2 through 7, it would be more accurate for NIBRS cities to talk about a decline in violent crime rather than a drop in crime in general. And it would be even more accurate to say that specific types of violent crime decreased rather than that violent crime in general decreased. Moreover, ignoring the impact of aggravated assault reports on violent crime rates increases the possibility that changes in assault patterns or reporting practices will suggest a drop in violent crime and that such a drop will be described as drop in crime in general. The decrease in aggravated assault rates may be the result of decreases in aggravated assaults on black victims and decreases in black arrests for assault. This is almost certainly the case for homicide victim and arrest rates. Such trends suggest that the decline in violent crime rates from 1995 to 2000 in NIBRS cities was essentially a reflection of declining black rates of violent crime. If this was the case, the most interesting and theoretically important question we face is why some black rates of violent crime decreased when they did.

Figure 8 provides a rough summary of the NIBRS trends for 532 cities for three types of violent crime and one non-predatory crime. As noted above, only the aggravated assault rate shows a clear and convincing decline. In sharp contrast to the violent offenses, the drug offenses show an almost steady increase over the ten-year period. The drug offense rate drops in 1999 and levels

off for 2001 and 2002 before starting up again. Although the black drug arrest rates are puzzling, the pattern of drug offenses, reflecting reports of black and white offenders, presents a clearly different pattern than that shown for aggravated assault.



**Discussion: Continuing Questions, Possible Answers, and Next Steps**

The only consistent and sizable decreases for this set of 532 NIBRS cities were those for aggravated assault offenses and arrests. It will be important to see the aggravated assault patterns for non-NIBRS cities, especially when we limit the non-NIBRS cities to those in the same size range as the 532 NIBRS cities used here. Since a homicide is an assault where the victim dies, the fact that the murder rates do not follow the assaults rates suggests that recent aggravated assaults produced less severe injury than earlier assaults or that some aggravated assaults were being classified as simple assaults after 1995 that would have been reported as aggravated assaults in the early 1990s. There is also the possibility that some kind of loss of ability to respond to serious injuries caused by aggravated assault—a kind of reverse lethality argument—will explain the failure of murder rates to follow the aggravated assault rates.

At this point our ability to suggest any strong conclusions on the great American crime decline is limited. We have only a few clues. We need to know more about trends in the proportion of aggravated assaults that involve serious injury. We need to learn more about the role of demographic changes on the violent crime rates by carrying out age- race- sex-specific



studies for the NIBRS cities and to compare the results with analyses of non-NIBRS arrest data. We need to look at economic trends, black and white, for this set of cities and for non-NIBRS cities. If possible, we need to learn more about enforcement activities and police reporting practices, and we need to learn more about the impact of the drug economy and variations in police response to it on violent and non-violent offenses. Most importantly, we need to look at the trends for at least one major property crime and one more victimless crime.

When we expand our analyses to fill in these gaps, we expect to find that the 1995 to 2000 trends were influenced to varying degrees by each of three forces. Population shifts in the proportion of young black men between 1990 and 2000 may have contributed to the decrease in assaults. We may find that the economy in general and the economic circumstances of the black population in these cities improved from 1995 to 2000. We may find that changes in enforcement practices in specific cities, especially for drug offenses contributed to the decreases and the increases observed. Some of the decline in arrests may be attributable to the loss of popularity of specific drugs, such as crack cocaine. However, if specific drugs lost popularity, why did drug arrests increase as aggravated assault decreased?

The best answers to this last question may lie in changes in drug enforcement practices and policies and in changes in reporting practices for aggravated assault. Therefore, the next steps in our effort will be to include in the analysis an examination of trends in drug offender rates as distinct from arrest rates, and we will need to carry out an examination of trends in the kinds of injuries reported for aggravated assault cases. In addition, we need to carry out age-race-sex-specific studies and to look at the public health homicide victimization data and the arrest and offense trends for non-NIBRS cities. Pulling all of this information together should help us generate a reasonably clear understanding of the great American crime decline for NIBRS cities and places of similar size.

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# Comparing Homicides in the Netherlands and England

**Paul Smit**

Ministry of Justice/WODC;

**Katharina Gruenberg,**

Lancaster University  
and

**Kim Kraaijenbrink**

Ministry of Justice/WODC

## **Introduction**

Homicide is a phenomenon feared throughout all cultures and religions around the globe. Yet, we understand little about it. This research aims to shed a little light on these events by undertaking a cross-national comparison. Comparing the same event in two different countries, shall help us understand the cultural and country specific components.

This part of the study focuses in the Netherlands and Great Britain, that is, England and Wales to be more specific, we hope to incorporate more countries into this analysis in the future.

The Netherlands as well as England & Wales all experience rather low homicide rates, around 1.5 per one hundred thousand. Separated only by the Channel, both regions belong to the more protestant area of Europe and they both have a rather high number of immigrants, and both used to be colonial powers. At the same time, there is a major difference in the way the countries are organized: following the Rhine-capitalism approach, the Netherlands have a strong social security network, while England in the tradition of the Anglo-Saxon capitalism does not. Furthermore, the Netherlands adopted civil law, while England follows common law. Thus, the two regions provide a perfect basis for a comparison. Moreover, in the Netherlands as well as in England & Wales, research already has been conducted to find empirical support for homicide typologies.

## **Previous research**

In the Netherlands research has been done among others by Smit and Bijleveld (2006). In order to examine multivariate relations between the characteristics of crimes, offenders and victims multiple correspondence analysis or HOMALS (Homogeneity analysis through Alternating Least Squares) was used. HOMALS could be used as a scaling technique, where similarities and differences between persons and categories are represented in distances between dots (Slotboom, 2001). In short one can say HOMALS will find the maximal correlation between the transformed variables (Van der Leeden, De Heus & Garendam, 2002).

The dataset for the research of Smit and Bijleveld (2006) was composed of interviews with police officers, police and court records and newspaper clippings. The analysis was only carried out for the year 1998. In first place only the solved murders and homicides were examined. After that, the unsolved ones were added to the solution. It turned out that these murders were not really different than the solved cases. Two dimensions were used to classify the homicides. The first dimension was the motive of the offender and the second dimension was the relation between offender and victim. The research showed that the chosen classification was not alien with the empirical connection between crime, victim and offender characteristics. However, there appeared to be an overlap between the different groups. It seemed like the different types of crimes against life could be ranked along a circular continuum.

Gruenberg and Francis (2006) have done research in England & Wales. In this case a probabilistic model-based statistical technique for finding subgroups of similar cases or types was used, which is called latent class analysis. This technique has the advantage of not reducing the dimensionality of the data, but assigning probabilities within the separate dimensions. Oversimplified, latent class analysis can be described as a sophisticated trial and error approach to group similar cases according to an unobserved pattern or underlying, “true” structure. This structure has the same number of dimensions as the data itself. The dataset of Gruenberg and Francis (2006) used, contained information of the Homicide Index of England & Wales. Their research was conducted for 1978 until 1998. In the latent class analysis twenty statistically independent clusters were found. Each of these clusters characterizes a different type of homicide which can be rearranged according to the research interest of the investigator.

### **Current research**

The research at hand can be seen as a follow up on both studies and was conducted for the years 1998 and 2003. One of the goals of this study was to get a clearer view of possible typologies. Besides that, it is quite interesting to see where the differences and similarities are between the two analysing techniques lie. Therefore, both techniques, HOMALS and latent class analysis, were used.

For this study a dataset containing information from the Netherlands and from England & Wales was created. The dataset of the Netherlands was constructed in the same way as described for the research of Smith and Bijleveld (2006) and for the dataset of England & Wales similar to the one Gruenberg and Francis (2006) used was chosen. An overview of the variables included can be found in table 1.

When deciding which variables to choose for the analysis, the largest common number was chosen. For some variables, as for instance “ethnicity”, compromises needed to be taken. The English data differentiates England white and non-white while for the Netherlands the country of origin is known. We chose to infer the color of the skin from the country of origin. Also, some suspicion arose, whether the process in which the intoxication level was determined is comparable. When investigating the results, we need to keep in mind that these compromises needed to be made.

### **Results and Outlook**

We carried out both analyses simultaneously. Here, we will first present the Latent Class results. In the analyses of our data, ten classes turned out to be the best fitting model. These ten clusters are described in figure 1 and table 2. Table 2 gives the percentage of a certain characteristic within the variable. So for instance, in class 1, we find, white males aged 18-40 killing white young males aged 18-55 that are either acquaintances or strangers. In about a quarter of cases in this group, the offender was drunk, in 31 percent of the cases, the weapon used was physical force, sharp instruments were employed in 26 percent of the cases, while guns were used in 25%. The vast majority of cases in this class were not gain related.

Figure 1 shows for each country, the distribution of cases in each cluster. We can see that some of the classes are clearly dominated by one country, while other classes are not. For instance, it seems that intimate killings, these include child, parent and partner killings, are not very country specific. Homals tells a similar story. After running Homals on all cases, as can be seen in figure 2, we decided to run the analysis purely on the non-intimate homicides to check, whether the two methods pick up the same differences between the countries, which they do, as is depicted in figure 3.

In the next steps we will on the one hand further dig down into the differences in these patterns. Also, we will check, whether there are some more subtle distinctions between the countries for the types that seem similar at first glance.

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Heus, P. de, Leeden, R. van de, and Garendam, B. (2002). *Toegepaste data-analyse* [Applied data analysis]. Utrecht: Lemna.

Slotboom, A. (2001). *Statistiek in woorden. De meest voorkomende termen en technieken* [Statistics in words. The most common terms and techniques]. Groningen: Wolters-Noordhof.

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Table 1: Variables used in the analysis

Agegroups Offender:	<18, 18-25, 26-30, 31-35, 36-40, 41-45, 46-55, >55
Agegroups Victim:	0-1, 2-9, 10-17, 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55, >55
Intoxication Offender:	Drunk, stoned, both, sober
Realtion (V. to O.):	Child, Parent, Partner (IP), Other family, Strangers (S), Acquaintances (A), Professional relation (P)
Method:	Sharp instrument(Sharp), blunt instrument (Blunt), physical, shooting (Shoot), suffocation, strangulation (Strang), other external factors
Dummies:	Gain related, gender and race (white, non-white) of victim and offender, country, year

Figure 1: LCA Hard Assignemts

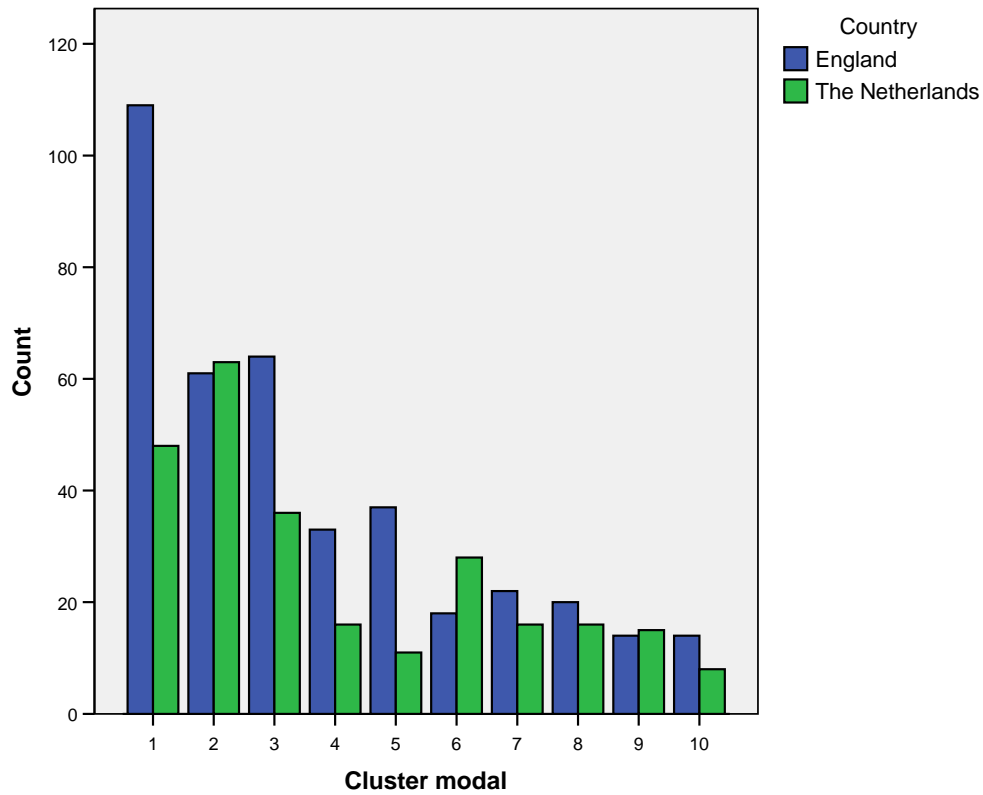


Table 2: LCA Results

Cluster Number	1	2	3	4	5
Agegroups Offender	18-40	<18-35	18-55	<18-30	>18-25
Percentage Male Offenders	98	94	96	86	98
Percentage White Offender	100	26	100	76	85
Intoxication Offender	drunk (26)	drunk(19)	drunk(14)		
Agegroups Victim	18-55	18-45	18-55	36-55+	10-35
Percentage Male Victims	100	98	8	70	66
Percentage White Victim	99	16	100	86	88
Relationship	A+S (82)	A+S(76) P(17)	IP(69) A(19)	A+S(89) P(10)	A+S(94)
Method	Physical(31) Sharp(26) Shoot(25)	Sharp(47) Shoot(36)	Shoot(37) Strang(21) Physical(12)	Sharp(21) Physical(18) Shoot(18)	Sharp(43) Other(27)

Gain Related	N	N	N	Y	N
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Cluster Number	6	7	8	9	10
Agegroups Offender	18-40	18-55	18-35	36->55	18->55
Percentage Male Offenders	95	94	50	85	2
Percentage White Offender	70	0	75	97	100
Intoxication Offender	drunk(38) both(49)	drunk(16)	stoned(11)	drunk(41)	drunk(27)
Agegroups Victim	18->55	18-45	0-9	>55	26->55
Percentage Male Victims	77	13	50	29	100
Percentage White Victim	100	18	83	100	100
Relationship	A+S(88)	IP	Child	Parent(36) IP(31)	IP
Method	Sharp(48) Strang(16)	Sharp(55) Physical(20)	Other(42) Sharp(27)	Strang(34) Other(24) Sharp(20)	Sharp(90)
Gain Related	N	N	N	N	N

Figure 2: Homals Analysis

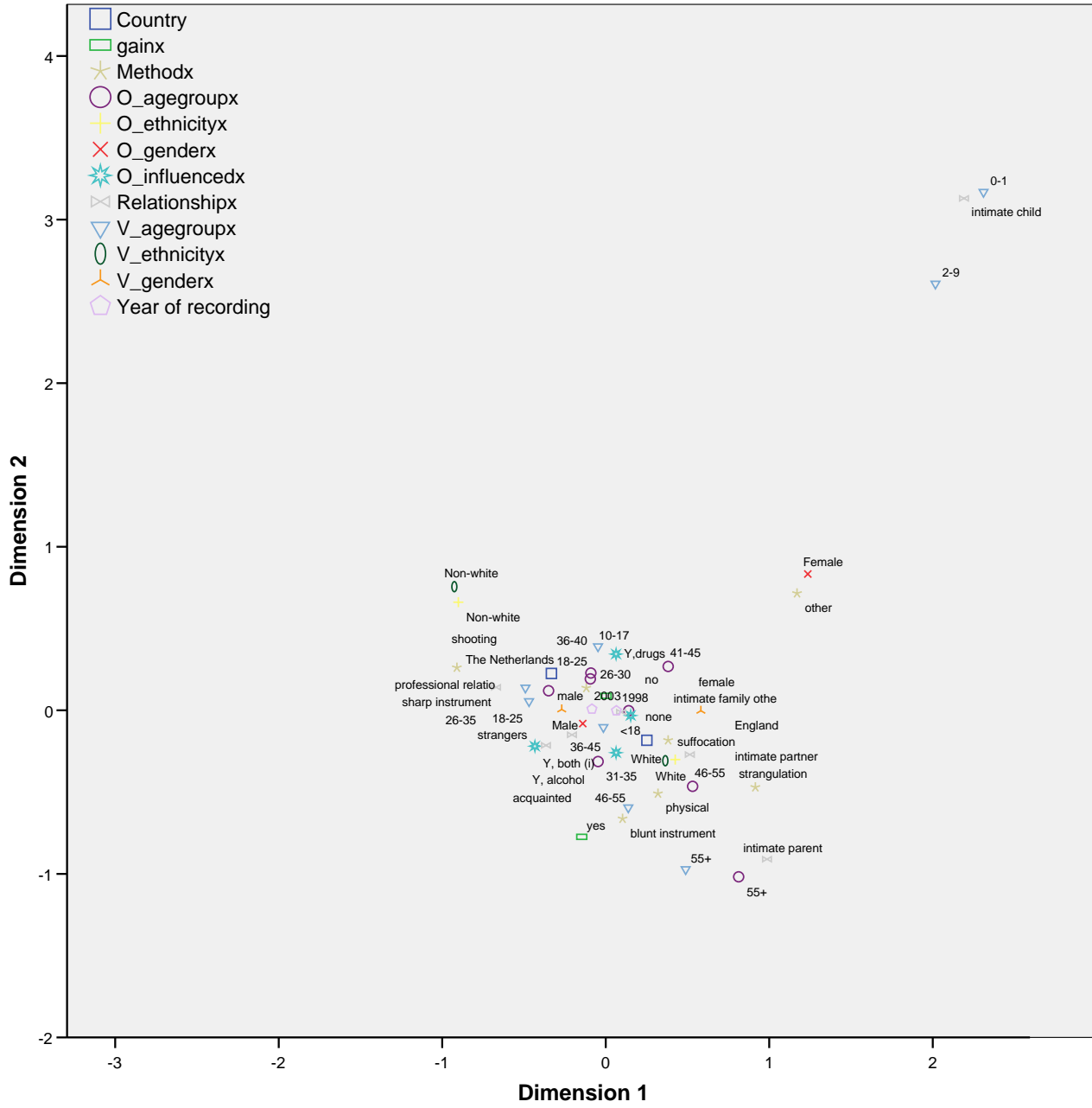
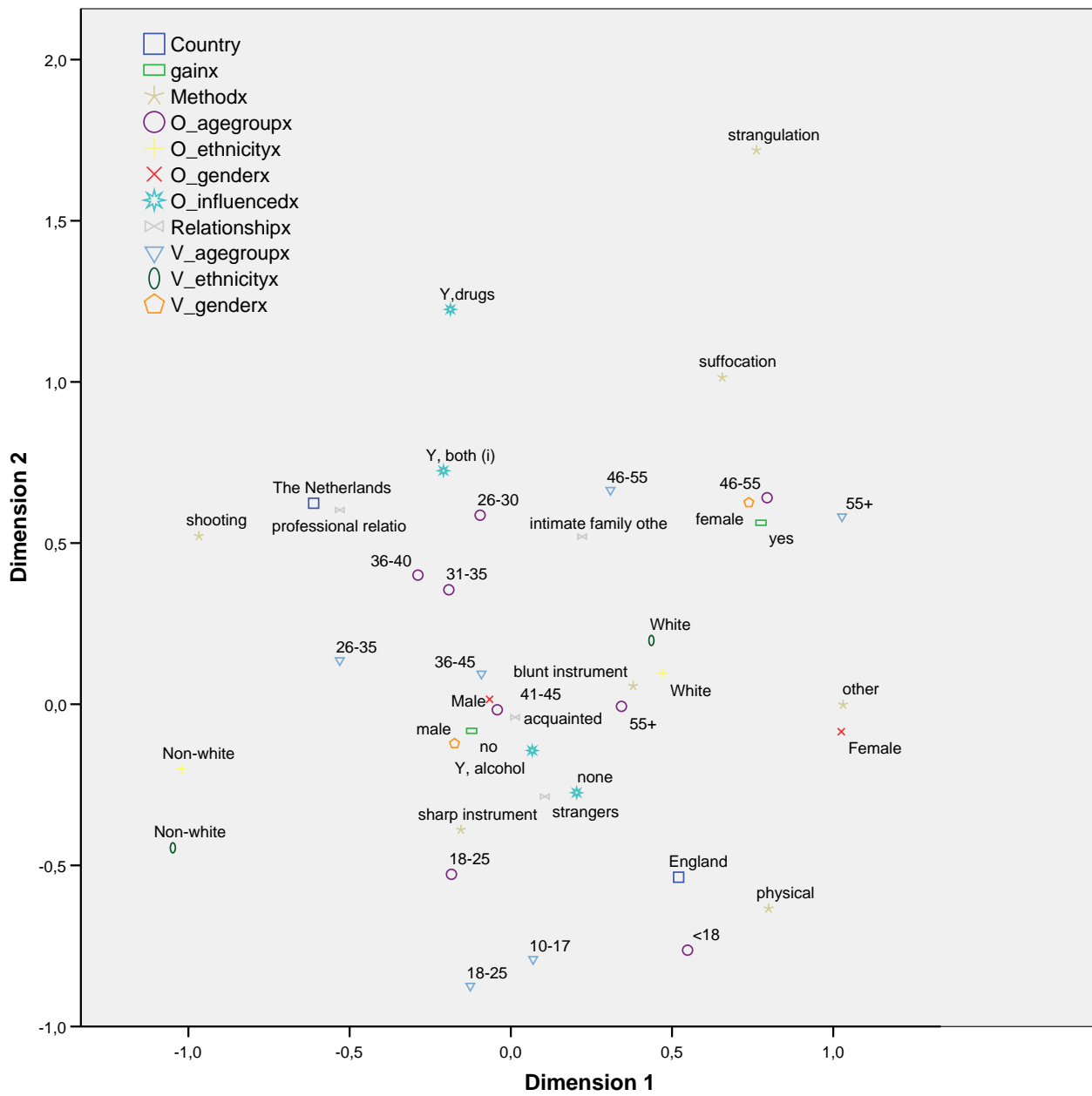


Figure 3: Homals Analysis (Child, parent and partner homicides removed)





## Discussion Notes

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### **Session 2: Continuity and Change in Homicide**

**Friday June 6<sup>th</sup>, 11 – 12:15**

**Moderator: Gary Jensen**

**Recorder: Chris Fisher**

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### **Murder in the Kingdom of the Mouse: The Orlando Homicide Spike of 2006-2006**

**Victoria Tittertington:** What do the numbers look like so far in 2007?

**Jay Corzine:** 20. Things were going well, then in May everything went downhill. 1 so far in June.

**Kim Voight:** You mentioned no neighborhood economic issues...have overall economics changed?

**Jay Corzine:** Orlando has been a growing city, rate of growth is slacking off

**Kathleen Heilde:** What changes in street culture have you seen?

**Jay Corzine:** The Stop Snitching movement. However, it is hard to document less information. May be a lot of retaliation, because they stopped going to the police. A number of killings indicate that.

**Mark Riwdel:** Wasn't gang related. Any evidence of drug market competition:

**Jay Corzine:** 76% drug related...but they have a broad definition for "drug related." If the interaction involved drugs, or the suspect or victim had a prior drug conviction it is labeled as such. West side tends to be open air drug markets until the police move them inside. Heroin is in different markets and has no violence. The crack markets do have violence.

**Chris Rasche:** Interested in the State Farm case where they shot the man who wasn't resisting, what was the defendant age?

**Jay Corzine:** There has been no arrest.

**Chris Rasche:** Is it an age related phenomenon?

**Jay Corzine:** In part. 20 and under most likely to be multiple offenders. Those under 20 offenders were involved in 9 separate incidents. In 2005 2 incidents with a 20 and under offender. Did have one incident where a 10 and 15 year old killed a guy in car jacking.

**Chris Rasche:** Does it have anything to do with the growing evidence of immaturity. Link that up to completely irrational behavior and your chart of suspect age with very volatile weapons is going to increase death rate.

**Jay:** On the streets the level of perceived resistance that is necessary has gone down.

**Kim \*\*\*\*:** Is there a cross-cultural factor to the homicides?

**Jay Corzine:** No, it's staying same ethnicity. It's mostly Mexican. The Orlando police department does not consistently record ethnicity. The original data for 2006 showed only 3 hispanic victims, went to the lead...he said 2 more were.

**James Fox:** The famous criminologist Isaac Newton said “what goes up most come down.” With a big spike in 2006, notwithstanding May ‘07, there is a high probability that 2007 will be lower. I looked at the 60 largest cities every year from 20 years, and looked at change from year to year and odds of it going up or down based on previous year. If it goes up, you have like 3 to 1 odds it will go down.

**Lin Corzine:** Yes it will go down. Florida is a tourist place. We would like it to stay that way. The task force is desperate to see that we maintain a safe environment.

**Jay Corzine:** It started going down at end of 2006 with a gun bounty program (doesn’t work), also TAC units deployed, which are units free from daily assignments, and instead have assignments based on weekly or daily crime trends. Used it to drive heroin markets indoors.

**James Fox:** The Orlando Sentinel published an article on the “Shoot First” law and the 18 homicides that resulted from that law. To what extent was spike in 2006 related to that law.

**Jay Corzine/Lin Corzine:** Maybe 1 or 2. It really doesn’t make much difference in Florida, almost anyone can have a concealed firearm.

**Roland Chilton:** Are you treating Orlando like the Blocks treated Chicago Shouldn’t you send data to NIBRS.

**Jay Corzine:** I wish they would. Not going to happen in near future. State legislature is trying to rollback property taxes...not going to have the funds.

**Lin Corzine:** I brought it up with Orange County Sheriff’s Office...they didn’t know what it was.

**Roland Corzine:** We all need to urge them all to submit better data.

### **Trends in Homicide Offenses Suggested by the 1995-2004 NIBRS Data**

**Jay Corzine:** It general depends on location...some cities still have thriving crack markets.

**Roland Chilton:** You know that how?

**Jay Corzine:** I play close attention to that. I think it’s true that crack is bust in most places.

**David David:** Why did drug arrests and aggravated assault rates fall? A lot of agencies are going to the conspiracy based way of taking people down...so you’re taking down huge organizations. Aggravated assault rates went down because the young teenagers lost those chances because we took that away.

**Roland Chilton:** Minneapolis is not a NIBRS city...why not?

**David David:** Good question for last night and Chief Martin. I’m from St. Paul.

**James Fox:** One issue is still the size of the agencies. Even if some are over 100,000. there really was no change in cities under 500,000. The entire surge in the eighties was in cities over 500,000, as was the late nineties decline. As far as demographics, in terms of homicides, if you do it with SHR, 10% of the decline would have happened anyways based on demographics. Finally, the issue of what happens next. The last couple years of the SHR show a rise in

homicide by people over 30...it's the same group people who drove it up in the eighties...they seem to be driving it up again.

**Roland Chilton:** But this brings us back to NIBRS. This isn't happening in cities under 500,000. So you have to ask are the over 30s only doing it in cities over 500,000. I think it's a mistake to dismiss NIBRS.

**Mark Riedel:** You mentioned the concern with drugs and drug economy. I'm seeing the valid argument that blaming violent homicide on drug and drug related causes has a social construction issue...if you call it drug-related it makes it about "the other."

**Roland Chilton:** I cringe when people say guns, drugs, and gangs are the problem. We know from the Orlando data, that the socioeconomic opportunities are so limited. Those other factors are the results of that...so it leads them into another economy. If you're going to sell drugs, you need a gun and you need partners.

**Darryl Roberts:** Will there be an effort by NIBRS to look back on previous years?

**Roland Chilton:** I don't think so. You have the massive problem of getting large cities to even participate now. Let's just worry about getting them to join now.

**Alan DeLine:** Lot of differences in definitions across states. Won't find aggravated assault in NYS. Have you considered that?

**Roland Chilton:** You just translated them into the handbook definitions, correct? I get so lightheaded convincing people to participate in a system that started when I was born.

**Roger Trent:** My expertise is injury data not crime data. When I look at the crime/homicide drop and look at my injury data, there were also drops in suicide and even recreational gun injuries. Makes me think our focus may be too narrow. It may be something tectonic.

**Roland Chilton:** Vance and I are going to work on a project and compare Robeson to NYC, and look to see what happened to accidents, suicides, and homicides. When the homicide rate is highest in NYC, accident is lowest and vice-versa...may be classification issue or something else.

## **Comparing Homicide in the Netherlands and England**

**Darryl Roberts:** What is your N?

**Katharina Gruenberg:** We're using 1998 and 2003 so it's roughly 400 per country. Rates are same, but England we took a random sample because it has a larger population.

**Chris Rasche:** What does it mean? What is the end result?

**Katharina Gruenberg:** We got that some types of homicide are culturally and country independent, and others that are very country specific.

**Mareke Liem:** You outlined the basic differences between the countries. It would be very interesting to outline some factors that you can operationalize social services to measure their impact. Perhaps mental disorder. You might find some differences that related to addiction services.

**Katharina Gruenberg:** Would love to. With the substance abuse issues, there is a large difference in how the two countries record it.

**Mark Riedel:** I've done some latent class myself. Wouldn't it have been simpler to just use basic descriptives. Need to justify the high powered statistics.

**Katharina Gruenberg:** I like them because you look at all variables at the same time. If you do bi-variates, you lose that.

**Mark Riedel:** There are also a variety of multivariate techniques that do the same thing. This was a very basic version.

**Kristen Welch:** When you identified your clusters, how did you name them?

**Katharina Gruenberg:** 1 and 5 were both pub fights, 2 was shootings. You name them as you go along. Every time you see something different. Percentages are what you look for. You sort on what you want to look for.

**Vance McLaughlin:** I know Roland has a zeal for NIBRS. One thing to point out for aggravated assault. When I was a young officer in FL, when I found out that, especially young black males, if they were in even a friendly altercation, they would "shorten" the knife and fight knowing that it wouldn't seriously kill. It was considered by them to be the same as just wrestling around. We've agreed on it. It's just simple assault. In Savannah, the major in charge of investigators, called his investigators in, and explained to them that if someone points a gun and threatens, that if they didn't fire, it was just simple assault. Detectives knew better, but my point is politicians don't want it because then they can't manipulate the crime rate. Politically people don't like it.

**Alan DeLine:** I'm assuming I know what you mean by gains-related.

**Katharina Gruenberg:** It includes any where the aims was to gain something. We had a separate variable under circumstance where the police noted that.

**Gabrielle Salfati:** We were just talking about the HOMLS, when you actually look at it there are very few variables, there are three main groups...English is very violent type of pub brawls with lots of alcohol, another subgroup with Netherlands that is more professional drug-related, and the third is more familial.

**Chapter Four:**  
**Session3: The Center for Homicide Research: Solving and  
Preventing Homicide.**

*Dallas Drake and Joe Sulka, Center for Homicide Research.*

# The Center for Homicide Research: Solving and Preventing Homicide

Dallas Drake and Joseph Shulka

This will serve as an introduction to the Center for Homicide Research. It is not an academic paper, but rather a simple overview of the development of, and services provided by, our center.

## **About the Center for Homicide Research**

Center for Homicide Research (CHR) is a volunteer-driven, nonprofit organization based in Minneapolis whose goals are to increase case solvability, articulate homicide issues, and reduce incidence of homicide in the community. CHR's founding mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding of the unique nature of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender homicide through sound empirical research, critical analysis and effective community partnerships. The Center focuses on homicide cases where the victim is a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender person, where the offender is GLBT, or where the homicide contains a homosexual element.

The Center for Homicide Research was formed seven years ago as the Minnesota Gay Homicide Study. Our initial mission and programs focused solely on GLBT homicides in Minnesota. As our work progressed, we quickly became a regional and national resource for the GLBT community, law enforcement, criminal justice professionals and criminologists on the subject of gay homicides. On January 1, 2004 we changed our name to reflect this broader mission.

CHR has become an international resource for law enforcement, criminal justice professionals and the LGBT community on gay homicide. The Center's research educates and assists in active homicide investigations. The Center's researchers help identify offenders, strengthen prosecution cases, and secure convictions. Frequently, CHR is contacted to assist with an active homicide investigation.

CHR volunteers and researchers log thousands of hours of service each year. They conduct or participate in hundreds of hours of training each year. The Center provides a unique and vital resource for those investigating and addressing the many varieties of homicide.

## **Need for the Center's Work**

Why study GLBT homicide? Homicide is the most severe of all crimes. Gay homicide can be the most extreme of all anti-gay hate crimes. The impact of a gay homicide is felt far beyond the immediate family or friends of the victim. A gay homicide has a terroristic effect on the gay community and its members. In the wake of a gay homicide, members of the gay community perceive a greater threat to their personal safety and well-being. Many gay people become the targets of harassment and threats by individuals bolstered by the event of gay homicide.

Leaders of organizations serving gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgender people are challenged to provide resources to their constituencies and support the investigation of a gay homicide. They lack the training and resources to respond effectively in the wake of a gay homicide.

The Center proposes to develop new resources and training for nonprofit professionals, volunteers and community leaders serving gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgender people so that they may respond more effectively in the event of a gay homicide and to be proactive in preventing gay homicides. The Center works collaboratively with a broad-base of existing nonprofit and community organizations. The Center does not provide direct services, but instead acts as a specialized resource to strengthen existing organizations.

Likewise, law enforcement and criminal justice professionals are often challenged to respond appropriately to members of the gay community. Potential biases by investigators, perceptions of the “homosexual lifestyle” and the victim’s family’s perception of stigmas all can present significant challenges to an effective investigation. In many instances, a tenuous relationship exists between the gay community and law enforcement, which only adds to the difficulty in identifying and solving a gay homicide. The critical days following a gay homicide are not the time to develop working relationships between the gay community and law enforcement.

The Center for Homicide Research proposes to develop appropriate and effective tools and resources for law enforcement and criminal justice professionals to help ensure that investigations of gay homicides and prosecution of offenders is thorough, effective and just. The Center offers a unique opportunity for law enforcement and criminal justice professionals to be more responsive to the needs of the gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgender community and to be more effective in the apprehension and prosecution of offenders.

One of the reasons law enforcement and criminal justice professionals are demanding this information is because gay homicide has received little or no attention from researchers and criminologists until now. Despite the growing gay/lesbian/bisexual and transgender community and the increase in gay homicides and other forms of violence against gay people, such basic information like the prevalence of gay homicide, the ability to accurately identify gay homicide, techniques to improve the solvability of gay homicide, and effective ways to activate a gay community response to violence do not exist.

Even tabulating the number of gay homicides does not occur on a local, statewide or national basis outside of this research. Although the incidents of all homicide are documented by various government agencies, sexual identity is not included in these statistics. Thus, until now, the gay community and the criminal justice system could not even accurately determine the number of gay homicides.

## Activities

The activities of the Center for Homicide Research fall into five broad categories:

**Identification & Analysis of Cases:** One of the most crucial activities is the collection of case facts and development of the data set. Data is gathered from vital records, news articles, and reputable Internet-based resources. The CHR database contains 125 variables and over 2,500 cases. The Center anticipates 7-10,000 cases exist. Over 100 cases are from Minnesota.

**Professional Development:** Center researchers study research methodology, homicide literature, and participate in professional discussions, conferences and workshops. The Center has a broad-based peer network that assists with research, collaborate, and evaluate our work.

**Consultation/Case Review Services:** Center researcher(s) review suspicious deaths and consult on homicide cases. Frequent referrals come from law enforcement professionals, criminal justice professionals or advocates serving the gay community. Law enforcement officials often seek a confidential resource to ask questions of. This education and sharing of case details has become vital to many gay homicide investigations.

**Analysis and Articulation of Research Findings:** Center researchers are developing the first, comprehensive analysis of GLBT homicide. The findings will identify the frequency of GLBT homicide; analyze law enforcement investigations, including solvability and offender sentencing; determine patterns among gay homicide victims and their cases; and present theories about the nature of offenders. The Center presents findings through peer-reviewed journals, books, and at conferences of criminologists, victimologists, crime victim advocates, law enforcement professionals, gay community leaders, etc. The Center aims to ensure that its research and findings are readily available to all that could benefit.

**Presentation of Study Findings:** The Center is developing educational materials and programs designed to educate the gay community, criminal justice personnel, and the public about gay homicide. The Center works closely with other organizations to ensure the widest dissemination of this information. In 2003, Center volunteers presented trainings to gay community members in Minnesota, Louisiana, Florida, California and Wisconsin. Law enforcement personnel received specialized trainings in Minnesota, Louisiana, California, Wisconsin, and New Jersey. Surprisingly, it is the rural police officers and law enforcement who seem most eager for this training. Dozens of confidential case reviews were also provided.

The work of the Center for Homicide Research is having a profound impact on active homicide cases today. In 2003, the Center was contacted by a multi-state serial homicide task force made up of state police from several states and the FBI. The offender, who has been the subject of intense FBI and state police investigation for many years, is suspected of killing gay men in over 10 states over the last 30 years. The Center worked hand-in-hand using our database and the investigator's records in an attempt to identify and link additional cases. Over 100 fresh leads on "cold cases" were identified, some stretching back over 20 years. The resources of the Center are literally helping keep this offender behind bars and are helping to build a solid case against him. In addition, information was conveyed to investigators detailing the specific nature



of GLBT homicides in an effort to help them understand crime scene behaviors unique to GLBT homicides.

### **Evaluation**

The Center for Homicide Research will be successful in its research objectives when it has compiled and disseminated its data set of gay homicides. A team of advisors with expertise in research methodologies evaluate this work. Research findings and analysis will be evaluated through peer-reviewed journals in the fields of criminology, victimology and criminal justice. The Center will measure the effectiveness of training materials through written and oral evaluations by participants. The Center will know, however, that it has been truly successful when these concepts and tools are incorporated into law enforcement and criminal justice training and are used by these professionals in the investigation and solving of gay homicides.

We hold ourselves to a higher standard of accountability in the LGBT community. The Center will only be successful in the LGBT community when we have trained experts from the LGBT community, both in Minnesota and nationally, who are knowledgeable on gay homicide and who can more effectively advocate for the rights of LGBT people. Evaluation questionnaires will be used to determine the effectiveness of materials and resources for the LGBT community.

We will know we are truly successful when tools and resources developed by the Center for Homicide Research improve the solvability of gay homicides and ultimately prevent gay homicides.

### **Replication of the Center's Structure**

Many of our colleagues will have questions about how the Center is organized and about how others might build such a research center. The organizing strategies necessary for the development of our current center were somewhat specific to the GLBT community. Initial funding came from key stakeholders within that community along with additional private foundation funding. As one might expect, the goals and mission of the Center are somewhat restricted by the source of that funding. A founding principle however, has been to maintain independence as much as possible while pursuing our research and organizational goals.

The position of the organization has been very dynamic. While we began with a rather narrow focus on GLBT homicides in Minnesota, we have provided assistance nationwide and internationally. Our notoriety has also expanded and requests for case reviews have not been limited to GLBT homicide cases. This expanding scope requires balancing the interests of our donors with the needs of the community. An ideal position would be to have a research center addressing all varieties of homicide without neglecting GLBT homicides. What we are learning about gay homicide has much relevance to homicide in general.

A main concern about the development of any research center is staff funding. To date, there is not enough funding to pay our staff, with the exception of a few small stipends paid to deserving student interns. While this might be a shortcoming of our own making, we believe that institutionalized research is not an easy sell outside the confines of traditional academia. We are

working constantly to position our agency to be prepared to receive federal funding, something that will be necessary for long-term viability.

**Chapter Five:**  
Session 4: Parameters of Serial Murder

**Moderator: Tom Petee**

**200 Years of Texas Serial Murders: Outlaws, Angels, and Badmen.** *Kristen Welch, Sam Houston State University and Robert Keppel, Seattle University.*

**Lethal Ladies.** *Amanda L. Farrell, Sam Houston State University; Robert D. Keppel, Seattle University; and Victoria Titterington, Sam Houston State University*

**Street Prostitutes: High Risk Victims of Homicide.** *C. Gabrielle Salfati, John Jay College of Criminal Justice.*

**Discussion** recorded by Nicholas Libby

# 200 Years of Texas Serial Murders: Outlaws, Angels, & Badmen

Kristen Welch, ABD  
Sam Houston State University  
&

Robert Keppel PhD  
Sam Houston State University

## **ABSTRACT**

Serial murder has garnered much interest and attention in the past few decades, culminating in numerous books and movies such as *Silence of the Lambs*, *Hannibal*, *Manhunter*, *Taking Lives*, *Seven*, *Bone Collector*, *Identity*, *Kiss the Girls*, and *the Riverman*. The public has also been fascinated with real life serial killers such as John Wayne Gacy, Ted Bundy, Wayne Williams, the Green River Murderer Gary Ridgeway, the BTK Strangler, Arthur Shawcross, Ed Kemper, Kenneth Bianchi, and Aileen Wuornos. While there have been many movies, books, and articles dedicated to the topic of serial murder and its related issues, very little attention has been paid to historical trends in serial murder.

In addition, few studies have focused on Texas serial killers. Texas has a long and rich history with several examples of male and female killers whose crimes meet the modern definitions of serial murders, such as Joe Ball, Dean Corll, David Edward Cole, Louise Peete, Vicki Dawn Jackson, Henry Lee Lucas, Charles Albright, Betty Lou Beets, and Gene Jones. The present study seeks to explore changes in types of serial murderer over time by identifying and analyzing data from the Texas Serial Killer database. The Texas Serial Killer database contains 215 serial killers from 1800-2006. This paper summarizes and discusses characteristics of serial murders in Texas for the past 200 years, including trends in types of serial murders, offender characteristics, and case studies of specific serial killers.

## **Lethal Ladies**

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While most well-known modern serial killers are presumed to have been sexually motivated, it is further assumed that these killers are male. Aileen Carol Wuornos Pralle holds the honor of bringing the idea of women as multiple murderers, capable of the types of crime commonly attributed to men, to the forefront of public consciousness, and was inaccurately dubbed the first American female serial murderer by the media. To date, there have been very few empirical studies examining serial murderers, let alone females as serial murderers, with only one classification rubric having been designed explicitly for females.

### ***Broadening Our Horizons: Embracing a More Inclusive Definition of Serial Murder***

One of the most problematic issues in researching serial murder, especially female serial murder, is the lack of a consistent and agreed-upon definition of serial murder. Classic definitions of serial murder implicitly exclude females by referring to sexual motivations or, as in Egger's (1984) original definition, specifically excluded females by stating that the offender would be a male. Jenkins (1994, p. 44-45) illuminates the flaws in denying that women are serial murderers, noting that, in Hickey's 1991 study, women represented approximately 15% of American serial killers and that even the Justice Department had indicated 36 female serial killers had been active over the course of the last century (Jenkins, 1994, p. 46). Hickey (2006, p. 22) suggests that women, in particular, are often excluded from the ranks of males as serial murderers because, while they do meet barebones criteria, they are not "associated with the sexual attacks, tortures and violence of their male counterparts." Women tend to kill quietly, preferring not to butcher and maim.

In response to these narrowly tailored definitions, new and expanded definitions have been devised. Hickey (2006, p. 22-23) indicates that, to encompass the full range of serial killers, we must deliberately define serial murder in the broadest terms available, including any offender, regardless of gender or motive, who kills three to four victims over time. In the same vein, Jenkins (1994, p. 23) argues "the term *serial murder* should simply mean multiple acts of criminal homicide committed over a period of time; but in common usage it has come to have a more limited meaning, and the reasons for excluding some types of behavior are quite arbitrary." Taking up the crusade for a broad definition of serial murder, in 1998 the United States Congress defined this genre of crime as "a series of three or more murders, having common characteristics to suggest that these crimes were committed by the same individual or individuals" (Morton & McNamara, 2005) and many different agencies and individuals involved in the research,

detection or study of serial murder have taken to defining this phenomenon as a series of at least two or three murders, committed as separate offenses with a cooling off period between homicide events (Morton & McNamara, 2005).

If we utilize a broad definition of serial murder, as suggested by the FBI (Brantley & Kosky, 2005) and Burnley, Edmunds, Gaboury and Seymour (1998), do women qualify to join males as serial murderers? For the purposes of this study, the definition of serial murder will be kept deliberately broad, modeled on both the definition provided by the U.S. Congress (1998) and Hickey's (2006) definition of serial murder, bowing to the concerns expressed by Hickey (2006) that many of the traditional definitions of serial murder exclude females. That said, for the purposes of this research, serial murder will be defined as three or more victims being killed over time with common characteristics to suggest that the same offender committed the murders.

### ***Finding a Label that Fits***

After identifying women as serial murderers, the next task, logically, is to somehow define and categorize their crimes. Two of the most notable law enforcement tools available in the investigation of serial murders are profiles and typologies, often developed by a combination of statistical data from previous serial cases, an investigator or profiler's experience, and psychology. Numerous typologies of serial murder, most notably those developed by the FBI, have been developed over the last two decades. Yet only one typology was developed specifically to assess female serial murderers. The lack of recognition and understanding surrounding female serial murderers have prevented research and the development and testing of typologies that include (let alone focus on) females, save for Kelleher and Kelleher's (1998) typology advanced in their book, *Murder Most Rare: The Female Serial Killer*.

Although the Kelleher and Kelleher classification rubric is the only typology developed specifically for female offenders, Schurman-Kauflin (2000) cites Holmes and Holmes (1994) as developing a typology based on female murderers. Hickey (2006) references an earlier version of this typology (1988) as a general typology for serial murder. Thus, Holmes and Holmes (1998, p. 147-154) have adapted their existing typology of serial murder, an expanded version of the typology presented by Holmes and DeBurger (1988), to females. In attempting to include females in a typology developed for male offenders by male criminologists, the readers may struggle to see offenders fitting easily into one category or another, similar to fitting a square peg into a round hole. The Holmes and Holmes typology, like Kelleher and Kelleher, focuses solely on motivation and several of the categories parallel those found in Kelleher and Kelleher's (1998) typology. One significant problem with utilizing the Holmes and Holmes (1994) typology, as suggested by Schurman-Kauflin (2000), is that, in its attempt to be simple and straightforward, it does not account for complex motivations, such as a woman who kills for attention but also is the beneficiary of hefty life insurance policies on each of her victims. To this end, the Holmes and Holmes (1994) typology fails to be both mutually exclusive and parsimonious. Another critical issue in using this typology is that neither Holmes and Holmes (1998) nor Holmes and DeBurger (1988) reference a sample used to develop their typology. Without a verifiable sample, these generalizations are mere speculations that are not empirically based. Thus, the typology presented by Holmes and Holmes (1998) cannot be considered valid or reliable and was not examined in this study.

### ***Revisiting Kelleher and Kelleher***

Kelleher and Kelleher (1998) developed their typology of female serial murderers from studying approximately 100 cases of female serial killers, with 50 of those offenders hailing from the United States. This research was initiated on the premise that the organized/disorganized categorization proposed by Ressler, Burgess and Douglas (1988) did not adequately examine deeper motivations for serial homicide, particularly in the cases of the often ignored female offender.

Although informative, this typology has not been tested to determine its veracity or applicability in ongoing investigations. In other words, the reliability and validity of this classification system have not been examined. Two specific areas of concern regarding reliability involve interrater reliability and test-retest reliability. Whether or not this study was able to utilize this typology, in examining some of the same offenders, and place those offenders into the same categories both reliability issues raised were examined. As far as validity is concerned, the question is whether or not Kelleher and Kelleher's (1998) typology, utilizing motivation as the variable central to classifying female serial offenders, meets the requirements of content validity, taking into account all areas of female serial murder. In addition, discriminant validity, comparing the variable of interest, in this case Kelleher and Kelleher's classifications, to a similar variable, motivation, and to other variables that may be related, was examined in this study when attempting to determine if this typology could be refined to be more user-friendly in both academic and practical contexts.

From their analysis, Kelleher and Kelleher (1998) were able to develop a typology of serial female murder that consisted of nine offender categories: team killers (14 cases); black widows (13 cases); unexplained cases (6 cases); revenge murders (4 cases); question of sanity cases (4 cases); profit or crime cases (3 cases); angels of death (3 cases); unsolved cases (4 cases); and sexual predators (1 case). It is not clear, however, if the offenders included in this study is a selection of the offenders found or all of the case histories examined by Kelleher and Kelleher (1998). If this is a selection, there is no mention of whether or not it is random or convenience sample. Finally, the authors do not define what, exactly, constituted the materials for the "case histories" studied.

While groundbreaking, Kelleher and Kelleher's (1998) typology is focused on understanding the complex motivations that are attributed to female offenders and, as the authors note, is primarily designed for research, rather than law enforcement purposes. The present research was conducted via accessing data on the twelve selected cases, to gauge the utility of the Kelleher and Kelleher (1998) typology, and to: 1) determine if this typology bears further revision, and 2) to examine whether or not other common demographic variables, such as age and race, and variables traditionally associated with serial murder, such as method of death and victim-offender relationship, interact with motivation, or with each other, to influence these categorizations.

### ***Methodology***

The data for this research was collected in three distinct steps. The cases of murder included in the preliminary data collection were chosen for inclusion based on the following criteria: 1) the

offender was a female, acting alone; 2) there are at least three (3) known victims; 3) the homicides were separated in time; and 4) the homicides occurred within the United States.

To determine the scope and prevalence of this rare crime in the United States, the second step of data collection utilized non-scholarly resources, such as Newton's *Bad Girls Do It: An Encyclopedia of Female Murderers* (1998) and *The Encyclopedia of Serial Killers* (2000), to generate a list of 54 solo female serial murderers from the United States (28 from prior to 1960 and 26 from post-1960). While not considered academic sources, Newton (1993, 2000) provides a methodical and well-organized approach to the overall topic, by investigating cases, motivations, and definitions in what Jenkins (1992, p. 4) refers to as a cautious and scholarly manner. Offenders included in this list meet the previously mentioned criteria. There were no time period constraints set during this initial search for cases, unlike the Kelleher and Kelleher (1998) study. From this list, ten cases were randomly selected from each time period to create an initial sample of 21 cases, including the case of Aileen Wuornos, whose case was automatically included in the sample due to the high amount of press coverage and the assumptions previously mentioned.

Once the initial sample was selected, it was compared to the sample Kelleher and Kelleher (1998) used in their study. To more accurately assess the typology of female serial murder, offenders in the sample who were not included in Kelleher and Kelleher's (1998) study were discarded, leaving twelve offenders. Two offenders were subsequently removed from the sample due to a lack of news articles regarding their crimes. After the final sample had been selected, newspaper articles were collected from major national newspapers, such as the *Chicago Tribune* and the *New York Times*. Several case studies were supplemented by readily available police reports and informal interviews with detectives. The data for this research were collected by analyzing 282 newspaper articles that discussed 70 murders committed by the ten (n=10) offenders selected.

In addition to motivation, the offender's age at the time she committed her crimes, the offender's age at the time her crimes were discovered, the offender's race, how long she remained active, the number of victims attributed to each offender, the victim-offender relationship, method of death, location of offenses (based upon Hickey's (2006) classification of offender mobility), the career of the offender, the mental state of the offender, the victim's age, and whether or not the offender was charged with murder were also examined in this study.

### ***Findings***

Central to this research was examining the reliability and utility of Kelleher and Kelleher's (1998) typology, which is based primarily on motivation. Motivation was categorized based upon the classifications provided by Kelleher and Kelleher (1998), with the addition of the categories of "other" and "combination of motives." Of the 70 cases included in this study, 39 (55.71%) murderers were motivated by a combination of factors, not a single coherent motive. Following a combination of motives, 13 cases (18.57%) had unknown motives; this means that the media provided no known reason for the murders. The unknown category of motivation aligns with Kelleher and Kelleher's (1998) category called "the unexplained." There were ten (n=10, 14.29%) victims who were killed for profit by people with whom they were intimate,



meeting the qualifications of the black widow category proposed by Kelleher and Kelleher (1998). Ten percent (10%, n=7) of the homicides were motivated by anger or revenge. This category mirrors Kelleher and Kelleher's (1998) revenge classification. Finally, only one victim (1.43%) was killed by an acquaintance or stranger for profit; this category mirrors Kelleher and Kelleher's profit or crime categorization.

The crimes of Tillie Klimek exemplify the multiple motivations that can be attributed to a series of murders committed by a female offender. She profited from the deaths of her three husbands, which meets Kelleher and Kelleher's criteria for a black widow. However, profit accounted for motive in only three of the eight deaths to which she is connected. It is suspected that she murdered her beau, John Guskowski, after he jilted her, and she was suspected of murdering the three children of an aunt with whom she had had a falling out. The murders of Guskowski and the Zakrzewski children appear to have been motivated by revenge or anger, although Guskowski's murder would be atypical of this classification because the offender murdered the object of her anger. Revenge was also cited as the motivation in the murder of Klimek's cousin, Rose Chudzinsky, when the offender cooked her a deadly special dinner following an argument.

Where the victims were killed also contributes to a more holistic view of the female serial offender. Hickey (2006) developed three classifications relating to the location of a serial murderer: place-specific, local, and traveling. While these categories would seem easy to apply, female serial murderers tend to yet again defy existing classifications. Using Hickey's classification system, Nannie Doss, who murdered four husbands in as many states, would be labeled a traveling serial killer. This may seem straightforward, as she crossed state lines in the course of committing her crimes, but she also committed her crimes within her own home in each jurisdiction. Thus, as she did not specifically travel to commit her crimes, is she possibly a place-specific murderer who happened to travel? With this ambiguity, some of the location-associated labels affixed to these offenders may be misleading. Place-specific killers operate out of one base location. For example, a woman who poisons her family at home or a nurse who kills her patients in a hospital would be considered a place-specific serial murderer. In this study, 25 cases (35.71%) were found to have been committed by a place-specific killer. If the offender was not limited to a specific location, like a house or a hospital, but were active within a particular city or state, then she would be classified as a local killer. There were 31 homicides, or 44.29 percent of the sample, that were committed by local offenders. The third classification developed by Hickey (2006), the traveling offender, pertains to offenders who cross state lines in the course of their crimes. There were 11 cases in this study that were committed by traveling offenders. In this sample there were also three (n=3, 4.29%) cases where the location classification of the offender was unknown.

### ***Results***

While it was hoped that the consideration of additional variables beyond motive would provide a more effective means of classifying female serial murderers, the results have shown that further study is necessary before any comprehensive classification system can be attempted. In short, these women, and their crimes, defy our need to label them and neatly classify their actions. Using both the classifications devised by Kelleher and Kelleher (1998) and Hickey (2006), this study indicates that neither is reliable nor comprehensive when examining female serial

murderers. Kelleher and Kelleher (1998) devised a typology based primarily on motive. While illuminating in some aspects, using this variable to classify female serial murderers is inaccurate. The results from this study indicate that motivation alone does not provide an optimal basis for categorizing female serial murderers. The data presented shows that these women are influenced by multiple motives or motives that do not fit neatly within the nine (9) categories provided by Kelleher and Kelleher (1998). Unexpectedly, Hickey's (2006) classification also proved to be problematic in its application. The offenders in this sample often displayed elements of more than one classification. Though logical, if Hickey's classifications are to be applied to female serial murderers, they will need to be refined and expanded.

It is possible that there cannot be an adequate typology for female serial murderers, as they are quite diverse in their rarity. Results from this study indicate that better attempts at classification may focus upon a combination of the victim-offender relationship and the manner the offender uses to approach her victim. This new classification rubric would call for two broad categorizations: the occupational female serial murderer and the hearthside female serial murderer. Within this classification system, there may be sub-categories, but its central tenet is that offenders who fit within the occupational category use their employment or source of income as a means of both scouting and approaching victims. Jane Toppan, Aileen Wuornos, and Genevieve Jones would then fall within the parameters of this category. The hearthside offender targets family and friends, using their personal relationships with them to approach and murder prospective victims with stealth. Like the classification of the occupational offender, this category may call for additional sub-categorizations, but Judi Buenoano, Nannie Doss, Audrey Marie Hilley, Martha Johnson, Tillie Klimek, Louise Vermilyea, and Stella Williamson would then fall into this category.

### ***Conclusion***

The findings from this research clearly indicate that there is much to learn about female serial murderers. It is clear that motive, previously considered simple and static by Kelleher and Kelleher, is more complicated and therefore not an ideal means of classification. Victim-offender relationships, method of death and how they approach their victims are the key elements to better understanding these offenders and the murders they commit. As these killers receive more news media attention and traditional definitions of serial murder are altered to accommodate their crimes, further research will aid in the development of more accurate classification rubrics.

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# **Street Prostitutes: High Risk Victims of Homicide**

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## **Abstract**

Much of the serial homicide literature has suggested that most serial homicides are sexual in nature, and that often vulnerable and stranger victims are chosen by offenders. Prostitutes, who have been shown to be by far the most at risk female group for homicide (Lowman & Fraser, 1995; Potterat, Brewer, Muth, Rothberg, Woodhouse, Muth, Stites, and Brody, 2004; Ward, Day and Weber, 1999), encapsulate all of these factors. They have also been shown to most often be targeted by offenders with extensive previous convictions for violence (Kinnell, 2006) and by serial offenders (Brewer, Dudek, Potterat, Muth, Roberts, and Woodhouse, 2006; Brooks-Gordon, 2006; Miller and Jayasundara, 2001).

Prostitutes have often been identified as sex objects within society (McKeganey and Barnard, 1996; Miller and Schwartz, 1995), and as such the question is raised about the role of prostitute victims in sexual serial homicides. Kinnell (2006) however showed that many of those who kill prostitutes do not only target that group, but often also target non-prostitutes. Whether these series are sexual overall, or whether they target prostitutes as part of a vulnerable, and readily available victim group, has not yet been identified.

The current study is an ongoing study which aims to analyze prostitute victims in both single and serial homicide cases, and aims to understand the role of sexual and vulnerable victim targets for the purposes of defining subgroups of serial homicide, as well as for understanding consistency in victim target and crime scene behavior across series.

Implications of this research will be on the development of our understanding of behavioural consistency and victim selection in homicide, particularly in relation to high risk victims such as street prostitutes.

## **Prevalence of violence**

“It is unlikely that any occupation or lifestyle exposes a woman to the threat of assault and gratuitous violence as constantly and completely as prostitution” (Fairstein, 1993, p.171, as cited in Miller and Schwartz, 1995, p.1).

The literature in the UK on violence against prostitutes<sup>1</sup> show us that prostitutes who solicit on the streets are more frequent (Kinnell, 2001) and more at risk than those who work indoors (Benson, 1998, Kinnell, 1993, 2002 cited in Brooks-Gordon 2006). Of these incidents, 82% of involved violence, and 37% sexual assaults (Kinnell, 2002). Farley, Baral, Kireman, and Sezgin (1998) in a larger survey spanning prostitution in five countries (South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, USA and Zambia) found that 73% had experienced a physical assault, and 62% had experienced a rape. Farley and Barkan (1998) in a US study of 130 female prostitutes in San Francisco and reported that 83% had been threatened with a weapon, 82% had experienced a physical assault, and 68% had experienced a rape. Many other studies report similar figures (Benson and Matthews, 1995; Hoigard and Finstad, 1992; Miller, 1997; Miller and Schwartz, 1995; Silbert and Pines, 1982).

When violence is experienced, prostitutes list that the most common reasons for a client to become violent are disagreements over the time and quality of the services given to them, they try and get their money back, or the clients have been drinking (O'Neill and Barberet, 2000). Dodd, 2002 quoted the UK Channel 4 television documentary (Ferguson, 2002) which found that 52% had experienced attacks for no apparent reason, but where a trigger was seen, it was often related to; sex workers refusing the types of sexual services clients wanted (44%), disputes over money and clients refusing to pay (42%), the sex worker ending transaction before ejaculation (29%), and sexual dysfunction or delay by client (32%), the last of which could often be related to alcohol use, which in itself is a correlate of violence. In addition, Kinnell (2006) adds insistence of condom use by street workers as another trigger for violence. Brewer, Dudek, Potterat, Muth, Roberts, and Woodhouse (2006) in a study specifically looking at clients who killed prostitutes, quote arguments over the sex for money/drugs exchange, responses to the victim's (attempted) robbery of the client, verbal insults from the victim, demands or requests by the victim, the client's misogyny. The client's hatred of prostitutes, the client's sadism, the client's psychopathology (e.g. sexual deviance, psychopathy, and psychosis), as well as other motives, a combination of motives, or more commonly, no apparent precipitating factor.

Benson and Matthews (1995) in their study also showed that a large proportion (73%) of victims had often been abused more than once. Similar figures (75%) were found by Miller and Schwartz (1995). In addition, many studies show that the largest proportion of the violence experienced by street prostitutes are by clients. Farley and Barkan (1998) report a rate that 65% of violent incidents were reported to have been by a client. Church, Henderson, Barnard, and Hart (2001) in a survey of three cities found that 81% of street prostitutes reported violence by clients at some point in their career, and 50% reported client violence within the past six months. In Canada, Lowman (2000) quotes that clients were responsible for 62-64% of prostitute homicides.

But it is not just clients who are a risk, but also other people directly related to the work of the prostitute such as pimps (63%, Miller 1997; 66%, Silbert and Pines, 1982), and their general vulnerability raising from working on the streets. Silbert and Pines (1982) reported that as many as 72% of the rapes were unrelated to the prostitute's work, but when the women were identified as prostitutes, the rapes tended to be even more brutal and resulted in more injuries. Miller and

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that the current study does not look at violence within the sex industry overall, at sex workers as a general group, nor violence against male sex workers, but focuses specifically on female street prostitutes. For a discussion on issues of terminology and focus, please see Brewer, Potterat, Muth, and Roberts (2006)

Schwartz (1995) showed that 6.6% of their sample had been raped in other contexts on the streets. Other studies report a variety of additional crimes being committed against the street workers such as money stolen by clients after sexual transaction (56.3%, Miller and Schwartz, 1995), and kidnapping and being held captive (37.5%, Miller and Schwartz, 1995; 38%, Miller 1997).

### **Prevalence of homicide**

At the more extreme end of the violence spectrum, it has been suggested that prostitutes are the group most at risk for homicide. In Canada prostitutes are 60 to 120 times more likely to be murdered than non-prostitute females, homicide has been reported to be the leading cause of death amongst prostitutes (Lowman & Fraser, 1995). Potterat, Brewer, Muth, Rothberg, Woodhouse, Muth, Stites, and Brody (2004), when comparing prostitutes to women of similar demographic characteristics, estimate that sex workers in the US are 18 times more likely to be murdered. Overall, Brewer et al. (2006) state that 2.7% of female homicide victims in the US between 1998-2000 were prostitutes. They also show that in their study of 1,969 prostitutes from 1967-1999, for whom dates of first prostitution was known in 1,633 cases, 100 died. Of these, 21 were murdered, nine of whom were within three years of their first prostitution act. A further eight were killed after the three year period, whilst actively working as prostitutes. They therefore concluded that in their study, the majority of the women murdered, did so as a direct consequence of prostitution. In the UK, Ward, Day and Weber (1999) estimated that the mortality rate among 402 women attending a GU service for sex workers in London (1985-1994) was 12 times the normal rate for women in this age group.

*Adding to this issue, most murders of prostitutes are notoriously difficult to investigate, and many remain unsolved. Of the 886 cases of all homicides reported for the period April 2001 to March 2002, 10% were unsolved (UK Home Office, 2002), and of the 53 prostitutes that had been murdered in the UK since 1990, 69% of the cases were still without a conviction by the time Kinnell wrote her paper in 2001. Reasons for the difficulty in solving these particular cases have been suggested to include lack of public interest because of a low opinion of the victim, lack of credible witnesses and an unwillingness by both prostitutes and clients to talk to the police (Boynnton, 2001).*

*This shows that prostitutes experience not only violence on a day to day basis, but are also more likely to be killed than any other group. The rest of the chapter will go on to explore why this may be, and outline some more detailed figures on the nature and prevalence of prostitute homicides.*

As Salfati, Darnell, and Ferguson (2008) stress, it is important to find factors of these homicides that can be used to help to identify prostitute homicides and to solve them, notably in relation to the actions the offender engage in at the crime scene, and the characteristics of the offenders. If it is found that murders of prostitutes are distinct from other types of murder in general this may assist in both the recognition of particular risk factors for violence, and the investigation of a prostitute homicide, particularly in terms of identifying sub-types of offenders who may be linked to these specific types of murders.

Defining what constitutes violence against prostitutes, and what we should focus on when studying this type of violence, is however difficult, notably regarding whether we should focus

on all violence against prostitutes, or whether we should look at only the violence that is committed against them because they are prostitutes. As Brooks-Gordon (2006) states, it is often difficult to decide if a crime against a sex worker relates directly to her occupation. As many authors (e.g. Benson, 1998; Kinnell, 2006; Pearce and Roach, 1997 cited in Brooks-Gordon 2006) show, street workers are also at risk from violence in general due to their lifestyle, and because they are vulnerable, not specifically because they are prostitutes. Brooks-Gordon (2006) also highlight that categorizing the type of violence that prostitutes encounter can be problematic, such as the example of where a client takes back the money they have paid after sex. Since consent for sex was given on the basis of payment, some women view this as rape, others as robbery. As Salfati et al. (2008) stress it is therefore important to identify the psychological reason behind any of these differences, notably in terms of whether it is this ease of availability and increased opportunity that makes prostitutes more prone to attack than non-prostitute women, or whether it is because of the type of woman that they are. In other words, are prostitutes attacked 'just because they are there' or are they targeted specifically because they are prostitutes.

### **Understanding the violence against prostitutes within a societal context**

Before we look at specific studies that have looked at this specific issue, it is important to first look at our understanding of prostitute violence from a larger societal perspective as this will largely guide individual behaviour. A number of authors have put forwards broader theories about why prostitutes have been targeted as a group within society, by exploring specific attitudes against prostitutes within society, as well as understanding the violence against these women within the context of violence against women in general.

McKeganey and Barnard (1996) in their work consider the link between violence and sex in the context of prostitution, and highlight certain parallels between the position of the female prostitute and that of women generally in our society. They quote Scully (1990) who noted the way in which men's justifications for rape are rooted in ideas of the role that society assigns women, and directs 'appropriate' ways that women should act, which excludes overt sexuality. Women who violate this expectation or role, they highlight, are then seen as acceptable and justifiable rape victims. Miller and Schwartz (1995) also argue that violence against prostitutes is an extreme form of violence against women in general. Themes that emerged from their interview with 16 street prostitutes show an enormous amount of rape and violence against these women and that people often see prostitutes as unrapeable, that no harm is done when a prostitute is raped, that prostitutes deserve to be raped, and that all prostitutes are the same. They go on to explain how these themes of attitudes against prostitutes relates to societal rape myths and how sexual violence in the context of street prostitution illuminates the functions and meanings of violence against women generally in American society. In this way it explains how prostitutes are seen not necessarily as people or individuals that the offender is directly angry with, but rather a category of woman that is objectified. As Scully puts it very well - "a man's intent may not be to punish the woman he is raping but to use her because she represents a category to him" (Scully, 1990, p.138, cited in Miller and Schwartz, 1995).

Miller and Schwartz (1995) in their work discuss powerful ideologies that define women (and prostitutes) as sexual property. There is a fundamental belief that prostitutes are seen as public property when they give consent to any sexual act through prostitution (Rubin, 1984), indeed

many of the women in their study, reported that they felt that the client had purchased their body to use as they pleased. A striking example is when they go on to detail that it was not uncommon for prostitutes to be picked up, then clients refusing to pay them, then would rape them, and then afterwards turn around and pay the prostitute. By so doing, they essentially abuse the woman as a mere object, and then justify their act of rape by then paying the prostitute, and by so doing essentially reframing their act as not a rape.

Kinnell (2006) mentions an important related theoretical issue when she questions why some men who approach a sex worker displays violence as soon as they are asked to pay, which they suggest begs the question whether this person has ever been a client previously, since by definition a client is someone who pays for sex. She proposes that this may show an unwillingness of certain men to pay for sex, which she suggest may be explained by men resisting the role as client, or it may go back to other writings that talk about street workers being attacked due to common societal attitudes of sex workers as women who deserve punishment, or are worthless objects.

Miller and Jayasundara (2001) summarise the work on how society's attitudes and rape myths contributes and promotes violence against prostitutes into prevailing attitudes; First is the belief that prostitutes cannot be raped: "The fact that prostitutes are available for sexual negotiation [is interpreted to] mean that they are available for sexual harassment and rape"(Hatty, 1989, p.236, cited in Miller and Jayasundara, 2001); Second, the belief that no harm was done: "Through a confusion of sex with violence, rape is defined simply as a bad business transaction" (Miller and Jayasundara, 2001, p.468); Third, the belief that "Prostitutes deserve violence against them because of their violation of normative expectations of appropriate femininity" (Miller and Jayasundara, 2001, p.468). They also show that this objectification of the female prostitute may not always be based on the individual prostitute herself, but be part of a transferred anger from another situation with a prostitute that has been generalised to all prostitutes as a group, when they quote Miller and Schwartz's (1995) study which noted that women reported being held responsible for the actions of other prostitutes, i.e. where a client becomes angry with one, but often take it out on another.

This pervasive bias against prostitutes goes beyond just victimizing them as victims of violence, but extends to how these cases are being investigated, and ultimately being cleared and consequently treated within the legal system, all of which goes to feed the original attitude against prostitutes. Miller and Jayasundara (2001) discuss in their book how the extent of women's legal protection from sexual violence is shaped by the extent to which they adhere to the standards of this normative femininity. As they state, in the US, this means being white, middle class, and chaste. They go on to suggest that because sex workers fall at the far end of this continuum, some scholars (e.g. Miller and Schwartz, 1995) have suggested that rape of prostitutes go unpunished, and that due to this bias, prostitutes due not report crimes when they do happen against them (Fairstein, 1993). This pervasive attitude towards women in general and prostitutes specifically, they go on to state, may be a leading reason why violence against prostitutes go un-investigated and unsolved. They site the specific example of the Southside Slayer, a serial killer in South Central Los Angeles who targeted mainly African American women working as prostitutes, and where the police didn't bring this series to the attention of the public until 10 women had been killed, and specifically not until white women had been



targeted. Moreover, early in the investigation, they quote officers calling these cases “cheap homicides” (Miller and Jayasundara, 2001, p.469), and give the example of one officer stating that “the slayer is doing a better job at cleaning up the streets than we are” (Predscod, 1990, cited in Miller and Jayasundara, 2001, p.469).

Unfortunately, when areas are so called - cleaned up, the knock-on effect has been suggested to be that prostitutes are displaced to other areas, which they are ultimately unfamiliar with, and for which they do not have the local information on which clients to avoid due to their known previous displays of violence, and the negative results is that they are therefore further put at risk of attack (Kinnell, 2006).

### **The Risky Location**

By the very nature of their work, prostitutes, especially those who work on the street, are susceptible to attack. Regardless of whether or not the prostitute works on her own or with others, the actual service for which the prostitute is being paid for will usually be between the prostitute alone and the client (Salfati et al., 2008). The service will often take place in a dark, deserted location, and usually in a vehicle, outdoors, in alleyways, industrial units, parks, car or lorry parks, derelict buildings or country areas outside town, or even the client’s home (Kinnell, 2006). Negotiating for services will often take place through a car window or actually in the car itself. The violence mostly occurs after the street worker and the client have left soliciting area (Kinnell, 2006). Being in an isolated spot therefore, with a client who, more often than not, is a stranger (McKeganey & Barnard, 1996) is a potentially dangerous situation for the prostitute, and, occasionally, for the client himself. In these situations the street prostitute is also seen as an ‘easy target’ for robbery as she will carry her evenings ‘wages’ on her in cash (Salfati et al., 2008).

### **The Violent Client**

*As outlined by Salfati et al. (2008), obtaining an accurate answer to the question of what type of individual buys sex from a prostitute is difficult as frequenting prostitutes is often done in secret and may be associated with feelings of guilt and shame (Sharpe, 1998). According to authors who have looked into this (e.g. James, 1976; Kapur, 1978; McKeganey & Bernard 1996, McLeod, 1982; Matthews, 1993; Lever & Dolnick, 2000) the majority of clients are typically middle-aged, middle-class and married, and likely to be in their mid-thirties (McKeganey & Bernard, 1996; Benson & Matthews, 1995; Sharpe, 1998). Indeed, 47.5% of prostitutes regard older men as safer to work with (Sharpe, 1998) stating that they will not do business with a client if they look under 30. Salfati et al. (2008) however show that violence is actually more likely to be committed by younger clients. With regards to the occupational profile of the clients, three-quarters or more are in full time employment (Benson & Matthews, 1995; Matthews, 1986; McKeganey & Bernard, 1996; Sharpe, 1998).*

Most prostitutes would prefer to service clients whom they know, or at least have done business with before. However, Sharpe (1998) shows that the majority of clients are not known to the prostitute when they approach them for business. In Ferguson's (2002) survey, 45.8% of prostitutes claimed that most of their clients were complete strangers, whereas 5.6% claimed that all of their clients were strangers.

Salfati et al. (2008) summarizes that considering therefore that the average number of clients per day per prostitute ranges from 3 to 7 (Ferguson, 2002; May et al. 1999; McLeod, 1982; McKeganey and Barnard, 1996; Sharpe, 1998), and that an average 'shift' is around 6 hours (Ferguson, 2002; May et al. 1999) the prostitute is probably having at least 2 to 3 sexual encounters with a complete stranger every 2 to 3 hours of their working day. This has a direct effect on level of risk. As O'Neill and Barberet (2000) states, attacks on street prostitutes are more frequent when the client is a stranger than when he is known to the prostitute. They found that most violence against the prostitute was unpredictable and happened suddenly. Violence was also more common when the prostitute was either under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

This violence is however also committed by others on the streets, including not only clients but also pimps, drug dealers, users, and the police and others on the street (Bracey, 1983; Maher, 1997; Miller, 1995). Brooks-Gordon (2006), in a review of the literature, specifically states that this pattern of violence is not culture bound. Indeed, similar findings have been reported in the UK, Scotland, Canada, and Norway (Cunnington, 1984; McKeganey and Baranrad, 1996; Lowman and Fraser, 1995; Hoigard and Finstad), and South Africa, Thailand, Turkey, USA, and Zambia (Farley, Baral, Kiremire, and Seizgin, 1998).

However, as Kinnell (2004, as quoted in Brooks-Gordon, 2006) argues, much less attention has been paid to questions originally explored by Benson (1998) of who commits the violence, what form it takes, and why some sex workers appear more targeted than others.

Kinnell (1993, cited in Brooks-Gordon, 2006) stated that the high proportion of attacks ascribed to clients has led to assumptions that a high proportion of clients are violent. However as Brooks-Gordon (2006) shows, most clients are non-violent, and the majority of violence is committed by a small proportion of offenders. Based on her study, she therefore concluded that information about attackers suggest that many are serial offenders. Kinnell (2006) in a study of 84 homicides against street workers also shows the vulnerability of sex workers to serial killers, as do Miller and Jayasundara (2001; D. Linger, personal communication, October 27, 1999, cited by Miller and Jayasundara 2001). Brewer et al. (2006) provide an estimate when they suggest that serial murder account for 35% of prostitute homicides, and that all serial offenders were clients. In the nine different samples they surveyed, they also showed that lone perpetrators accounted for most prostitute homicides.

In an analysis of the criminal records of 77 clients stopped by the police for curb-crawling, Brooks-Gordon (2006) found that 63 had a previous criminal record. Of the 44 cases that were traceable, the age range was 23-66 years, with a mean of 40 years. The mean distance travelled to where they were stopped was 15 miles (however there was no information in the study regarding where these offenders had traveled from). In looking at not the quantity, but the range of offences, the type most frequent across the sample was a previous conviction for violence (21%), followed by theft, handling and shoplifting (20%). Seven percent had previous

convictions for sex offences. Interestingly, Brooks-Gordon followed up these men, and found that 11 of them were re-convicted within 23 months after their arrest for kerb crawling. Of these 11 men, six of them were convicted of a violent offence against the person, and one was convicted for a sexual offence. She therefore tentatively concludes that, with keeping in mind the small numbers, the research suggests a link between curb-crawling and more serious crimes committed by only a small number of these men, who are likely to be repeat offenders. Low rates (8%) of previous convictions for violent and sexual offences were also found amongst men apprehended for kerb crawling in Southampton in the UK (Shell, Campbell, and Caren, 2001, cited in Brooks-Gordon, 2006).

### **Prostitute Homicide**

As has been shown, the literature stresses that prostitutes are at a high risk group for homicide, and clients are the most likely offender.

Of the solved homicide cases of prostitutes studied by Kinnell (2001), where the relationship between the offender and victim was known, 69% were committed by clients. Kinnell (2006) quoted that judicial charges were brought against 63% of prostitute deaths, 55% of which were by clients. Similar results were found in Canada (Lowman, 2000), and in the US, in a study on mortality causes and rates and in prostitutes, Potterat et al. (2004) found that homicide was the leading cause of death of 100 prostitute deaths from 1967-1999, and that of the 21 who were killed, 9 were murdered while actively soliciting.

However, in order to be able to use this information more effectively to understand what clients are the more likely to commit violence, or kill, a prostitute, it is important to understand this subgroup against clients in general, as well as the male population in general, and men who kill women. In a recent NIJ report (Roberts, Muth, and Potterat, 2007; Brewer, Muth, Roberts, and Potterat, 2006) looking further at the characteristics of prostitute offenders in the US, amongst other issues, looked at the prevalence of clients overall in order to provide a baseline against which we may start to compare the characteristics of clients with the general male population, as well as compare characteristics between violent and no-violent clients. The data included prostitution arrest data from approximately 30 local US jurisdictions, and all 50 states. Analysis was based on men arrested for patronizing a prostitute in several metropolitan communities, and was compared to the General Social Surveys (GSS), a regular national probability sample household survey. Results from these studies estimated that about 2-3% of local male residents in large metropolitan areas in the US patronized local street prostitutes during an observation period of 2-5 years. These figures they report are almost twice as large as those based on self-reports in the GSS. They then compared the clients arrested with men in the general population (as reflected by various social census data), and included a number of characteristics not focussed on in previous studies. Young men were over-represented amongst clients, they were more likely to be Hispanic (hypothesised to be due to the unavailability of non-commercial sexual partners), and to a lesser degree Black, had substantially less education, were less likely to be married, resided closer to their arrest locations, and drove modestly newer vehicles. In a sub-study just focussing on Colorado Springs, they also found that the characteristics of clients of street prostitutes were similar to clients of off-street settings.

In a sub-study identified from an extensive national search of media sources, Brewer, Dudek, Potterat, Muth, Roberts, and Woodhouse (2006) and Brewer, Muth, Dudek, Roberts, and Potterat (2006) also compared clients who assaulted, raped and/or killed prostitute women, with clients arrested for patronizing prostitutes in the same jurisdictions and time periods, on observable characteristics easily assessed by police during an investigation. Results showed that violent clients usually picked up their victims in the same areas where police arrested clients for patronizing. Violent clients were however similar in age and distance between their residences and victim encounter/arrest locations. Violent clients were less likely to be White, drive cars (as opposed to other motorized vehicles), and have a previous criminal history of miscellaneous other (non-violent, non-property, non-sex, non-patronizing) offences. Men with a criminal history of violent and/or rape offences comprised a pool that included 40% of prostitute killers (47% of serial prostitute killers). In addition, meaningful proportions of clients arrested for patronizing in two jurisdictions had less money in their possession than the price they had agreed to pay for sex or carried weapons at the time of arrest, suggesting a potential for violence in client's interactions with prostitutes.

Kinnell (2006), in a study of 84 sex worker homicides, of which 83 were female, and for those where age was known, 61% were under 25 years, and the mean age was 24 years, with a range between 14-46 years. This she concludes is similar to that from many other studies of street workers in the UK, but is likely to be not only a reflection of the victim group, but also a reflection of the fact that street workers tend to be younger than off-street workers. Of the cases where it was known, 59% were street workers, of whom 65% were last seen alive whilst working. At least 63% of the deaths of the sex workers were directly related to the isolation of their work. Potterat et al. (2004) in their study, quoted a mean age of death at 34 years.

In a study of 73 homicides of sex workers by Kinnell (2004, cited in Brooks-Gordon, 2006), showed that 71% were street workers. Of the 46 cases where a suspect was known, 52% approached their victim as a client. 42% had previous or subsequent convictions for violence, including rape, and homicide both against sex workers, and non sex workers, and against both men and women. Of the (22 out of 35) cases where an offender was identified in Kinnell's (2006) study, 49% had previous convictions for homicide or other violent offences. The majority (19 out of 22) of these offenders with previous criminal convictions for violence were clients. Through additional case studies, she further showed that those who kill sex workers do not only target that group, but often targeted non-sex workers, which raises an additional important issue of the consistency in victim target, and reasons for the violence by these men. It also raises the importance of understanding the difference between those men who target only prostitutes and those who target other women (and men). Although this study has not yet been done on serial sexual assaults, or on serial homicide, a recent study by Salfati et al. (2008) compared men who killed prostitutes with men who committed sexual homicides against non-prostitute women, and men who killed women but did not sexually assault them.

### **Prostitute Homicide in the Context of Sexual and non-sexual Homicide of Non-Prostitutes**

As shown by Kinnell (2001) and Farley and Barkan (1998), the majority of violence inflicted on prostitutes is carried out by a client. Assuming that the majority of prostitute homicides are committed by clients, who are most probably previously unknown to the victim, raises

interesting questions about the interaction between the victim and offender. In light of the literature of societal values of female sexuality and the objectification of prostitutes, as Salfati et al. (2008) discuss, because the encounter is fundamentally a business one, the client may see the prostitute as an object. This would suggest that the act of prostitute homicide would be fundamentally instrumental in nature. This assumption is reinforced further by the evidence suggesting that most prostitute homicides are committed by strangers, with stranger-murders also being associated with instrumental behaviours (Salfati & Canter, 1999). Also, the evidence previously outlined, suggests that most incidences of violence against prostitutes are initiated by the client over disputes about money, performance or services received. This, according to the literature is fundamentally an instrumental motivation<sup>2</sup>.

However, as Salfati et al. (2008) go on to say, because of the possibly high aroused state that some clients are in during the offence, (both in sexual and anxiety terms) responses to insults and disagreements may involve lack of rational calculation and reasoning; which is mainly the basis for an expressive act. It is most probably this aroused state that leads to this traditionally expressive behaviour but it could be argued that in this case it is precisely the aroused state that makes this sort of emotional behaviour instrumental. The effect of the emotional outburst isn't necessarily directed at the prostitute as a person, but is directed at the situation, the prostitute is merely part of the situation and not important as a person to the offender as such. It is this lack of personal, emotional intimacy between the client and prostitute that would make this sort of sudden emotional reaction more instrumental than expressive. Indeed,

Block, Devitt, Donoghue, Dames, and Block (2001) suggest that instrumental crimes can have an expressive component to them, as an example where the offender goes with the aim to obtain money through burglary, but end up in an argument, which leads to the homicide. This could also be likened to what the police often term a 'burglary gone wrong'. In this sense it becomes important to understand the link between the violence exhibited and both the expressive and instrumental aspects. More importantly, is to understand this is different between different types of homicides, and understand how the actions during prostitute homicides compare to these homicides.

Although we know some of the precipitating circumstances to prostitute violence and homicide, and some details regarding the perpetrator, we don't know much about what the assaults consist of, nor how this compares to other types of aggressions against women. One of the biggest questions remains whether violence against prostitutes is one of opportunity and availability, or because they are prostitutes, i.e. whether violence against prostitutes is sexual or theft motivated, or whether they represent specific targets to the offender. To understand violence, and especially homicide, against prostitutes, it is therefore important to understand these crimes in the context of violence and sexual violence, and particularly homicide, against women in general. Indeed, there may be an assumption that the murder of a prostitute is a sexually motivated offence but this may not be the case. As in the case of rape it may not be simply just a matter of sex, but rather an exertion of power. Salfati et al. (2008) specifically aimed to look at this issue in an attempt to further understand the nature of the sexual and non-sexual violence in prostitution homicides by comparing them to sexual and non-sexual homicides of non-prostitute women. In

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<sup>2</sup> For details on the nature of expressive and instrumental aggression, see Feshbach (1964) and for how this is exhibited specifically in homicide, see Salfati (2000).

particular, their study focussed on the issue of whether prostitute homicides can be conceptualised as persons against whom the offender vents their anger, victims who are available and vulnerable, or victims who provide an outlet for the offender to obtain sex or theft, i.e. they compared the difference between the idea that it may be the ease of availability and increased opportunity that makes prostitutes more prone to attack, or the idea that it may be type of female victim that they are.

It is sometimes difficult to distinguish between sexually and non-sexually motivated homicide. One homicide may have an overtly sexual element to it, whereas another may show no such evidence but may still be motivated by sexual drives. In some cases it may even be that sexual behaviours are observed but that the crime was not sexually motivated. In some cases it is the offender's control of the victim, and in turn their pain and humiliation which becomes linked to the offender's sexual arousal. Another difficulty may arise when a sexual assault, a rape for example, culminates in the victim's death purely because the offender wants to eliminate a potential witness and not because the offender gains any sexual arousal from the killing itself (Schlesinger, 2007).

In the recent behavioural literature, general murders which include a sexual element to them have been shown to be linked with other instrumental types of behaviours (Salfati, 2000). If therefore, it is hypothesized that prostitute murders will be fundamentally instrumental then they would therefore appear to have more in common with sexual murders than non-sexual murders.

Salfati et al. (2008) in their study, looked at 122 homicide UK cases of homicide against women. Of these, 46 were defined as prostitute homicide cases (taken from Ferguson, 2002). Of the selected 46 cases 25 had been solved, i.e. an offender had been convicted for the offence. Of the 25 solved cases, all were male, and in all but one case, the offence had been carried out by a lone offender. The ages of the victims in this group ranged from 17 - 46 years, with an average age of 24 years. A further 17 sexual non-prostitute homicide cases (selected from Salfati 2000) were used. Cases were selected to match the prostitution group, and ranged from 16–47 years, with a mean of 26 years. Another 59 cases of non-sexual non-prostitute cases (selected from Salfati 2000) were added with a matched victim age range from 16-50 years, with a mean age of 32 years.

It was hypothesized that the prostitute victims would have higher incidences of those factors that make them more vulnerable to attack. These factors included drug or substance abuse, lack of experience and being homeless or living rough. Results showed that in 74%<sup>3</sup> cases the victim had a fixed address which included property owned by the victim, rented by the victim or property that the victim shared with family, a partner or friends. Of these, 31% took the clients home to do business. In 71% of the 7 cases where the victim took their clients back home the attack took place at the victim's property. In 94% the victims were engaged in some kind of substance abuse, including drugs, alcohol and solvents. Twenty-two percent of the victims had worked for less than 12 months in the area in which they were killed. Twenty-six percent of the victims were working for a pimp, or were forced to work by a partner for their partner's financial benefit.

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<sup>3</sup> All numbers quoted from the original Salfati et al. (2008) study were based on calculations from the number of cases that had the information available, and for ease have been modified for the current chapter from the numbers quoted in the original study by rounding percentages up/down to nearest whole number.

The study also compared the prostitute offenders' background to those offenders convicted of sexual and non-sexual homicides to see if there were any significant differences between them. In terms of the mean offender age, offenders of prostitute homicides were 37 years, compared to 35 years non-sexual homicide, and 27 years for sexual homicide. Significantly more prostitute homicide offenders (74%) had pre-convictions for violent offences compared to both non-sexual (32%) and sexual (18%) homicide offenders, again showing the greatest difference between the prostitute homicide offenders and the offenders of sexual homicide of non-prostitutes. However, of the three groups, prostitute homicide offenders were the least likely to have previous non-violent offences (20%), compared to sexual offenders (41%), and non-sexual homicide offenders (81%). In terms of the question of whether the offenders of prostitute homicides bring with them a previous criminal experience in the realm of sex crimes, it is of note that prostitute homicide offenders in Salfati et al.'s study also had significantly more pre-convictions for sexual offences compared to non-sexual and although not to a significant difference, also more than sexual homicide offenders. Of further interest is the fact that with soliciting being classified as a sexual offence (Home Office, 2000), the data showed that 41% of the prostitute homicide offenders held such convictions, compared to 18% of sexual and 9% of non-sexual homicide offenders. non-sexual (27%) and sexual homicide offenders (29%). Other results by Salfati et al. regarding the characteristics of the offenders showed that 44% of the prostitute homicide offenders were unemployed at the time of their offence compared to 42% of non-sexual homicide cases and 29% of sexual homicide cases. In addition, 25% of the prostitute homicide offenders were married at the time of their offence compared to 75% of non-sexual homicide offenders and 59% of sexual homicide offenders.

*As much of the general literature on homicide stresses the importance of offender-victim relationship to understand homicide, Salfati et al. also compared this aspect between the three groups, and interestingly found that the 3 different sub-groups of homicide each had their most likely offender coming from a different category of victim/offender relationship. The prostitute homicide offender was most likely to be a stranger to the victim (54%), whereas this was less likely in sexual homicide offenders (23%), and even less likely in non-sexual homicide offences (7%). Indeed, when the homicide is of a non-sexual nature (76%) the offender is likely to be in, or has been in, a relationship with the victim, compared to 25% of prostitute homicides and 17% of sexual homicide cases. However, when the homicide was of a sexual nature the offender was most likely to be an acquaintance of the victim. This was the case in 59% of all sexual homicides compared to 17% of the prostitute homicides and 14% of non-sexual homicides.*

*In order to test whether prostitute-homicide crime scenes are in some way physically different from other female victim homicides, Salfati et al. analysed key crime scene variables pertaining to the key group of variables highlighted in the literature to pertain to risk factors and homicide.*

*Location has been shown to be closely related to the risk factors of prostitute homicides. Variables that occurred more in the prostitute murders as compared to the other two groups, included the location variables of transporting the victim away from the original crime scene after death, leaving the body of the victim outside, and hiding the body of the victim. Conversely, those variables that occurred less in the prostitution murders included leaving the victim at the same scene where they were killed, or at the victim's premises, or committing the crime in daylight. Thus, overall, Salfati et al concluded that prostitution homicides were more likely to*

*include variables linked to covering up the crime and delay the investigation. This difference was however stronger when compared to non-sexual homicides than when compared to sexual homicides, which is interesting considering that prostitute homicides were found to be generally more different from sexual homicides when looking at the characteristics of the offenders.*

*In terms of sexual or theft related activity, 42% of prostitute victims were found completely naked, compared 18% of sexual and 8% non-sexual homicide victims. In terms of the actual sexual activity, 14% of prostitute cases and in 6% of the sexual cases an object was used to sexually penetrate the victim. In 52% of prostitute homicide victims, property was stolen from the victim suggesting a link between robbery and the crime. This was higher than for both sexual (35%) and non-sexual homicides (10%).*

In all 3 types of cases the two most frequent wounding actions were those of a manual nature and multiple wounding. Both prostitute and non-sexual victims were more likely to have multiple injuries. Whilst multiple wounding was the most common type of wounding between both groups, within group figures suggest that prostitutes were more likely to be injured in this way than were non-sexual victims. Considering that multiple wounding is highly associated with expressiveness and impulsivity and has been linked with both known victims, and an emotional element, this finding is important in understanding the nature of the violence in prostitution homicides, and adds evidence to prostitute victims possibly being either vehicles through whom offenders vent their general aggression or aggression related to other prostitutes other than the victim herself, or a target in of themselves. In either case, As Salfati et al. (2008) suggest, these first wave of results suggests that the level and type of violence may important to understand these cases.

Overall Salfati et al.'s (2008) study, in comparing prostitute homicides to other homicide sub-groups, shows that although the level of violence and types of crime scene behaviours is similar to that of non-sexual homicides, the characteristics of the offenders are more like those of sexual homicide offenders. In this way, prostitute homicides may be started to be understood as a violent crime like general homicides. However, they may be committed by a more instrumental sub-group of offenders as the general literature on prostitution violence has also shown.

*In accord with the general literature on violence against prostitutes, Salfati et al.'s study also shows that in a large proportion (14 out of 19) of offenders who had previous violent convictions, 6 involved a pre-conviction for at least one murder. With figures as high as these they suggest that it is likely that a prostitute will come into contact with clients with violent pre-convictions on a relatively regular basis. Indeed, in one prostitute homicide case in their study, the victim had had sex with a client who had previous convictions for attempted murder and serious sexual assaults on women, in the same night as she was killed by another client who also had previous convictions for attempted murder.*

*The evidence thus suggests that men who assault prostitutes have convictions for assaulting other women as well, which in turn backs up some of the general literature highlighted at the start of this chapter, which suggests that violence against prostitutes may be considered as part of a continuum of violence against women more generally, and not just against prostitutes specifically. This now needs to be further investigated and analysed to test the assumption that offenders are consistent in their behaviours at one level and across situations and is the first step*



*in being able to make inferences about the nature of prostitute homicides, and the specific characteristics of the offenders responsible for these crimes.*

### ***The Study***

*This presentation will outline the ongoing study which aims to look at prostitutes as victims of serial homicide.*

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## Discussion Notes

Nicholas Libby

Friday, June 8, 2007

Session 4: Parameters of Serial Murder

### **Paper 1: Kristen Welch “Outlaws, Angels, & Badmen: 200 Years of Texas Serial Murders”**

Vance McLaughlin: Your database, one thing that might be overlooked: what about people who employ farm labor minorities and do not pay them and decide to kill them or kill people who tried to leave before they completed their work.

Kristin Welch: We have one example of a modern family who did that sort of thing on their ranch.

Dwayne Smith: Is Henry Lee Lucas in your dataset?

Kristin Welch: Yes

Dwayne Smith: How many victims do you count?

Kristin Welch: I have a listing of a suspected number, about 100, and a confirmed number of 10, which were his convicted ones. He confessed first of 600 but it kept going down. For the confirmed numbers I only counted the ones the killer was convicted of.

### **Paper 2: Amanda Farrell, Robert Keppel, Victoria Titterington “Lethal Ladies”**

Mark Zelig: I’m wondering, do you have any gut level feeling that we may have more males that have behaved like these women offenders but we are blinded to them?

Kristin Welch: There are some that we have found but generally the traits of offenders are gender linked such as where offenders are comfortable killing, etc.

Lin Huff-Corzine: Did you include women who killed unwanted children?

Kristin Welch: There were some but not included in the primary sample

Lin Huff-Corzine: This is a big business.

Kristin Welch: There were some.

Marieke Liem: - To what extent did you relate serial killers with multiple killers- That’s mass, and I defined that as different than serial killers.

James Alan Fox: How did you choose your cases?

Kristin Welch: Random from the over 52 that I found in the reading I did.

Kathleen Heide: Can you say more about those who killed husbands vs those who killed husbands etc?

Kristin Welch: I wouldn't feel comfortable discussing that until I look at my full data but I did break it down into intimate partner killing and children killed by parents, etc, but there are also cases where a woman would kill off a husband and all children so nobody else could share the estate

Kathleen Heide: How far back did you go?

Kristin Welch: As far back as I could.

Candice Batton: Do you think patterns may emerge if you look at more than 10?

Kristin Welch: If I could get funding and opportunities to do more complete research in vicitimology, autopsy reports, police reports, etc, I'd like to investigate further.

### **Paper 3 – Gabrielle Salfati “Street prostitutes: High risk victims of homicide”**

Darryl W. Roberts: There are a couple of people at Johns Hopkins that are looking at prostitutes from a nursing perspective. Jackie Campbell is looking at it and she would argue that sexual, control, and violence is all part of the same thing.

Gabrielle Salfati: Most of the literature says the reason prostitutes are targeted is that they are seen as objects and they haven't adopted the traditional sexual roles of females and men see them as objects that are property, not persons. They get paid and they can do what they want to them. What I want to do is investigate why they do what they do, how do they target them?

Tina Jaeckle: Will you be breaking this down in racial categories?

Gabrielle Salfati: Yes, we will be doing this in South Africa as well to understand a racial/cultural component because their trends are much different than the US. Anecdotally this all comes back down to the issues of equality and sexual objectification and if you do not conform to traditional sex roles and you are on black on top of that its even worse.

Katharina Gruenberg: Can you differentiate between prostitutes on and off the job?

Gabrielle Salfati: Yes and the literature suggests prostitutes are vulnerable on and off the job because of the lifestyles they lead. They are drug addicts and they associate with dangerous people even off the job. Even when home they encounter risk because of clients who know where they live.

**Chapter Six:**  
Session 5: Media Portrayals of Homicide

**Moderator: Candice Batton**

**Media and Crime: Towards a NEO-Realist Position.** Gary Jensen, Vanderbilt University.

**Slain and Slandered: A Content Analysis of the Portrayal of Femicide in Crime News.** Rae Taylor, University of Central Florida.

**The Schizophrenic New York Times.** Christa G. Polczynski, University of Central Florida.

**Discussion** recorded by Katharina Gruenberg

# News and Crime: A “Neo-Realist” Perspective

Gary F. Jensen

Vanderbilt University

## Abstract

Social constructionists give the impression that there is little or no relationship between media coverage of gang violence and actual violence nor between media generated panics about cocaine use among athletes and measures of cocaine use. The evidence presented for such arguments has been citations to general patterns with no attempt to apply quantitative methods. The current paper concentrates on 1) the relation between newspaper and magazine articles on gangs and both F.B.I. supplemental homicide statistics on gang murders and survey data on gang violence and 2) news coverage of cocaine use among athletes and self-reports of cocaine use. In both instances the correlations over time are consistent with the view that the media response lags behind temporal variations in violence and drug use. The analysis calls for a “neo-realist” position on the link between media coverage and these two crime problems and illustrates problems with uncritical acceptance of social constructionist arguments.

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The most popular perspective in sociology dealing with the processes and dynamics involved in 1) the delineation of a “social problem,” 2) the designation of some characteristic of people as a problem encompassed in some “deviant” category, and/or 3) as the favored foundation justifying qualitative epistemology or methodology is commonly referred to as social constructionism. A very simple definition of social constructionism in the study of deviance is expressed in Rubington and Weinberg’s (2005: 1-2) statement that social constructionists take deviance as “subjectively problematic” as opposed to “objectively given.”

One of the most common types of evidence used to highlight the constructionist position is any indication of a tenuous or fabricated “reality” as the impetus for defining a social problem, defining problematic people, or applying definitions and labels to specific people. In fact, the most impressive “deconstruction” of a problem from such a perspective is a demonstration that the alleged reality is a fabrication or a dramatic distortion of some real world events. Socially constructed myths can be exposed when information on the actual events that prompt the moral enterprise defining a problem can be shown to be an over-dramatization or an over-reaction to those events.

A common research theme in constructionist research is to examine the role of the media or the use of the media by various interest groups in the invention or definition of a social problem. Social constructionists can make a strong case for their view by demonstrating disparities among measures of reality and the amount of moral enterprise or media attention paid to it. For example, Shelden, Tracy, and Brown (2001: 3) state that data on gang-related articles in newspaper and magazines “demonstrates that media reporting of events does not always conform to reality.” The specific pattern leading to that conclusion was the decline in news coverage “in recent years,” coupled with “steady growth in the number of gangs and the number



of gang members” in “surveys of law enforcement agencies.” The gang problem could be interpreted as declining in one source of subjective imagery while remaining constant, or even increasing, using data pertinent to an alternative “subjective” reality.

In fact, the concept of a “moral panic” was introduced by social constructionist to encompass situations where the public, political, and media reactions to a troublesome event or “problem” appears to far exceed the actual magnitude or any changes in the magnitude of the problem (Goode and Ben-Yehuda 1994). The rediscovery of the “gang problem” in the 1980s is depicted by McCorkle and Miethe under the rubric of Panic: The Social Construction of the Gang Problem (2002) and their analysis emphasizes the fabrication of many aspects of the problem.

### **The Current Investigation**

This paper takes the relation between underlying “real world” or “naturalistic” phenomena and media attention to a problem as problematic. From an extreme constructionist perspective there should be little or no relationship between alternative ways of assessing variations over time in the magnitude of a problem, including media attention to the problem, assessments of the problem in data compiled by agencies, and attempts to track problems using survey data on involvement in problem behavior. A modest relation among alternative measures would be support for a contextual constructionist or a “moderate” or “realist” position. Finally, strong relationships would be consistent with a strong realist conception. If the magnitude of attention over time corresponds very closely with evidence that can be interpreted as tapping an underlying reality, then social constructionists need to specify the properties of problems that are best explained by that perspective or to reject the relevance of that data to adjudicating among the three positions.

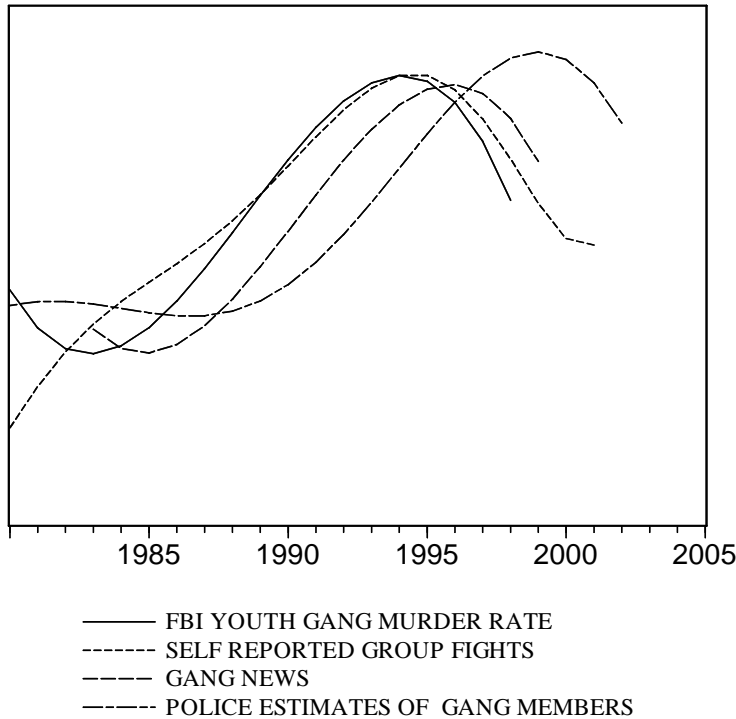
### **Gang News and Estimates of Gang Activity**

The analysis will concentrate on the relation between newspaper and magazine articles on gangs and gang activities using the data cited in Sheldon, Tracy, and Brown (2001: 3) as measures of gang news. Although there are no systematic survey data based on youths’ self-reports that would allow any statements about the magnitude of gang involvement over long spans of time, the Monitoring the Future surveys have asked high school seniors to report the number of times they were involved in altercations where one group of youths got into a fight with another group. Such data do not include dropouts or provide detail on the meaning of group fights, but we can compare the variations over time for these survey data with the estimates from FBI youth gang murder rates from F.B.I supplemental homicide reports and estimates based on the National Youth Gang Surveys summarizing police estimates of the magnitude of the gang problem.

Equations based on these four estimates of the gang problem are plotted in Figure 1. Several observations about patterns over time are suggested by the four different sources of data. First, the FBI and self-report data followed nearly identical paths, both accelerating from the mid 1980s to the mid 1990s and declining thereafter. Second, gang news stories follow a similar pattern, but “lag” behind the trends in events captured by the FBI and self-report data. News stories peak a year later. Finally, the police estimates follow a similar pattern but with an even longer lag, peaking in 1997. It is true that the police estimates do not always coincide with “reality” but they do follow a similar pattern over time with a decline evidenced by the late 1990s. It appears that those agencies had a delayed response to real events with little evidence

that they created a panic for the sake of ratings or budget increases.

**Figure 1**  
**Gang News and Three Measures of**  
**the Gang Problem**



### Summary

This analysis suggests that examples typically presented as evidence of moral or social panics with tenuous links to any “real” measure of the magnitude of the problem are themselves problematic. For the gang problem, there are meaningful lags between different measures, but the temporal patterns are very similar. Temporal variations in F.B.I. reports and self-reports of group fights are very closely related with no lag, suggesting that they are both measuring behavioral dimensions of the gang problem. The same temporal pattern is found for gang news, but such news lags behind the behavioral dimensions of the problem. Finally, police estimates appear to lag behind both the behavioral measures and the news. It may be that the temporal patterns in police estimates reflect the news coverage with a one year lag. If that is the case, the behavioral data lead to a prediction that the next round of surveys of police estimates will pick up the upturn reflected in the MTF and the F.B.I. data. At any rate, it is time to begin challenging perspectives that pay little attention to actual data when depicting crime problems as artificial panics.

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# SLAIN AND SLANDERED: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE PORTRAYAL OF FEMICIDE IN CRIME NEWS

Rae Taylor

**University of Central Florida**

## **ABSTRACT**

The present study consists of a content analysis of crime news to determine how femicide victims are portrayed. Research suggests that public perception, predominately shaped by the media, leads to individual attitudes and behaviors and that it is therefore necessary to determine how femicide is portrayed by the media in order to begin to change existing faulty perceptions about femicide and femicide victims.

The analysis consisted of 292 domestic homicide-related articles published by one newspaper from 1995 to 2000, with female-perpetrated incidences used as a control in the analysis. The five-year time frame and the metropolitan newspaper chosen allowed for a much more comprehensive analysis than similar studies. The data were analyzed to determine a number of factors, including effects on newsworthiness, context revealed, and patterns of victim blame. Various findings in existing literature were supported by data in the present study. Additionally, an interesting dichotomy concerning victim blame emerged from the analysis, suggesting victims are blamed both directly and indirectly for their own femicides. Direct tactics include using negative language to describe the victim, highlighting the victim's choice not to report past incidences or cooperate with prosecution as contributing to her murder, and highlighting her actions with other men, such as actual and suspected infidelity while married, being seen with another man, being found with another man when killed, and being the mistress of the killer as contributing to her murder. Indirect tactics include using positive, sympathetic language to describe the perpetrator, highlighting the perpetrator's mental, physical, and emotional problems, discussing the couple's financial despair, highlighting the victim's mental or physical problems, and describing domestic violence in terms that assign equal blame to both the victim and perpetrator.

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## **SUMMARY OF THEORY, METHODS, FINDINGS**

### **Feminist Theoretical Framework**

Men may resort to violence against their female intimate partners to maintain power and control over their partners. In these events, the media may exonerate these men through victim-blaming coverage, which also may encourage such behavior (Lowney & Best, 1995; McNeill, 1992; Meyers, 1994; 1997). According to researchers, this treatment of women by the mass media is a fundamental problem in society, as it is the mass media that truly educate the public on social issues and transmit these messages intergenerationally (Tuchman, 1978). Thus, it is primarily the media who perpetuate harmful myths and stereotypes about victims of violence against women (Byerly, 1994; Meyers, 1994; 1997).

While the research on femicide has been firmly established in the literature, certain areas have been neglected. Specifically, the manner in which the media portray these victims and

perpetrators has remained under studied (Meyers, 1997). Furthermore, while the notion of femicide has been established in the homicide literature, it is essentially nonexistent within the media community. While there are various definitions for femicide, all based in a feminist theoretical framework, (i.e. Caputi and Russell, 1992; Radford, 1992), the definition offered by Dawson & Gartner (1998) will be used in the current analysis: “the killing of women by a male intimate partner...” (p. 383).

### **Methods**

In this study, newspapers were selected for content analysis of how femicide victims are portrayed in the media. Similar studies have been conducted involving analysis of a relatively small number of newspaper articles (i.e. two stories) for a short period of time (i.e. six months) (Chermak, 1995; Meyers, 1994); however, the data collected for the present study were from one newspaper for a five-year span (1995 to 2000), thus allowing for a substantially larger sample size. The current study incorporates analysis of both the manifest and latent content in the newspaper articles. Frequency statistics as well as more in-depth text analysis for concepts such as tone (i.e. victim-blaming, sympathetic) are utilized. In addition, detailed examples are offered for each element of latent analysis to substantiate the author’s interpretation.

### **Sample Frequencies**

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292 articles were retrieved

150 = male-perpetrators/female victim

18 = female-perpetrated/male victim

27.3 % (n = 41) of male-perpetrated = murder-suicides

5% (n = 1) female-perpetrated = murder-suicide

\*1 article involved a same-sex couple (male)

57% (n = 166) articles were one of a multiple series on the same incident

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### **Findings**

Beginning with victim-blame, the articles in the present study presented no exception to the tendency of the media to blame victims for their own victimization. Authors of the articles in the current sample managed to discredit or altogether blame victims using several methods, some with direct and others with more indirect approaches. The direct approaches included the language used to describe the victim, both in adjectives and in behaviors attributed to the victim, attributing the violence to the victim’s lack of reporting previous violence and/or not cooperating with the prosecution of the perpetrator in prior offenses, and highlighting when a woman had an affair, had been suspected of infidelity, when the woman had been in the company of another man during the incident, or when the woman was the mistress of her killer. Some of the more indirect approaches used to cast blame on victims and/or exonerate perpetrators included adjectives used to describe the perpetrator, behaviors attributed to the perpetrator, disclosure of mental, physical, and emotional problems of the perpetrator, disclosure of mental or physical problems of the victim, discussing the perpetrator’s frustration over financial despair, and describing a history of domestic violence in neutral terms as to assign equal blame to both parties for past incidences of violence or for the troubled state of the relationship as a whole. Conversely, articles pertaining to female-perpetrated incidences contained very little victim blame compared to stories where females were the victims. While four of the female-perpetrated

stories in the sample did make mention of the fact that the perpetrator had been abused by the victim and two were clearly incidences precipitated by the victim, the majority of these stories were void of any of the victim blame tactics described in reference to male-perpetrated incidences. A summary of the victim-blame dichotomy can be seen in the table below.

### **Dichotomy of Victim Blame**

<b>Direct victim blame tactics</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Negative language used to describe the victim</li><li>• Highlighting the victim's choice not to report past incidences as contributing to her murder</li><li>• Highlighting the victim's decision not to prosecute previous incidences as contributing to her murder</li><li>• Highlighting her actions with other men, such as actual and suspected infidelity while married, being seen with another man, being found with another man when killed, and being the mistress of the killer</li></ul>
<b>Direct victim blame tactics</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive, sympathetic language used to describe the perpetrator</li><li>• Highlighting the perpetrator's mental, physical, and emotional problems</li><li>• Discussing the couple's financial despair</li><li>• Highlighting the victim's mental or physical problems</li><li>• Describing domestic violence in terms which assign equal blame to both the victim and perpetrator</li></ul>






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In addition to the central focus of victim blame and the relevant new contributions to the literature, the current study serves to support various findings reported in existing literature on the portrayal of femicide victims by the news media. For example, the current analysis revealed that members of the criminal justice system are the most heavily relied upon of the sources referenced in the articles. When an article is based on the report of an incident, responding officers and detectives are the most common source for information. When an article is based upon the judicial proceedings stemming from an incident, prosecutors and defense attorneys are the most common sources for information. In addition to the criminal justice system personnel, various other sources are referenced, though not as frequently, including friends and family members, co-workers and neighbors of the victim and/or perpetrator. Quotations from these sources, however, were usually featured in follow-up stories on an incident or in the judicial process. This is presumably due to the fact that reporters have to take the most readily available information on a story, which is largely available through police, and run with it in order to meet deadlines.

Existing literature on the topic suggests that while victim advocates would be the best source of information about victims and their plight, advocates are rarely regarded as worthy sources by the media (Benedict, 1992; Byerly, 1994; Jones, 1994; Meyers, 1997). The current study supports this claim, as there was only one article in the sample of 292 where an advocate's view

was sought. This article was relatively lengthy and the history of domestic violence was well documented. An advocate from a local women's shelter who had worked with the victim was quoted briefly about how she had been abused by her killer and how she feared he would kill her.

The context of a relationship was commonly referenced in the articles. The sources most often cited for information concerning context included police, family and friends of the victim and/or perpetrator, co-workers and, in the judicial-related articles, attorneys for both sides. Context references included a history of domestic violence and marital problems such as impending divorce and custody, financial problems, and infidelity. On the other hand, several articles featured the context of the relationship as seemingly peaceful and happy, according to sources close to the family.

On the whole, the current study serves to reinforce various findings reported in existing literature on the portrayal of femicide victims by the news media, while identifying some new areas as well. One basic theme of existing literature with regard to the portrayal of victims is that the news media tend to blame victims for their own victimizations, and the present study produced findings consistent with this theme. Additionally, these findings support literature from feminist theorists who contend that the tendency of the media to cast blame on victims of femicide for their own deaths presents a significant barrier to social change concerning femicide. The exception found regarding victim blame was in cases where the incident was female-perpetrated. Very little victim blame was revealed in those particular articles.

The present study is both a contribution to the body of literature in existence on the topic of femicide, as well as a stark reminder that victims of femicide are often blamed for their victimization through the news media. As feminist theorists contend, this faulty portrayal is then filtered into the perceptions, and thus, attitudes and behaviors of members of society. Through this process, the problems associated with this portrayal, including the occurrence of femicide itself, is only perpetuated. It is crucial to develop this area of study, as it is perhaps the cornerstone to change with regard to impacting femicide rates.

# The Schizophrenic New York Times

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## Introduction

In the theory of social construction of reality, Berger and Luckmann (1966) explain that reality is formed by reoccurring events. Crimes are reoccurring events, in that although they do not happen exactly the same way, they are similarly reflected in newspaper articles to catch a reader's attention. Often articles are focused on the same types of crimes (i.e. murder) leading readers to perceive that these crimes occur more often than they do and/or more often than other types of crime, such as larceny. Many studies in past years have focused on the veracity of the crime information in newspaper articles; in general finding that news reports do not correspond to the crime statistics.

In this paper, I take a step beyond earlier studies on the media and crime by analyzing the reoccurring reports of drive-by shootings through the *New York Times* incident reports and thematic news-related articles to determine whether these events as portrayed are consistent. Vasterman (2005) uses similar titles for differentiating between articles. Incident reports are the articles printed on an actual event, in this case a drive-by shooting. The thematic news-related articles are those which focus on the theme of drive-by shootings, but are based on opinions, e.g. editorials, crime wave reports, etc.

In reading the articles from the *New York Times*, the difference in crime portrayals between the incident reports and thematic news-related articles became apparent. By using three parameters (offenders, victims, and causes of the event) to classify drive-by shooting incidents, it became even more evident that published articles on drive-by shootings are not consistent.

## Methods

The *New York Times* was my source for this study, because of its availability through the InfoTrac OneFile Database and its coverage of national news-worthy events. To obtain the articles for this study, many trials of combinations of words were used to find the most comprehensive results. After many trials with key words, I concluded that the most accurate search was returned with the key words *drive-by shoot\* murder*. This search which produced 165 documents was completed through all articles over the available time period of 1857 to 2003. The 165 articles were then pared down to 54 articles which all relate to drive-by shootings and have the word murder mentioned in them. These articles ranged from news stories and notifications of policy implementations to book reviews and letters to the editor.

## Analysis

I performed some quantitative analyses to determine whether newspapers reports are consistent. In the 54 articles I reviewed for information relating to offenders, victims, and causes of drive-by shooting, I found that 11% (6) of the articles reported an opinion of the parameters of drive-by shootings, 65% (35) reported on actual parameters in drive-by shootings, and 24% (13) reported both on actual parameters and opinions of drive-by shootings. The articles range in date



from 1987 to 2001, with 1999 being the year with the most articles published about drive-by shootings.

One of the major implications of drive-by shooting are the opinions that the victims as well as offenders of drive-bys are more often children and/or youth. I completed two cross-tabulations testing this hypothesis to show the total incident reports and thematic news-related articles claims about offenders and victims, specifically focusing on the aspect of age.

Fifty-six percent of thematic news-related articles project children/youth to be the offenders of drive-by shootings, while the incident reports actually identify that 69% of the shootings are committed by adults. Victim is more evenly presented than the offender. The notion that victims in drive-by shootings are children/youth is held by 50% of the thematic news-related articles, while 47% of reported articles write that the victims are children/youth. Fifty-three percent of victims written about in incident reports are adults, yet adults are never mentioned in thematic news-related articles as victims. The findings provide support that articles perceive children/youth to more often be the victims of violent crime while adults are actually in the majority.

I also analyzed the articles by a qualitative method of content analysis to give the statistics a more rounded and holistic view of the inconsistencies displayed by the *New York Times*. One way to catch the attention of the reader and cause the reader to question her/his probability of becoming a victim is to describe the victim as innocent or as someone who is not related to the situation, i.e. a person who is in the wrong place at the wrong time. Questions of who commits the crime and blaming of groups are faulted with the violence. Numerous types of people, such as gang members and drug dealers are blamed with committing these horrendous acts which take the lives of young “innocent passersby”.

Offenders of drive-by shootings reported in the *New York Times* are often mentioned by their age and association with groups or illegal dealings. Offenders are rarely described by their race, education, or occupation. Race is only mentioned three times relating to the offenders and, of the three times, it is mentioned twice in one article which contradicts itself. In the article journalist Erik Eckholm provides his opinion of offenders for which he has no verification. In fact, within the same article a gang member contradicts Eckholm.

The frequency of offenders listed as gang members and drug dealers in thematic news-related articles far outweigh the number of times an incident report identifies the offender with a group or illegal dealing. As for offenders relating to drug dealing, none of the incident reports report the offender as a drug dealer, compared to three thematic news-related articles which make reference to the drive-by shooters as drug dealers. Out of the entire incident report articles, only half mention the offender’s connection with a group. The only article which identifies the offender as a member of a group which is not a street gang is a white supremacist. In accordance with most of the information discovered in the analysis, just as victims and offenders are not portrayed by incident reports and thematic news-related articles consistently, neither are the causes of drive-by shootings.

The cause of violence in this incident report is rare; violence for the “fun-of-it” is not quoted in any other article. Numerous other reasons are given, however, for the motivation to kill in these articles, from turf wars and drugs to arguments and random violence. In incident reports, most of the drive-by shootings are attributed to rivalry with another gang and arguments with the victim.

Even with these quantitative and qualitative analyses, questions are left unanswered: Who are the victims? Who are the offenders? What is the root cause of the violence? It is impossible to tell. The reliability of the *New York Times* on drive-by shootings for parameters of victims, offenders, and causes of violence is simply absent. Currently, there is no way to verify whether the incident reports or the thematic news-related articles are correct in their portrayals of drive-by shootings, because there is no national database which identifies homicides as resulting from drive-by shootings. From this paper what is known is the 'New York Times' are inconsistent in reporting about drive-by shooting offenders, victims, and causes of the crime. Due to the fact that these portrayals are inconsistent I surmise that at least one, and possibly both incident reports and thematic news-related articles, are misleading in their accounts of drive-by shootings.

I also contend that the media do not produce consistent information about issues/events. The majority of society has only the popular media from which to gather its information; if the *New York Times*, one of the largest national newspapers, is not consistent, it is not surprising that society has little to base its information of drive-by shootings on, let alone how to address the problem. I assert that those who are responsible for the print media are the public's only source of information about drive-by shootings; therefore, law enforcement and justice departments with the media outlets should strive to provide the general population accurate information relating to crime, by putting aside their individual agendas. Those responsible for the print media should focus their efforts to inform and educate the interested reader about current issues.

Although the incidence of drive-by shootings has seemed to subside in some areas, still much of the phenomenon is unexplained. This is a vast hole in the research literature that obviously cannot be filled by the popular media. To further research this subject, a national database of drive-by shootings should be constructed and used to verify the accuracy of "news" portrayals, because it is from the portrayals that readers base their knowledge. The extent of knowledge can be greatly expanded through basic analyses by means of adding drive-by shootings as a descriptive variable to the homicide reports kept by the Federal Bureau of Investigations, similar to what the Center for Disease Control's National Violent Death Reporting System will contain in 2007, to determine information similar to that found by Hutson et al. (1994) and Sugarmann and Newth (2007). This content analysis should be the first step to many more analyses and writings about drive-by shootings to inform the interested reader on the workings of drive-by shootings, which will in turn lead to discussions on how to address the problem.

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## Discussion Notes

**Recorded by Katharina Gruenberg**

**Gary Jensen: Media and Crime: Towards a NEO-Realist Position**

Marc: The best estimate of gang activity is the FBI estimate?

Gary: Interesting that FBI and self-report show the same trends.

Marc: What about the recent upward trend?

Gary: Yes there is an upward trend. Why, I don't know. The research is about whether moral panic and construction.

Amanda: Are police refusing the problem?

Gary: No, first assess whether it is a real problem, then hit hard. By the time police get a good estimate it is not accurate anymore.

Darryl: Patterns seem to start coinciding. Time decrease due to internet?

Gary: Maybe, we will need to see if they actually will coincide.

Gary: Cocaine use and moral panic: use kept going up in news when already down in data: real problem with the lags.

Chris: Answer Marc's question!

Gary: I predicted that the lags would continue. This is not a prediction to the problem itself but the police estimates according to the equations.

David: Looking from the police's point of view. Is there false reporting in the self report and thus the self report less accurate than the police?

Gary: 1) Correlation between FBI and survey estimates, so no false measure.

2) In gang research the same questions as the police so fairly objective survey and no incentive for false reports.

## **Rae Taylor: Slain and Slander: A Content Analysis of the Portrayal of Femine in Crime News**

Roland: Any idea why the reporter blames the victim?

Rae: Similar studies show an embedded attitude in the society.

Possibly not intentionally, just overall attitude, especially in more indirect ways.

Chris (female): What degree reports blame victim and what are the sources?

Rae: Big issue: use of personal information. Combination of talking an editing.

Family members, etc all talk naively about the story.

Jamie: Naïve vs. good story?

Jamie also criticizes the mixture of editorials, reports and letters.

Dwayne: Was that one newspaper?

Rae: Yes:

Dwayne: can vary between newspapers, so Chris question depends on the readership. Try to expand your sample.

Rae: This is not an attempt to generalize.

Kathleen: What type of paper or readership?

Rae: NWs metropolitan >250000 big paper, not NYT.

Delabias; How many authors and what is their gender?

Rae: No information on gender, more than one reporter. So no way of figuring out whether there is a bias from one certain reporter.

Vick: Femicide versus other victims: depends mainly on readership.

Dew: Story can be partially negative but still sympathetic, need balancing.

Vance: NP Rep

Deadlines, crim. Justice -> starters. What you can do with the story.

## **Christa Poczynski: The Shizophrenic New York Times**

Roger: Newspapers were designed to reflect reality, but suicides etc are boring and don't make the news.

Jay: Problem But people think they do.

Darryl: NY daily and NW are used as historic information.

Jamie: op.editors, op eds. Freelance whoever, whereas news a lot of the findings may be due to differences in people subject to op.eds.:

Cross-classification whether news or opinion.

What is an opinion? As soon as a quote appears.

Roland and others: Discussion whether name of paper could have been mentioned.

Joe: Newspaper as well as our data is the first draft of history.

Amanda: Police department kept only newspaper portrays.

# **Chapter Seven:**

## **Session 6: Refining Homicide Research**

**Moderator: Gabrielle Salfati**

**Dial M for Missing: An Enhanced SHR Database Adjusted for Item and Unit Missingness.**

*James Alan Fox and Marc L. Swatt, Northeastern University.*

**Defining and Scoring Random Homicides.** *Geoffrey Li, Statistics Canada.*

**The Darfur Genocide: Implications for International Homicide Research.** *Tina Jaeckle,*

*Flagler College.*

**Domestic Homicide – Suicide in the Netherlands: Methodological Considerations.** *Marieke*

*Liem, Utrecht University.*

**Discussion** recorded Rae Taylor

# Dial M for Missing: *Multiple Imputation of the Supplementary Homicide Reports, 1976-2005*

James Alan Fox and Marc Swatt  
Northeastern University

**ABSTRACT** – The Supplementary Homicide Reports (SHR) is one of the most widely-used sources of detailed information on homicide. By far the most limiting aspect of the SHR is the substantial amount of missing data in the data series—both unit and item missingness. Unit missingness arises when agencies fail to report some or all of their homicides to the FBI. Item missingness, on the other hand, arises when records for homicide incidents are incomplete, lacking certain information about the victim(s), offender(s), or other characteristics of the offense (e.g., victim-offender relationship). This paper details our efforts to resolve missing data problems in the SHR database. First, we describe the procedures used to generate multiply-imputed values to correct for item missingness. Second, we discuss a weighting procedure, which relies on National Center of Health Statistics (NCHS) mortality data, used to adjust for unit missingness. Finally, we evaluate these procedures by comparing univariate distributions of the non-missing cases to the fully imputed and adjusted dataset.<sup>1</sup>

Group Support for this project was provided by the Law and Justice Statistics Program of the American Statistics Association and the Bureau of Justice Statistics. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the United States Department of Justice.



## Extent of the Missing Data Problem

Unit missingness (homicides not reflected in the SHR data) is a problem that plagues information from agencies of all sizes. Although the SHR database does not differentiate whether zero homicide counts were due to non-reporting or to legitimate zero-homicide months within the data, the FBI does monitor non-submission in the overall UCR program. The annual estimates of UCR homicide can be used as benchmarks for assessing the completeness of the SHR. Overall, the SHR file is approximately 90 percent complete, with annual rates of completion ranging from a high of 96.7 percent in 1983 to a low of 83.7 percent in 1998.

Within the approximately 90 percent of available records, the extent of item missingness varies considerably across variables. Some variables, namely agency characteristics (e.g., population group and geographic division) are always complete. Victim data occasionally contain missing information, yet the extent of missingness is comparatively small. Table 1a presents the patterns of missing data for the three included victim characteristics. Specifically, victim age is missing in 1.72 percent of homicides, sex in 0.14 percent of homicides, and race in 1.04 percent of homicides. Overall, only 2.49 percent of homicides contain missing data for any of these victim characteristics.

Offender information, however, has a much higher rate of missingness. Based on SHR situation codes, approximately 26.5 percent of homicide incidents involve unknown or unidentified offenders. Even for solved homicides, there is a non-trivial amount of missing offender information. The extent of missing data for offenders, from both unsolved and solved cases, is presented in Table 1b. As shown, 26.5 percent of offender records contain no information about the perpetrator, and 31.6 percent of the records are missing some information regarding the assailant's age, sex, or race. Due to the significant extent of missing data for offenders, usual approaches for missing data are problematic.

There is also a substantial amount of missing information pertaining to characteristics of homicide incidents, as shown in Table 1c. The homicide weapon is fairly complete, missing in only 4.2 percent of cases. In contrast, circumstance is missing 23.4 percent of the time. However, the most problematic variable is the victim/offender relationship, missing in one-third of all homicide incidents.

## Assumptions about Missing Data

Given the wide variety of different strategies that have been invoked to account for missing data in the SHR, it is important to examine these approaches in the context of the assumptions made regarding the nature, source and distribution of the missing data. Specifically, various methods for handling missing data in the SHR have rested on one of three assumptions about missingness: Missing Completely at Random (MCAR); Missing at Random (MAR); or Not Missing at Random (NMAR).

The MCAR assumption holds that missing data are a random subset of the underlying data universe and thus that the probability that a data element (Y) is missing does not depend on the value itself or that of any other variable (X1, X2, ..., Xk) in the analysis (see Little & Rubin, 2002; Allison, 2002). Specifically,

$$(PY \text{ is missing} | Y, X_1, X_2, \dots, X_k) = PY \text{ is missing}$$

This rudimentary and often implausible assumption is implicit in the listwise deletion and mean-substitution approaches that, until recently, were routinely applied without much consideration of their effects. While eliminating incomplete cases listwise may be inefficient (by discarding partial information), under the MCAR assumption, the estimation of parameters remains unbiased.

A less restrictive assumption about missingness—and one that underlies most imputation strategies—holds that the data are Missing at Random (MAR). Under the MAR assumption, the probability that a variable  $Y$  is missing does not depend on the value of  $Y$  itself, after covariates ( $X_1, X_2, \dots, X_k$ ) related to the likelihood of missingness are controlled (see Allison, 2002).<sup>2</sup> Specifically,

$$(PY \text{ is missing} | Y, X_1, X_2, \dots, X_k) = PY \text{ is missing} | X_1, X_2, \dots, X_k$$

12 k 12 k

The MAR assumption is a cornerstone to most of the previous attempts to impute missing data in the SHR (Fox, 2004; Pampel and Williams, 2000; Regoeczi and Riedel, 2003). For example, it may be true that the probability of offender race missingness is greater for black perpetrators. Once factors such as victim race are controlled, however, it can be argued that the correlation between offender race and its propensity for missingness largely disappears.

A final possibility is that the missing data are Not Missing at Random (NMAR), or “nonignorable.” This means that the probability that a particular item  $Y$  is missing is dependent upon the value of  $Y$ , even after controlling for relevant covariates. That is,

$$(PY \text{ is missing} | Y, X_1, X_2, \dots, X_k) \neq PY \text{ is missing} | X_1, X_2, \dots, X_k$$

12 k 12 k

Non-ignorable missing data are rather difficult to handle, as adjustments require additional information about the nature of the data (which is typically unavailable) or very restrictive assumptions regarding the missingness structure (Allison, 2002; Schafer, 1997). Fortunately, several studies have demonstrated that MAR strategies using several covariates frequently outperform many of the intractable procedures for handling non-ignorable missing data (see, for example, David, Little, Samubel, and Triest, 1986). For this reason, it seems safe to assume that the bulk, if not all, of the SHR missing data is MAR.<sup>3</sup>

### Multiple Imputation

Many methods for imputing incomplete data involve replacing missing information with a single value. While preserving the means or conditional means of the entire data set,

this approach suffers the serious limitation of shrinking the variances and covariances of affected variables. As a consequence, hypothesis tests based on the imputed data tend to have inflated significance levels and increased probabilities of committing a Type I error.

An alternative strategy involves replacing the missing information with several imputed values, such as by repeatedly drawing randomly from the posterior distribution of the parameters of a missing data model. These multiple fill-in values correct for the deflated standard errors of the parameter estimates. The resulting data file contains the M imputed values for each missing item. As a consequence, the multiple imputation (MI) strategy yields M estimates of a particular parameter of interest. The M results are then combined to produce a single point estimate with a standard error reflecting the additional uncertainty resulting from using imputed data (see Schafer, 1997).

Although multiple imputation produces several imputed values, conventional formulae for variances and covariances can be used (see Allison, 2002). Thus, the multiple imputation approach offers conceptually simpler analyses for prospective researchers despite the requirement that these analyses need to be repeated for M separate data sets. It is well documented that most of the desirable properties of multiple imputation emerge even with a small number of imputed data sets (see Little and Rubin, 2002; Schafer, 1997: 106). Finally, there is evidence suggesting that multiple imputation is more robust to misspecification of the data generating process than single imputation procedures (Little and Rubin, 2002; Schafer, 1997). In light of its many advantages, multiple imputation is the strategy of choice for handling item missingness in the national SHR database.

## **DATA AND METHODS**

During the initial processing, it was necessary to correct some coding errors that resulted from inconsistencies between the victim and offender characteristics and the victim-offender relationship. In all, 1,444 cases containing relationship/sex/age inconsistencies were identified and corrected as reasonably as possible. Additionally, there were several instances where the case records were updated during a subsequent release of data, but the original cases had not been purged from the SHR database. Nearly 100 problematic cases were identified and removed from the SHR. After making these types of adjustments, there were a total of 538,210 victims and 597,351 offenders in the SHR data file of murder and non-negligent manslaughter, spanning the 30-year time frame from 1976 to 2005.

Several variables in the SHR have complete (or nearly complete) information and these were used as covariates for the imputation models for both the offenders and victims. Year of the offense was collapsed into three eras, 1976-1985 (the pre-crack era), 1986-1995 (the peri-crack era), and 1996-2005 (the post-crack era). Region of the reporting agency was included as a four-category covariate (Northeast, Midwest, South, and West). Population group was transformed into a four-category Urbanness measure (large city, small city, suburb, and rural). The weapon variable was condensed into a three-category covariate (gun, knife, and other).<sup>4</sup>

While age of victim and age of offender are reported as quantitative variables in the SHR data files, preliminary analyses of their marginal and joint distributions indicated substantial departures from normality. Since many of the imputation procedures for quantitative variables assume multivariate normality, treating these variables as such could generate

unreasonable imputations. Thus, both age variables were converted into categorical forms. Victim age was collapsed into seven-category variables (Under 14, 14-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-49, 50-64, and 65+). Moreover, as few offenders were at the age extremes, offender age was collapsed further into five categories (Under 18, 18-24, 25-34, 35-49, 50+).

Victim and offender sex remained as dichotomies (Male and Female). Victim and offender race was collapsed into three groups (White, Black, and Other). It was also necessary to collapse circumstance into three categories (felony, argument, and other) and victim-offender relationship into four categories (intimate, other family, friend-acquaintance, and stranger). Again, although the original SHR file contains additional information regarding these variables (particularly circumstance and relationship), concerns with data sparseness necessitated using a much smaller set of categories.

### **Item Missing Data**

The Bayesian Imputation Posterior (IP) method implemented in S-Plus was used to impute item-missing data. Since these data were categorical, we used the log-linear model for generating a set of five imputed values for missing data. This procedure separates the data into distinct patterns of missingness and estimates a multivariate model from available information within each pattern. The results are combined to provide overall estimates of parameters. Once the initial values of the parameters are obtained, a random draw is taken from the posterior distribution of the parameter space, which is used to generate imputations for the missing data. This procedure is repeated iteratively until the parameter estimates converge. After convergence, this procedure generates a chain of values that has the probability of missingness given the observed data as a stationary distribution. After a suitable “burn-in” period, it is possible to sample from this chain to produce a final set of multiply-imputed values for missing data (Schafer, 1997).

The data augmentation (DA) algorithm was used for calculating the multiply imputed values for the loglinear model. First, an EM algorithm was employed to obtain “starting values” for the parameters as well as to discern the speed of convergence. The models converged fairly quickly—all, in fact, within 3-5 iterations. The starting values of parameters were then included, assuming a non-informative prior distribution, in the loglinear model to estimate the parameters for each missing pattern in the data. Then, these parameters were used to generate predicted values using a random draw from the conditional predictive distribution. Next, the parameters of the log-linear model were re-estimated from the “augmented” data in which the predicted values were substituted for the missing values. Another predicted value was then generated based on a random draw from the new conditional predictive distribution. This algorithm continually re-estimated parameter values and generated predicted values for missing items until the model converged and the estimated parameters stabilized.

After convergence, the DA algorithm was continued to generate a long chain of imputations, and  $M = 5$  separate imputations were selected by using every  $k^{\text{th}}$  ( $k = 100$ ) set of values. Since this process is a Markov Chain Monte Carlo algorithm, so long as  $k$  is large, the imputations are approximately independent (See Allison, 2002; Insightful, 2001; Little and Rubin, 2002; Schafer, 1997 for a detailed discussion of the DA algorithm). As described below, the imputation process was to some extent applied sequentially: certain imputations were grounded upon other imputations. For these situations,  $M$  parallel chains were generated—one for

each prior imputation set.

Initial results indicated that data sparseness was a significant issue when including all incomplete variables and covariates, requiring additional adjustments to the procedure.<sup>6</sup> Each of the victim and offender characteristics (age, sex, and race) was imputed separately (i.e., first victim and offender age were imputed, then victim and offender sex, and finally victim and offender race). By conducting separate imputations for each demographic characteristic, it was implicitly assumed that these characteristics were conditionally independent (e.g., victim age depended upon offender age, but was independent from victim race, victim sex, offender race, and offender sex, after controlling for time period, urbanness, region and weapon). Victim and offender characteristics were either independent or had only very small correlations, supporting the pairwise independence assumption.

The 10-step approach used to impute missing values in eight variables is summarized in Table

2. Due to the hierarchical data structure, there were some complications when dealing with homicide cases having multiple victims and/or offenders. Only the information for the first offender is included in the victim files and only information for the first victim is included in the offender file. This structure made it necessary to impute values for missing multiple victims and offenders separately.<sup>7</sup>

After imputing all the victim and offender characteristics, the imputed data were included as covariates along with region, urbanness, and weapon to impute missing values for relationship and circumstances. Since the coded relationship in the SHR refers to the relationship between the first victim and the first offender, only the data referring to the first victim and first offender were used in these imputations. Initial results indicated that data sparseness due to the large number of categories within the covariates was substantially affecting the distribution of imputed cases across relationship and leading to an unusually large number of atypical cases (e.g., a wide age gap or the same gender for victim/offender pairs in intimate-partner homicides). To avoid the sparseness problem, the categories of several of the covariates were collapsed for use in the imputation. As covariates, victim and offender age were collapsed into three categories (under 25, 25-34, and 35 and over), and victim and offender race were collapsed into two categories (White and Nonwhite). Finally, urbanness was collapsed into two categories (large city, non-large city). The distribution of imputed cases for relationship and circumstance substantially improved when using recoded covariates. Having five imputed data sets with imputed values for the victim and offender characteristics, a single imputation was generated for victim-offender relationship and circumstance for each of the five data sets.

### **Unit Missing Data**

Adjustments for unit missingness were accomplished using a weighting procedure that combined the FBI's UCR estimated homicide counts by year and geographic division, and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) data on decedents whose death was classified by coroners as a homicide. Because they are widely used for volume and trend estimation, the published UCR estimated homicide counts were maintained as level benchmarks for weighting the cases (see also Fox 2002; Williams and Flewelling, 1987). In addition, because of missing data for some states for entire years, it was only possible to generate weights raked to the nine-category division estimates, rather than to the state-level estimates.

UCR estimates of homicide counts do not contain information about the incidents, specifically victim characteristics. For patterns by victim characteristics, therefore, we used the NCHS mortality file of information for deaths due to homicide from 1979 to 2003. In other words, UCR estimated counts by year and division determined the level benchmarks, while NCHS data was utilized to benchmark distributional patterns by victim age, sex and race.

In order to avoid a substantial number of empty cells, provisional weights were created for the three time eras discussed previously, rather than for individual years. These temporary values were later adjusted by raking the weighted distributions to the year-by-division estimated counts from the UCR. Finally, due to the relatively small number of victims of “other” race, these cases were combined across division for the creation of weights.

One final complication that arises when constructing weights is that for the multiply-imputed data, cases can have different filled-in values for victim characteristics across the datasets. This would create consistency problems for the weights and result in different benchmarked distributions across the datasets. It was necessary, therefore, to derive five sets of weights for every case. This adjustment ensures that there is consistency within each dataset in regard to the benchmarked distribution.

## RESULTS

The results from combining the multiple-imputation for item missingness and weighting for unit missingness are presented in Table 3, both estimates of frequency/percentage distributions and standard errors. The left panel displays distributions for the actual cases only, while the right panel shows the distributions for the full data set. The actual data represent a virtual universe (that is, there is no sampling error, notwithstanding the case underreporting). Therefore, the standard errors shown on the right should technically be calculated from the multiply-imputed data alone, weighted for unit missingness, and not from the cases with actual values. However, because the actual observations number in the hundreds of thousands (and thus contribute little to the standard error estimates), the modified standard error calculations (that treat the actual cases as having fixed values) differed by a trivial amount, and therefore are not presented here.

The top portion of Table 3 presents the distribution of victim characteristics after imputing for item missingness and weighting for unit missingness. The age, sex, and race distributions for the adjusted data were very similar to the overall distributions for the actual cases. For all victim characteristics, the differences in the distribution for the actual and imputed cases was less than 0.5 percent, increasing slightly in male and white victims.

The distribution of offender characteristics after adjusting for item and unit missingness is presented in the middle portion of Table 3. Similar to the victim characteristics, there were only slight differences in the distributions of offender age, sex, and race between the actual and imputed and weighted cases. For all offender characteristics, the imputed distributions diverged from the observed distributions by less than 0.5 percent, the largest being a 0.44 percent increase in the 18-24 age group.

The bottom portion of Table 3 contains the distribution of the incident characteristics, relationship and circumstance, after adjusting for both unit and item missingness. As with the victim and offender characteristics, the distribution of the imputed cases was very similar to the distribution of actual cases. There were some important differences in the distribution of victim-

offender relationship, however. The percentage of intimate partner homicides declined by over 2 percent (12.41% v. 14.79%), while the percentage of stranger-perpetrated homicides increased by a similar amount (26.54% v. 24.82%). This is consistent with the argument that stranger homicides are more difficult to solve than intimate homicides. There are also some noteworthy differences in regard to the weapon use. A higher percentage of cases were assigned to the other weapon category compared to the knife or gun category for the imputed cases. The reduction in gun cases after imputation was a result of treating the small percentage of unknown weapon cases as neither gun nor knife. As it happens, the percentage of NCHS homicides involving a firearm is within one-tenth of a percentage point of the final result for the weighted SHR file (64.36%) and that for knives was close as well. This supports the decision to classify the 4.2% missing weapon cases as “other” weapon.

### **CONCLUSION**

The presence of missing data in the SHR is problematic, especially in regard to offender and incident characteristics, as the amount of item missing data can be quite extensive. Further, given the reporting gaps among agencies and even entire states, unit missing data are pervasive as well. The consequences of missing data for researchers using the SHR depend on the assumptions that are made regarding the missingness process. Results from both prior research and the current study demonstrate that the MCAR assumption is generally untenable in the SHR. This result is important because commonly used techniques for accounting for missing data (e.g., listwise deletion, pairwise deletion, mean substitution) lead to biased inferences about homicide patterns and trends. Given the importance of the SHR for homicide research, there is a clear need for a consistent strategy for accounting for item and unit missingness across studies.

In order to provide a simple and consistent adjustment for missingness, we have created multiply imputed values for item missing data and generated a set of weights for unit missing data, providing a much improved version of the SHR for homicide research. For item missingness, we used the Bayesian IP method of multiple imputation from a log-linear model, generating five sets of imputations for all missing victim, offender, and incident characteristics. For the unit missing data, we employed a unit weighting approach that benchmarks cases against the UCR estimates, while adjusting for the distribution of victim age, sex, and race within the NCHS mortality files.

We compared the distributions of key variables for the imputed data against the distributions observed in the actual data to assess the viability of this approach. Taken as a whole, it is clear that there was a substantial amount of similarity between these distributions. The univariate distributions of victim and offender characteristics were relatively unchanged after adjusting for item and unit missingness. Further, while there were some differences in the distributions of homicide situational variables, these differences were consistent with the belief that certain types of homicide, such as stranger killings, are more difficult to solve. These results support the conclusion that the multiple imputation and case weighting approaches used in this project are reasonable adjustments for victim, offender, and incident missing data in the SHR.

The imputed data will be archived along with the original SHR data to accommodate future research applications. Although the multiply imputed data create some additional complexity in analyzing the SHR, we feel that the added complexity is more than offset by the statistical advantages of using these imputations. Specifically, research using the adjusted data

should be less prone to biased estimates and deflated standard errors that result from using the unadjusted data.

## NOTES

1. We also conducted several bivariate analyses to examine whether the joint distribution of key variables were preserved after the adjustments for unit and item missingness. These results are discussed in Fox and Swatt (2007).
2. We are also assuming that the parameters that will be estimated are distinct from the parameters that govern the missing data process (see Schafer, 1997: 11). Missing data mechanisms that meet both the MAR criterion and the distinctiveness criterion are called ignorable.
3. The victim-offender relationship is one possible variable for which the MAR assumption is untenable. Some researchers argue that stranger victim-offender relationships are more likely to be reported as missing (Maxfield, 1989; Messner et al., 2002; Reidel, 1987). With the assistance of Messner and Deane we also considered the Log Multiplicative model for imputing missing victim-offender relationship data. Although there are no set criteria to evaluate which approach produced better imputations, preliminary analyses suggested that the Bayesian IP results were reasonable. Further, it would be very difficult to incorporate additional covariates into the Log Multiplicative models. For these reasons, only the Bayesian IP results are included in the SHR archived files (for more details, see Fox and Swatt, 2007).
4. There were relatively few cases in which the weapon was undetermined (4.15 percent). It is unlikely that many of these unknown weapon cases would have involved either a gun or knife, as injuries caused by such instruments tend to be readily apparent, as compared to strangulation, suffocation, drowning or poisoning. Because of this and the concern for not overstating the amount of gun crime, all unknown weapon cases were recoded as “other weapon.” As a check of this approach, we examined the weapon distribution for jurisdictions with at least 50 homicides and with weapon data at least 99.5% complete. For these 80 jurisdictions, the percentage of gun homicide was just over 64%, about the same as for the entire data set when treating missing values as other weapons.
5. We explored several alternative imputation strategies, including PROC MI in SAS, predictive score modeling in SOLAS, and multiple hot-deck imputation in SOLAS. Preliminary results indicated that the Bayesian IP method in Splus outperformed all of these alternatives (for additional details, see Fox and Swatt, 2007). Horton and Lipsitz (2001) also provide a very detailed discussion of many of the other available software packages that can be used for multiple imputation.
6. In these initial models, the crosstabulations of all the covariates had over 2 million cells, which is approximately four times the number of available cases.
7. First, imputed values were generated for the primary victim and offender. Next, these



data were matched with the original data and the imputed data were substituted for the missing information for each first victim and offender. Then, two separate sets of five files were generated: victim files containing the imputed values for the first victim and first offender and the yet-to-be-imputed data for multiple victims; and offender files containing the imputed values for the first victim and offender and yet-to-be-imputed data for multiple offenders. Finally, missing age, sex and race data for the multiple victims and offenders were imputed. Multiple-victim data were imputed (separately for age, sex, and race) for the victim file using the covariates year group, region, urbanness, weapon, and the relevant offender characteristics. Multiple-offender data were imputed (again separately for age, sex, and race) for the offender file using the covariates year group, region, urbanness, weapon, and the relevant victim characteristics. Since there were five data sets for both the first victims and first offenders, a single imputed value was generated for each of the five data sets. The results of these procedures generated five victim files and five offender files with imputed data that are linked by the first victim and first offender, each of which has consistent values for their characteristics between the two data sets.

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**Table 1: Missingness Patterns in Victim, Offender and Incident Variables**

- .a. Victim characteristics
- .b. Offender characteristics
- .c. Incident characteristics

Age Sex	Race	Count	Percent
● ●	●	524,787	97.51%
● ●	○	4,008	0.74%
● ○	●	51	0.01%
● ○	○	84	0.02%
○ ●	●	7,740	1.44%
○ ●	○	936	0.17%
○ ○	●	19	0.00%
○ ○	○	585	0.11%
<b>Total Victim Records</b>		<b>538,210</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Age Sex	Race	Count	Percent
● ●	●	408,566	68.40%
● ●	○	2,942	0.49%
● ○	●	37	0.01%
● ○	○	209	0.03%
○ ●	●	24,879	4.16%
○ ●	○	2,382	0.40%
○ ○	●	141	0.02%
○ ○	○	158,195	26.48%
<b>Total Offender Records</b>		<b>597,351</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Weapon V/O Rel	Circ	Count	Percent
● ●	●	353,476	59.17%
● ●	○	32,439	5.43%
● ○	●	90,585	15.16%
● ○	○	95,725	16.02%
○ ●	●	8,425	1.41%
○ ●	○	2,145	0.36%
○ ○	●	4,860	0.81%
○ ○	○	9,696	1.62%
<b>Total Offender Records</b>		<b>597,351</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Table 2: Available Missing Outline of the Multiple Imputation Strategy**

<b>Data File and Imputation Step</b>	<b>Imputed Variables</b>	<b>Percent missing</b>	<b>Complete Covariates</b>	<b>Partially-Imputed Covariates</b>
<b>First victim and first offender demographics (N = 514,418)</b>				
Step 1 M =5	Victim Age (7) Offender Age (5)	1.73% 33.46%	Urban (4) Region (4) Weapon (3) Year (3)	
Step 2 M = 5	Victim Sex (2) Offender Sex (2)	0.14% 29.94%	Urban (4) Region (4) Weapon (3) Year (3)	
Step 3 M = 5	Victim Race (3) Offender Race (3)	1.03% 30.70%	Urban (4) Region (4) Weapon (3) Year (3)	
<b>2+ Victim demographics (N = 23,792)</b>				
Step 4 M = 1 for each of 5 impute sets	Victim Age (7)	1.61%	Urban (4) Region (4) Weapon (3) Year (3)	1st Offender Age (5)
Step 5 M = 1 for each of 5 impute sets	Victim Sex (2)	0.14%	Urban (4) Region (4) Weapon (3) Year (3)	1st Offender Sex (2)
Step 6 M = 1 for each of 5 impute sets	Victim Race (3)	1.37%	Urban (4) Region (4) Weapon (3) Year (3)	1st Offender Race (3)
<b>2+ Offender demographics (N= 82,933)</b>				
Step 7 M = 1 for each of 5 impute sets	Offender Age (5)	16.25%	Urban (4) Region (4) Weapon (3) Year (3)	1st Victim Age (7)
Step 8 M = 1 for each of 5 impute sets	Offender Sex (2)	5.51%	Urban (4) Region (4) Weapon (3) Year (3)	1st Victim Sex (2)
Step 9 M = 1 for each of 5 impute sets	Offender Race (3)	7.01%	Urban (4) Region (4) Weapon (3) Year (3)	1st Victim Race(3)
<b>Relationship and Circumstance based on 1st Victim/Offender (N = 514,418)</b>				
Step 10 M = 1 for each of 5 impute sets	Relationship (4) Circumstance (3)	35.20% 24.84%	Urban (2) Region (2) Weapon (2)	Victim and Offender Age (3), Sex (2), Race (2)

**Table 3: Distributions of Variables using Multiple Imputation for Item-Missingness & Weights for Unit-Missingness**

Variable Values	Actual Cases f %	Item and Unit Imputed Cases Mean f Mean % SE
Victim Age Under 14	25,099 4.75%	28,021 4.72% .031%
14-17	26,670 5.04%	30,925 5.20% .084%
18-24	126,435 23.90%	142,203 23.93% .057%
25-34	152,529 28.84%	170,593 28.71% .087%
35-49	120,403 22.76%	136,540 22.98% .117%
50-64	49,463 9.35%	53,819 9.06% .149%
65+	28,331 5.36%	32,177 5.41% .041%
Total	528,930 100.00%	594,277 100.00%
Victim Sex		
Male	411,315 76.53%	459,237 77.28% .371%
Female	126,156 23.47%	135,040 22.72% .371%
Total	537,471 100.00%	594,277 100.00%
Victim Race		
White	271,532 50.98%	306,825 51.63% .324%
Black	249,734 46.89%	271,188 45.63% .619%
Other	11,331 2.13%	16,264 2.74% .299%
Total	532,597 100.00%	594,277 100.00%
Offender Age		
Under 18	41,953 10.19%	66,846 10.11% .054%
18-24	143,230 34.79%	232,847 35.23% .229%
25-34	118,801 28.85%	190,518 28.83% .062%
35-49	76,095 18.48%	121,099 18.32% .095%
50+	31,675 7.69%	49,612 7.51% .097%
Total	411,754 100.00%	660,922 100.00%
Offender Sex		
Male	386,655 88.12%	584,383 88.42% .157%
Female	52,114 11.88%	76,539 11.58% .157%
Total	438,769 100.00%	660,922 100.00%
Offender Race		
White	203,106 46.84%	305,485 46.22% .303%
Black	221,828 51.16%	340,271 51.48% .167%
Other	8,689 2.00%	15,166 2.29% .143%
Total	433,623 100.00%	660,922 100.00%
Relationship		
Intimate	58,653 14.79%	82,041 12.41% 1.165%
Other family	40,937 10.32%	67,284 10.18% .089%
Friend-Acq	198,483 50.06%	336,170 50.86% .404%
Stranger	98,412 24.82%	175,427 26.54% .852%
Total	396,485 100.00%	660,922 100.00%
Weapon		
Gun	383,897 67.09%	425,392 64.36% 1.336%
Knife	98,318 17.18%	108,193 16.37% .400%
Other	90,010 15.73%	127,337 19.27% 1.733%
Total	572,225 100.00%	660,922 100.00%
Circumstances		
Felony	122,434 26.77%	176,922 26.77% .059%
Argument	218,540 47.78%	317,581 48.05% .152%
Other	116,372 25.45%	166,419 25.18% .146%
Total	457,346 100.00%	660,922 100.00%

## Clearance Rates for Canadian Homicides

Geoffrey Li

Statistics Canada

### **Background information for the presentation “Defining and Scoring Random Homicides”.**

Statistics Canada has collected information on “random homicides” through the Homicide Survey since 1997. Initially this information was collected under motive as “random killing”. However it was moved to a stand-alone question on survey for 2005, and seeks to determine whether the homicide was a random killing.

A random killing is a one that does not aim to target one specific individual. If solved, the homicide will normally involve the killing of a stranger who is engaging in the normal course of their daily lives or who is “in the wrong place at the wrong time”.

It would be very unusual for a homicide that was committed by someone known to the victim (i.e. a family member or an acquaintance) to be scored as random. However, not all stranger homicides are random. If the victim is individually targeted in any way (e.g. two strangers at a bar engage in an altercation which culminates into homicide), then it should not be scored as “random”.

A homicide may be scored as random even if the victim is selected from a pre-determined group as long as all members of the group have an equal chance of being chosen. For example, if a perpetrator is seeking to kill a female child and abducts and kills a vulnerable girl he happens upon, this homicide would be random if all female children were at risk.

If the homicide is unsolved, it is still possible for a homicide to be scored as “random”. This determination should be based upon police investigation and informed judgement.

The possible values for the question “Was This Victim Randomly Selected” are as follows:

#### **YES**

Includes all homicides in which the victim was selected by the accused on a random basis. It will normally involve the killing of a stranger who is engaging in the normal course of their daily lives or who is “in the wrong place at the wrong time”.

#### **NO**

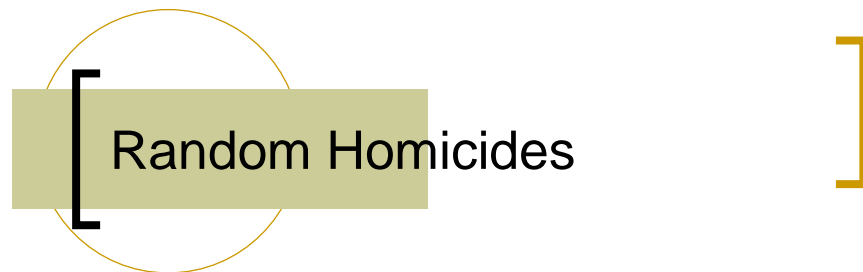
Includes all homicides in which the victim was NOT selected by the accused on a random basis. With few exceptions, these would include homicides committed by someone known to the victim.

#### **UNKNOWN**

Includes all homicides in which police are unable to determine whether the victim was randomly selected or not. This value is most commonly scored when a homicide is unsolved and police are unable to establish the circumstances surrounding the homicide. While we feel that the question is sound, and the definition is clear, in practice, there are differences in opinion on some of the homicides that are scored random.

The straight-forward random homicides such as drive-by shootings where the assailants have no intended target and the sniper who shoots first pedestrian who walks into his gun sight, are easy to identify. As are typical non-random homicides such as domestic arguments which escalate, and cases where the accused stalks and kills his victim.

As the presentation will show, it is the cases in the middle ground which cause the most difficulty.



The difficulty in classifying  
homicides as random or not

## [ Random Homicides ]

- “Random” is a term widely used in media, by police, and by the general public
- Different people have different interpretations of what is a random homicide

2

## [ Random Homicides ]

- Random based on the selection of the victim
  - i.e. the victim was the first person to meet a certain criteria

3



## [ Purpose ]

- Demonstrate difficulty scoring homicides as random
- Get suggestions on how we can clarify the definition of “random homicide” on the Homicide Survey

4

## [ “Random” homicides on the Homicide Survey ]

- Random homicides first collected on the homicide survey in 1997.
  - under motive as “random killing”
- Stand-alone question on 2005 version of questionnaire.

5

## [ Statistics Canada Definition ]

- A “random” homicide is one that does not aim to target one specific individual.
  - Normally involves the killing of a stranger who is engaging in the normal course of their daily lives or who is “in the wrong place at the wrong time”
- Victim may be from a pre-determined group as long as all members of the group have an equal chance of being chosen.
  - A perpetrator who wants to kill a female child kills a vulnerable girl he happens upon
- But if the victim is individually targeted in any way, then it should not be scored as “random”
  - Two strangers in mutual fight at the bar, which culminates into homicide

6

## [ Straight-Forward Scenarios ]

- Straight-forward random homicides
  - Drive by shooting
    - Assailants shoot into a crowd of people with intent to kill, but with no one in mind
  - Sniper shoots the first pedestrian who walks into the gun sights

7

## [ Straight-Forward Scenarios ]

- Typical non-random homicides
  - Most homicides between family members, acquaintances
    - Wife kills husband after learning of affair
    - Drug dealer collects on an unpaid debt

8

## [ Middle Ground ]

- The situations in between the polar extremes cause the most trouble

9

## [ Case One ]

- The victim was the passenger in a vehicle that was targeted in a drive-by shooting.
- It is believed that the victim was an innocent victim, mistaken for another person suspected of gang associations.
- The victim received multiple gunshot injuries which led to his death.

10

## [ Issue ]

- Should homicides involving mistaken identity be random?
- Individual was individually targeted.
- Victim was going about his day unaware he was in danger

11

## [ Case Two ]

- An elderly female hits her head during a purse snatching, resulting in a brain aneurysm caused by her head striking the sidewalk.
- A minimal amount of force was used but the victim died as a result of the fall

12

## [ Issue ]

- Should homicides without an intent to kill be random?
- Is the selection based on apparent vulnerability for robbery “random” enough
  - subjective assessment on part of the accused rather than hair colour, gender, race, clothing, etc.

13

## [ Case Three ]

- Victim was operating convenience store
- The accused entered while disguised and armed with a handgun.
- Accused demands and receives cash.
- When the accused turned to exit the store, the victim tried to strike the accused with a baseball bat.
- The accused retaliates and opens fire upon the victim, killing the victim.

14

## [ Issue ]

- Victim attacked accused after accused turned to leave.

15

## [ Case Four ]

- The victim attended a local bar, where upon he met both suspects.
- The victim and suspects were previously not known to each other.
- The victim drank with the suspects for an hour or so and played pool. All left in a cab to go to the victim's residence for more drinking.
- While there, the victim's throat was slashed. His wallet was found at the scene along with personal I.D and cash.
- The motive is still unknown.

16

## [ Case Five ]

- Three males (homeless persons) were sitting in an alley drinking when they were attacked by three individuals. The three victims of the attack were punched and kicked numerous times by their attackers before they were chased off.
- The next morning one was in grave condition and later died from his trauma.
- There is no other motive for the attack.

17

## [ Agreed?? ]

- How many times did you agree with your neighbour?
- Is the definition of a random homicide clear enough?
- Do we need to modify the definition? How?

18

## [ Other considerations ]

- If there are people selected from a predetermined group, can we say that it is truly random? Entire population does not have an equal chance of being selected.

19



## [ Suggested changes? ]

- Do you have suggested wording or methodological changes for the question?

20

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# The Darfur Genocide: Implications for International Homicide Research

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## **Abstract**

My dissertation research (paper in progress) has focused on the trauma and conflict implications for the Dinka (non-Arab Black Africans) who have become political refugees in the United States following the long-term Sudanese civil war. More refugees are expected to be granted asylum as the genocide in the Darfur region continues without effective United Nations and Sudanese intervention. Now considered the worst humanitarian crisis of today, it is essential to understand the ethnic and socio-political roots of this conflict and the implications for present and future homicide and genocide research on an international level.

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This paper and presentation originates from twelve months of ethnographic dissertation research which focused on documenting the social construction of identity, trauma, and issues of conflict among the Sudanese refugees who have resettled in Jacksonville, Florida. Several of these study participants are deeply impacted psychologically and emotionally by the ongoing Darfur genocide in the Sudan due to prior experiences, their country of origin, and/or to their transnational connection to family members remaining in refugee camps in this highly volatile region. Although significant and noteworthy criminological and sociological research has been completed on the various causes of violence in Darfur; this paper further suggests the need to utilize an anthropological lens to better understand conflict, not only in Darfur but also among various tribal groups who have migrated to the United States. Researchers who examine the causes of homicide and genocide on an international level can benefit from the inclusion of the experiences and interpretations of political refugees who have been granted asylum in the U.S. This allows for a broader comprehension of the perspectives of the survivors, their discernment of the causes of the violence, and the impact of the spread of ethnic and tribal conflict following resettlement. Moreover, this analysis included the socio-political and historical aspects within the Sudan that have led to the present day crisis in the Darfur.

This research utilized two major theoretical frameworks: social constructionism and social ecology. Berger and Luckmann (1966), building upon the work of Durkheim, developed social construction theory to explain the manner in which human beings subjectively interpret varying meanings and realities in the context of everyday life. These multiple “realities” and interpretations then become the knowledge that sociologists seek to understand in order to define dimensions of culture. These foundations of this knowledge can be discovered in many aspects of human life. Berger and Luckmann (1966) further argued that one such essential element was through language and speech which is capable of transmitting symbolism and meaning through patterns and themes, allowing for insight into these multiple realities and creation of identities

depending on the social context. Moreover, these scholars (1966) considered man as living within a “web of human relationships” that is further defined by the social structures and historical institutions in which they exist.

The history of the on-going conflict in the Sudan region in Africa is highly complex and has been examined by numerous scholars. Deng (1995) highlighted the civil war and struggle between the many ethnic and religious identities in the Sudan from a historical perspective. Deng (1995) categorized the long term Sudan civil war as one which has existed between extreme nationalist visions regarding how the Sudan, as Africa’s largest country, should be assimilated and governed. Although the Sudan is extraordinarily culturally and ethnically diverse, the country has characteristically been divided into the North and South regions. In the Northern Sudan, Arab-Muslims have dominated the region for several decades through an elevation of status by the Sudanese government. Many of the non-Muslim groups living in the North soon assimilated within the Arab-Muslim culture, mostly out of the basic need for survival and respect (Deng, 1995).

In contrast, the Southern Sudan is comprised primarily of Nubian and Nilotic non-Muslim Black African groups who have been viewed by the Islamic North as inferior in their cultural and religious practices (Deng, 1995). Through the work of early British Christian missionaries in Africa, many ethnic groups in the Southern Sudan began to espouse and practice various forms of Christianity, which was in direct conflict with their Northern Sudanese Arab-Muslim neighbors (Deng, 1995). Moreover, religious practices of the Southern Sudan, such as animism, were viewed by the Arab-Muslim North as barbaric in nature and lacking in legitimacy (Deng, 1995).

Conflict within the country of the Sudan has existed for centuries. The influence of the successive Egyptian and British rule within the country has continued to be apparent to this day. Although the Sudan gained independence in 1956, centralized governmental rule was placed under the authority of the Arab-Muslim leaders to decide the future of the country (Deng, 1995). Deng (1995) further explained that the armed conflict within the Sudan has occurred primarily between consecutive governments in Khartoum and various liberation movements in the South. In an attempt to unify the country under one rule, the Arab-Muslim government utilized forced assimilation of the non-Arab groups of the South through Arabization and Islamization. This, in turn, created a violent civil war with the Southerners who were seeking succession and independence from the North (Deng, 1995). This conflict lasted until 1969 when Major General Muhammad Jaafar Nimeiri seized power and the conflict took another direction (Deng, 1995).

In 1972, with the assistance of Ethiopia’s emperor Haile Salassie, the Addis Ababa Agreement was signed and thus granted a cease fire and regional autonomy to South Sudan. This served to meet some of the needs of the southern Sudanese and peace appeared to be a realistic possibility (Jendia, 2002). The Addis Ababa peace agreement effectively disintegrated in 1977 when Nimeiri forwarded the Islamic agenda in the country, thus leading to imposition of Sharia law in 1983 (Jendia, 2002). Moreover, Nimeiri decreed a division of the South into three separate sub regions which lead to further weakening of any political power held by the Southerners (Jendia, 2002). This began a new era of extremely violent civil war which not only served to further distance the North and South, but also created additional conflicts between the various Southern ethnic groups over resources and loyalties.

Another important aspect which served to ignite a new cycle of violence and second civil war was the defection in 1983 of Colonel John Garang, a Dinka tribesman from the South, who had previously maintained his loyalty to Nimeiri policies (Hecht, 2005). However, Garang began to oppose Nimeiri's large-scale abuse of the rules of the Addis Ababa agreement and joined as the ultimate leader of the newly formed Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A or SPLA), which called for a united socialist Sudan (Hecht, 2005). This infuriated Nimeiri who in turn responded in September 1983 with a widespread and gruesome killing spree and genocide in Dinkaland (Hecht, 2005). According to Hecht (2005), the loss of life attributed to this civil and the resulting famine has reached catastrophic proportions, with the total number of deaths of Southern Sudanese estimated at over two million. In addition, the relationship between the government of the Sudan and Ethiopia had been deteriorating since 1977. In June 1989, discussions of peace were destroyed between the SPLA and the government when the National Islamic Front (NIF) led by General Omar al-Bashir increased the north-south war by proclaiming jihad against the non-Muslim south (Jendia, 2002). In addition, inter-ethnic conflict increased due to a major factional split within its ranks. On and off negotiations between the Sudan government and the SPLA continued with little progress from 1994 to 2001. In July 2002, the Machakos Protocol granted a self-determination referendum for the South after a six year interim period, while Sharia law was to remain in the North. The Naivasha Accords was officially signed in Kenya on January 9, 2005 bringing peace between North and South Sudan for first time in twenty years (<http://www.theirc.org>). Future plans for the Sudan included the placement of Colonel John Garang as the first Vice-President of the new government based in Khartoum, however, he was killed in an airplane crash in Uganda on July 30, 2005. Garang's sudden death left a devastating void for hundreds of thousands of Southern Sudanese who viewed him as a savior who would lead them out of a past history of violence and into a more positive future (Tesch, 2005).

Peace in present day Sudan is considered fragile. The Darfur conflict is ongoing in the western Sudan primarily between the Janjaweed, a government-supported militia recruited from local Arab tribes, and the non-Arab Black African peoples. The conflict began in February 2003 and has consistently been characterized by torture, rape, and genocide. At the present time, the violence exists in and around refugee camps established for thousands of displaced Southern Sudanese. The death toll for both civil wars and the Darfur crisis is estimated at approximately two million, with four million people, primarily Southern Sudanese, displaced (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa>).

# DOMESTIC HOMICIDE-SUICIDE IN THE NETHERLANDS:

## METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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### **Background**

#### **Typology**

Homicide-suicide is a generic term referring to a homicide and a subsequent suicide by the same actor. Considered as one act rather than two separate ones, the period between the first and the second act can vary between minutes and days. Although homicide-suicide is often referred to as murder-suicide, the latter denotes the legal aspect of homicide, whereas homicide includes both murder and manslaughter and is therefore a preferred and more encompassing term.

Epidemiological studies pursued in some countries have estimated the homicide-suicide rate to be as low as 1 per cent in England & Wales (Barraclough & Clare Harris, 2002) to as much as 15 per cent of all recorded homicides in the United States (Campanelli & Gilson, 2002). As of yet, statistics on the Netherlands are not available.

The literature suggests that, with few exceptions, virtually all victims of homicide-suicide are either female sexual partners or blood relatives, usually children (Berman, 1979; Brown & Barraclough, 2002;

Cohen et al., 1998; Marzuk et al., 1992; Selkin, 1976; Stack, 1997; West, 1965). The killing of an intimate partner and the subsequent killing of oneself is also referred to as uxoricide-suicide. Filicide-suicide involves cases in which the perpetrator not only takes his or her own life, but that of his or her child(ren) as well. This phenomenon has also been referred to as extended suicide. Familicide-suicide constitutes an overlap of both uxoricide-suicide and filicide-suicide: the killing of both spouse and child(ren), whose perpetrators are also referred to as family annihilators. It is important to recognize that a proportion of homicide-suicides also take place outside the family realm. Extrafamilial homicide-suicides are, however, considered to differ substantially from intrafamilial homicide-suicides in the nature of the act, the relationship between victim and perpetrator as well as in psychopathological features in the perpetrator. Therefore, this study focuses on those homicide-suicides that take place within the family.

### **Research Problem**

In the Netherlands, there has been no systematic research on the homicide-suicide phenomenon. As these acts are not recorded in official crime statistics, not even the yearly number of cases and victims is known. Consequently, there is a vast dark number surrounding these cases. Homicide-suicides are an emerging public health concern, victimizing not only those directly involved in the act, but also relatives, friends and acquaintances. Given the fact that multiple victims are involved, the degree of secondary victimization tends to spread drastically. Homicide-suicides lead to shock and incomprehension among society at large. Compared to other forms of homicide, perpetrators of domestic homicide-suicide are less likely to show risk factors such as previous convictions, previous domestic violence or certain sociodemographic markers which renders homicide-suicide cases particularly unpredictable.

The importance of examining this virtually unstudied phenomenon is twofold: on one hand, little is known about the psychological and psychiatric characteristics of this type of perpetrators, as many of them typically succeed in committing suicide after the perpetrated homicide (Ewing, 1997; Goldney, 1977; Polk, 1994). A national surveillance system mapping the nature and incidence of homicide-suicide is nonexistent. Consequently, guidelines for risk assessment and prevention are lacking.

On the other hand, given the fact that many of these perpetrators attempt to commit suicide after the offence, it can be questioned whether the criminal justice system does or should treat these survivors differently compared to those not instigating a suicide. In contradiction to for example the United Kingdom, the Dutch judicial system does not entail laws regulating homicide-suicides. This is particularly relevant in perceived suicide pact cases. Rosenbaum (1983) pointed out that in practice survivors of pacts are not actually prosecuted. If it is indeed the case that majority of these pacts consist of coercion rather than voluntary co-operation, it can be questioned to what extent the criminal justice system does and should treat these survivors: as suicide victims or as homicide perpetrators?

### **Theoretical Background**

By definition, two well-researched types of lethal violence overlap in the case of homicide-suicide: homicide and suicide. There is a tradition in violence research to regard homicide and suicide as antagonistic expressions of human aggression (Henry & Short, 1954; Hillbrand, 2001). Previous studies on homicide-suicide have suggested two typical motives: on one hand, a homicide-suicide in the form of an extended suicide, in which a parent takes the child(ren) with him or her in a pseudo-altruistic and non-hostile mood. A homicide-suicide, in this point of view, is primarily suicidal rather than homicidal. On the other hand, a suicide can follow a homicide committed by a male partner who intends to punish the female partner for perceived sexual infidelity or attempt to separate. The suicide is then triggered by a wish to rejoin the murdered person (Lester & Lester, 1971). As this type of homicide-suicide is thought to be primarily homicidal rather than suicidal, it has also been termed as an extended homicide. Cases in which someone kills his or her spouse in addition to his or her children are believed to constitute a combination of both an extended homicide and an extended suicide.

Several strands of research have attempted to explain domestic homicide, among which Daly & Wilson (1988) have taken a psycho-evolutionary perspective. According to this view, men exercise control over the reproductive capacity of their wives in order to make sure that the child she is bearing is his, and not his rival's. When control over the woman's sexuality is threatened, the male cuckold responds with (lethal) violence. The killing of children, according to the authors, occurs when the male doubts his paternity. They point to the fact that children with stepparents have an increased risk of becoming lethally assaulted compared to children with biological parents. From a Darwinist perspective, the killing of ones own, biological children, is 'spiteful' as evolutionist use the concept of spite: the actor carries out a course of action that is devastating in his own interests. The same accounts for the subsequent suicide of the perpetrator. Failing to explain these phenomena by evolutionary theory, Daly & Wilson (1988) argue that psychopathological rather than evolutionary factors play a key role in domestic homicide-suicide.

Psychopathological theories on homicide-suicide focus on mental illness in the perpetrator; depression is the most commonly cited disorder, followed by paranoid ideation, psychotic

illnesses and – in the case of uxoricide-suicide – morbid jealousy. Many are found to suffer from previous suicidal ideation (Belfrage & Rying, 2004). The problem with the great majority of these studies is that they rely on the retrospective analysis of hospital records or eyewitness reports in order to determine a psychiatric illness. This method renders unreliable results and leaves room for speculation wide. Despite the fact that depression and suicidal ideation play a major role in both suicide and homicide-suicide (Palermo, 1994; Wallace, 1986; West, 1965), no study so far has attempted to compare suicide and homicide-suicide from an empirical perspective in order to outline the risk factors associated with each. Another shortcoming of merely focusing on the psychopathological characteristics of these offenders is that mental factors alone do not explain the variations in rates between regions or countries over time.

Sociological approaches, on the other hand, have focused on how social norms can influence even such extreme forms of behavior such as homicide-suicide. In this line of reasoning, Coid (1983) proposed several epidemiological ‘laws’: the higher the rate of homicide in a population, the lower the percentage of offenders who are found to commit suicide. Accordingly, the proportion of homicide-suicide increases as the homicide rate increases. Others (e.g. Milroy, 1995; Felthous & Hempel, 1995) have tested Coid’s (1983) hypothesis and found that although the rates of homicide-suicides fluctuate, they do not fluctuate as much as the homicide rate. Homicides-suicides, in this sense, appear to resemble suicides in their stability over time rather than resembling homicides.

Where studies have been done, they have mainly been based on small samples and followed a forensic psychiatric perspective on individual motives and typical constellations. Sociological explanations, on the other hand, have merely relied on aggregate-level analyses without taking individual motivations into account. While both approaches are clearly important, they are not mutually exclusive and therefore unlikely to capture all relevant causal dimensions of the homicide-suicide phenomenon. Although evolutionary, psychopathological and sociological theories have all made important contributions to the understanding of domestic homicide, they each individually fail to explain the nature and incidence of domestic homicide followed by suicide.

### **Research Questions**

This research will seek to explore the nature and incidence of domestic homicide-suicide in the Netherlands. This aim translates into the following working research questions:

- What are the main social, behavioral and psychopathological characteristics of domestic homicide-suicide perpetrators?
- How does the criminal justice system deal with perpetrators surviving a homicide-suicide?
- What are the risk factors for homicide-suicides? In other words, to what extent does domestic homicide-suicide differ from domestic homicide without a suicide? And to what extent does domestic homicide-suicide differ from suicide without a homicide? When is a homicidal person at risk of self-harm and when is a suicidal person at risk of harming someone else?

### **Aim**

The aim of this study is to come to an understanding of homicide-suicides taking place in the Netherlands and their interrelatedness with domestic homicide and suicide in order to identify similarities and differences between these types of lethal violence. These approaches can shed more light on the question whether homicide-suicide can be viewed as being predominantly

homicide or suicide events, or rather a category of its own. A systematic comparison between these cases will allow for the outlining of demographic, situational and psychological factors of importance to both (mental) health care and the criminological justice system.

## **Methodology**

In this research project, three main data sources will be used: first, for an epidemiological overview of homicide-suicide cases in the Netherlands, I will make use of a national database on homicide perpetrators. Secondly, in order to examine the main background characteristics of homicide-suicide perpetrators, I will rely on case studies from a forensic observation hospital of those who have committed a homicide and who have survived a serious suicide attempt. The third data source that will allow me to answer the research questions consists of case studies of those who ‘only’ made a serious suicide attempt without having committed a previous homicide. These cases will function as controls for those who have undertaken a homicide followed by a serious suicide attempt. Following, these three methods will be described more extensively:

### **National Database**

The database ‘Murder and Manslaughter 1992-2006’ (for a detailed description of this source, see Leistra & Nieuwbeerta, 2003; 2007) includes all lethal offences that have taken place between 1992 and 2006, which have been categorized as either murder (art. 289 and 291 Dutch Code of Criminal Law) or manslaughter (art. 287, 288 and 290 Dutch Code of Criminal Law), together comprising the category homicide. Basic demographic details such as age, gender and ethnicity of the perpetrator as well as the relationship between victim and perpetrator can be extracted from these data. In some cases, offence details are included as well.

The database ‘Murder and Manslaughter 1992-2006’ is comprised of the following six sources, which partially overlap each other:

- Files from the National Bureau of Investigation (NRI). From 1992 onwards, information on homicides in the Netherlands has been collected by the NRI, which is part of the National Police Force (KLPD). The information available in these files concerns the date and location of the homicide, the homicide method as well as basic demographic characteristics of both victim and perpetrator.
- All newspaper articles generated by the Netherlands National News Agency (ANP). In the period 1992-2001 the ANP has published more than 13.000 newspaper articles related to homicide in the Netherlands. In these articles much information is available on the characteristics of the homicides, the perpetrators and victims.
- The Elsevier Annual Report. From 1992 onwards, the weekly magazine Elsevier publishes an annual report on all homicides that have taken place. This report is based on both ANP articles as well as on police files.
- Files from the Public Prosecution Service. This database records the judicial procedures of a homicide.



- Files from the Judicial Information Service and the Ministry of Justice. In addition to the judicial procedures of a homicide, this database also includes those cases in which the defendant has appealed to the case.<sup>4</sup>
- Files from the Criminal Justice Knowledge Centre (WODC). In addition to files from the KLPD and the Public Prosecution Service, these files contain detailed information stemming from interviews with relevant investigators who were in charge of the homicide event. (e.g. Smit et al., 2001).

Due to the multifocal nature of the database, all succeeded homicide-suicides in the Netherlands between 1992 and 2006 are likely to be included. Unfortunately, the database does not include offences having occurred before 1992. By making use of this database, I will retrieve the basic information necessary to generate an epidemiological overview of the homicide-suicide phenomenon between 1992 and 2006.

### **Case Studies Forensic Observation Hospital**

Previous studies on homicide-suicide have attempted to map social, behavioral and psychopathological factors using secondary data such as medical and coroner files. Given the selectivity and the limited reliability of using these methods retrospectively, several researchers have called for the study of survivors of such acts (e.g. Berman, 1996; Brett, 2002). Due to its rare occurrence, interviewing surviving perpetrators on a prospective basis will not allow me to collect a reasonable sample within a fixed time span. Therefore, this study will rely on documentary analysis, collecting domestic homicide case studies in which the perpetrator made a suicide attempt after the offence, but failed to die. In order to get a realistic and current view of the homicide-suicide nature and incidence, cases from the past 25 years will be included (1980-2005).

In the Netherlands, people who are accused of having committed serious crimes and whose criminal acts are thought to be related to a mental disorder or illness are incarcerated in the Pieter Baan Centre, a forensic psychiatric observation hospital, for a period of 7 weeks. The centre has a national function.

Suspects are admitted to the centre for court-ordered multidisciplinary assessments in order to determine the degree of accountability at the time of the offence. It has to be emphasized that the cases in the study have a pre-trial status, as at the time of the forensic mental health assessment they have not yet been found guilty. Given their consistency and profoundness, these assessment files provide much information on each individual perpetrator and thereby make it a valuable source for comparison between groups of perpetrators, such as those accused of filicide, uxoricide and familicide.

Cases were regarded as filicide-suicide, uxoricide-suicide or familicide-suicide respectively when the suicide attempt took place within one week of the offence. Adhering to such a timeline will make the research findings comparable to other research using the same time span (e.g. Campanelli & Gilson, 2002; Chan et al., 2002; Marzuk et al., 1992).

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<sup>4</sup> Whereas files from the Public Prosecution Service, the Judicial Information Service and the Ministry of Justice are less relevant in order to determine the epidemiology of homicide-suicide, as the perpetrator is typically not prosecuted, these sources are valuable in terms of analyzing the punishment in cases in which the perpetrator attempted to commit suicide, but failed.

## **Case Studies Psychiatric Hospital**

Given the fact that many perpetrators experience suicidal ideation before the homicide-suicide, it is of importance to study which factors are responsible for the perpetrator not only wishing to end his or her own life, but to take others along in his or her death. The current literature does not address this problem.

In order to assess which individuals are at risk of only hurting themselves and which individuals are at additional risk of victimizing others as well, one needs to compare homicide-suicide perpetrators with those having attempted suicide without having committed a previous homicide.

As such, this suicide-only group will function as a control for the homicide-suicide group. Homicide-suicide cases will be matched to suicide-only cases according to demographic factors as well as the relation between victim and perpetrator; i.e. uxoricide-suicide cases will be matched to suicide-only cases in which the suicide perpetrator had an intimate partner, but did not victimize him or her. Filicide-suicide cases will be matched to suicide-only cases in which the suicide perpetrator had one or more children, but did not victimize them. Familicide-suicide cases will be matched to suicide-only cases in which the suicide perpetrator had an intimate partner as well as one or more children, but did not victimize them.

In order to control for within-subjects variance and improve the ability to find important differences (Grimes & Schulz, 2000), the ratio of control to cases (i.e. the ratio of suicide-only cases to homicide-suicide cases) will be raised.

In order to examine and compare the characteristics of homicide perpetrators who made a suicide attempt to those only attempting suicide without having committed a homicide, one ideally needs the same type of data source, in which case documents provide insight into the main social, behavioral and psychopathological factors. A psychiatric hospital is the most applicable data source from which cases can be assembled from individuals who have made a serious suicide attempt without a having committed a previous homicide.

As there is no single psychiatric hospital in the Netherlands with a sole national function, data from several psychiatric institutions across the country will be gathered. Collecting data in this way will not only safeguard the inclusion of multiple assessors, but also replicate the cross-regional differences between subjects included in the main sample of homicide-suicide perpetrators. Moreover, including case material from multiple centers will increase the likelihood of assembling a large enough group to function as a reliable control group.

It is believed that the abovementioned methodology will provide for a solid basis upon which the study can be conducted. I hope to discuss possible methodological issues and shortcomings during the next HRWG meeting.

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## Discussion Notes

### Session 6: Refining Homicide Research

**Presenter: James Fox**

Q: Roger Trent: In California, we have linked SHR and vital stats successfully, but an area of concern has been child homicides, as the sources give different numbers, etc. We have combined sources of data to reconcile this but are still concerned: Are child abuse cases a subset of concern with matching data?

A: Going back to original records is always best and will be different than other sources of data, unless that data is unavailable.

Q: Darryl Roberts: Are you posting this data on ICPSR with STATA dictionary and files?

A: At ICPSR, they give you SAS, SPSS, STATA, etc. with separate files for victim and offender. The data will be very flexible for users. I can send you data for 29 years now, but 2005 will be available soon. Imputation will be done again on those new data.

Q: John Jarvis: In your unit missingness imputation, are you basing that on SHR total level? Is the level imputed as well? There can be problems with this methodology...

A: Yes. (Jamie explains how the data were approached originally and how he would do it differently, but explains that the issue has been addressed and reconciled as best as they can.)

Q: Amanda Farrell: Regarding the small number of missing cases, I understand why this is done, but are there any concerns regarding subtle trends in the missing data?

A: The standard errors are so minimal that it won't make any difference at all in the results- gives several examples to substantiate point.

Q: Roland Chilton: Jamie, are you including all victims and all offenders in your data set?

A: Yes

\*Jamie – Explains/illustrates process of imputation during question/answer session.

**Presenter: Geoffrey Li**

\*\*Several questions throughout presentation to encourage audience participation regarding randomness of various case studies.

Q: Tom Petee: What is definition of randomness? Challenges the criteria for randomness through illustrations.

Q: John Jarivs: You may be trying to identify intent when the intent information may not be discernable from your data. You have to extract intent from what you have, but there may not be a way to do it accurately.

Q: James Fox: There are actually 3 types (rather than the 2 you have identified): 1) homicide of an actual targeted victim, 2) homicide against non-targeted others, and 3) truly random homicide.

Q: Jay Corzine: You're assuming a consistency of motivation throughout the crime and this may not always be the case— gives several scenarios to illustrate how motive can change depending on opportunity.

Q: James Fox: You also have to consider victim precipitation.

Q: Derek Bixby: Asked questions to clarify researcher's goal in the project.

A: Geoffrey Li: We're trying to determine the probability of randomness in homicides.

Q: Michael Reinke: Isn't there always criterion on which a homicide perpetrator acts?

A: Geoffrey Li: Reiterated that the purpose of the study is to determine probability of randomness.

Q: Vange McLaughlin: You seem to be depending on newspapers' definition/interpretation of randomness, which is based on sensationalism [non-scientific].

Q: Katherina Gruenberg: There is a difference between completely random and completely not random – suggests the researcher consider using a scale to allow for non-absolute degrees of randomness.

Q: Marc Riedel: Believes Geoffrey is taking the wrong approach, explains theoretical approaches to explaining randomness.

Q: Roland Chilton: Would the term "haphazard" make more sense, rather than random? Explains the difference between newspapers' definitions of random versus a statisticians definition of randomness.

Q: Tom Petee: Accessed a story from the Internet to demonstrate faulty definition of randomness used by media.

Q: Chris Rasche: Points out that the current discussion is consistent with the spirit with which HRWG was created: open discussion, brainstorming, support, etc., and encourages more presentations of this sort at future meetings.

Q: Dallas Drake: Regarding randomness, there are certain ethical implications of labeling a homicide as random or not, including how ethical it is to let media dictate these classifications. Media portrayals can perpetuate fear, etc.

**Presenter: Tina Jaeckle**

Q: Mark Zelig: (In response to Tina's note on how many of the refugees from Dufar will be experiencing undiagnosed/untreated mental disorders) Mark notes that in addition to the refugees from Darfur, we are expecting Iraqi refugees also, in addition to our own troops w/ undiagnosed mental issues (i.e PTSD). This will affect crime levels.

Q: David David: Explains how Minnesota has responded to other ethnic refugees who generate homicide and other crime when they come to the US.

Q: Alan DeLine: An interesting study would be to address the child soldiers recruited for violence.

A: Tina agreed, discussed the presence of these groups in Jacksonville (Rowandans).

Q: Amanda Farrell: Another interesting implication for research is to address the impact of these patriarchal attitudes and the effect on IPV rates.

Q: David David: Discusses how law enforcement in Minnesota addressed the spike in IPV as a result of these attitudes. He explained that not only do the natives have these attitudes and behaviors (i.e. patriarchal, violent toward women), but these attitudes can become imbedded in US troops while in these countries, affecting their behavior (IPV, etc.) when they return to the US. This is particularly dangerous when they return directly home with no period of time to reacclimate to our culture.

Q: Vance McLaughlin: It seems that genocide perpetrators are very slow and disorganized in their crimes and should be more expedient. An interesting study would be to address their methods, etc.

Q: Victoria Titterington: What does the average American do with the findings of your research?

A: Tina believes it will be more of a reaction in the future than having an immediate impact.

Q: John Jarvis: Agreed it is a present-future issue, as most Americans do not appreciate the impact it will have on them immediately. As the refugees come in, they will begin to feel the impact and will then react, to both legal and illegal immigrants.

**Presenter: Marieke Liem**

Q: Vance McLaughlin: You can categorize these homicide-suicides into two levels 1) I can't live without her, based on some precipitating event (i.e. divorce), and 2) physical or mental disease (i.e. she dies from disease, perp is distraught). Additionally, there are problems with *planning* to commit suicide versus actually completing the act because suicidal ideation can be fabricated, particularly at the suggestion of a defense attorney.

Q: Darryl Roberts: Explained that those who attempt suicide are very different from those who complete it. Usually completers are first time attempters, whereas attempters usually have a pattern of unsuccessful attempts; therefore, your sample of attempters may not be representative of those who complete suicide. Darryl explains how the scale to diagnosis suicidal ideation is also not totally reliable.

Q: Chris Rasche: Are you controlling for sex/gender in your study, especially with regard to killing of children, as this is important.

A: Yes, we are controlling for sex/gender.

Q: Amanda Farrell: You are using a matched pairs technique?

A: Yes

Q: Kathleen Heide: Clarified that the timeframe from homicide to suicide in the study is one week post-homicide and asked the rationale behind the one-week span.

A: This one-week span is established in the literature for several different reasons, including remorseful period, perpetrator not being able to commit suicide because of being incarcerated, etc.

Q: Darryl Roberts: Referenced study by Phyllis Sharps – thought of doing similar study?

A: Yes, we have, but there are problems associated with adequate data collection, etc.



# **Chapter Eight:**

## **Session 7: Consideration of Homicide Clearance Research: Some New Insights**

**Moderator: Marc Riedel**

**Investigating Homicides: Researching ‘Best Practices.’** *Tim Keel, Yvonne Muirhead, and John P. Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation.*

**Investigating How Far the Law Extends: Comparing Factors Influencing Homicide Clearances and Convictions.** *Wendy C. Regoeczi, Cleveland State University and John P. Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation.*

**Homicide Solvability: A Consideration of Cleared, Exceptionally Cleared, and Unresolved Cases.** *John P. Jarvis, Federal Bureau of Investigation and Wendy C. Regoeczi, Cleveland State University.*

**Discussion recorded by Chris Rasche**

Detecting Clues in Homicide Management  
Identifying “Best Practices” in Homicide Investigations

**Timothy G. Keel,**

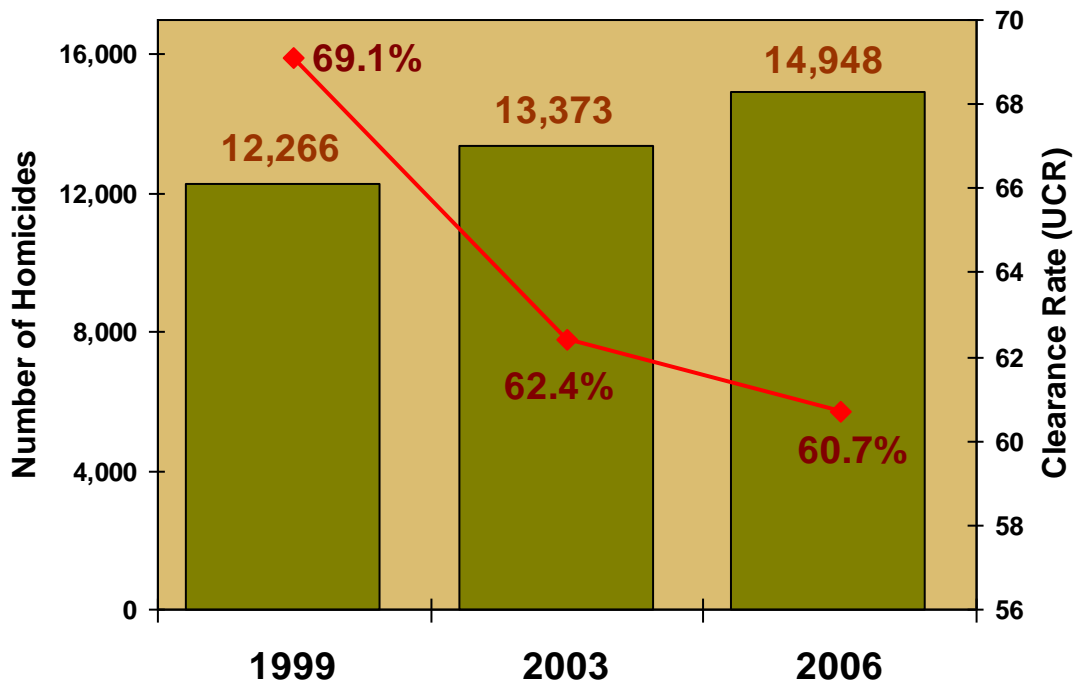
Major Case Specialist, Behavioral Analysis Unit

**Yvonne Muirhead,**

Research Statistician, National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime

**Examining the practices and procedures of how a homicide unit is *managed*.**

Nationally the # of Homicides is **Increasing**, yet the *Clearance Rate* is **Decreasing**



**Asking the age-old questions**

- What are the higher-performing homicide units doing?
- How are they approaching homicide investigation?
- What are they doing different?
- Are they doing anything new or innovative?

**The Departments**

- 55 departments responded (68% return rate).

- 27 different states represented
- Various populations, from under 100K to over 3 million.
- Urban and suburban
- 25 homicides or more a year, over a five-year average
- Reported stats to UCR

### The Questionnaire

- 103 questions
- Statistical sheet
- Five-year time span, 2000 – 2004
- Individual survey for detectives, supervisors and the commander

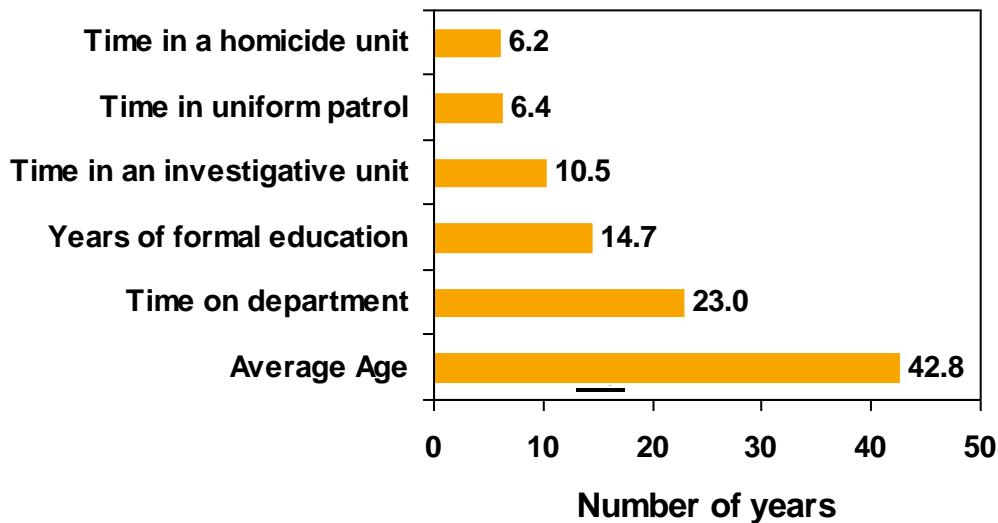
### Main Issues

- Detective Caseload
- Selection of Detectives
- Assignment of cases
- Initial Response
- Computerized Case Management
- Investigative Tools
- Cold Case Squads
- Overtime
- Rotation Policies
- Prosecutors
- Medical Examiners
- Teamwork

### Clearance Rate

- Current Year Clearance Rate -- how many cleared that year that occurred that year.
  - Gives a more accurate representation of how homicide investigations are managed on a day-by-day basis.

### Detective Averages



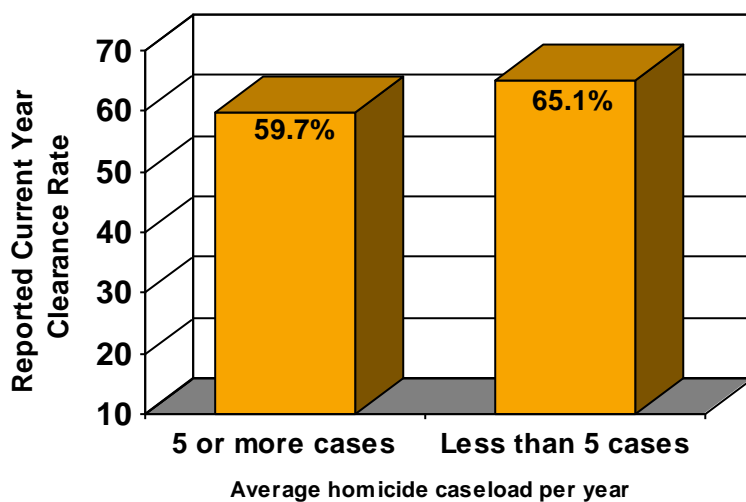
### How are homicide detectives selected?

- Formal oral interview and the request of the homicide supervisor most common.
- Formal written test was the lowest form.

### Successful traits for a homicide detective

- Interview and interrogation skills
- Dedication
- Experience
- Patience
- Common sense
- Tenacity
- Persistence
- Organizational skills

### Detective Caseload



### Supervisory Overview

- Homicide supervisors must be aware of detective caseloads and be willing and able to make adjustments as needed, regardless of general case-assignment guidelines.
- Rotation of case assignments varies, but should be fairly distributed.
- Over 60% had a minimum of 3 or more detectives responding to the initial scene.

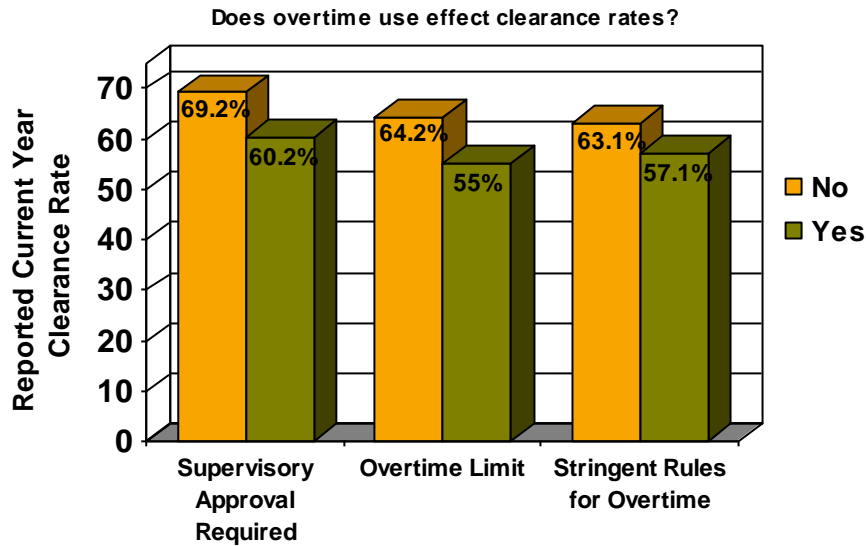
Two units, independently mobile.

- The Wellford (1999) study indicated an importance of detectives responding to the crime scene within 30 minutes.
- In this study, all departments claimed a detective response time of 30 minutes or less.

### Case Assignment

- Centralized vs. Decentralized, no department was decentralized.
- Geographical assignments, most were not geographically assigned.

### Overtime effect on caseloads



**Bottom line is that detectives need more than their 8 or 10 hour shift to clear cases!**

### Investigative Tools

- 93% used the Polygraph
- 35% also used the CVSA
- 90% used Blood-Stain Pattern Analysis, and had a **4.8% higher CR** than those who did not.
- **Criminal Investigative Analysis** (criminal profiling)
  - Half of the departments utilized it, half did not.
  - Those that did utilize CIA, had a **5.7% higher CR** than those who did not.
- **Statement Analysis**
  - Only 16.4% utilized, but they had a **5.2% higher CR** than those who didn't.

## Street Equipment

- Vehicles need to be available to detectives on a 24-hour basis.
- Only one department in the 55 had issues with vehicle availability.
- 83.6% had cell phones
- 80.0% had digital cameras
- 78.2% had pagers
- 40.0% had 35 mm cameras
- 38.2% had video cameras
- 38.3% had laptop computers

## Neighborhood Canvass Forms

- Of the 55 subject departments, only 38% admitted to having a standardized NCF.
- Many of the top units did, and have computerized NCF and Vehicle Stop Forms.
- They are accessible to both patrol and the criminal investigation division.
- 83% stated that they supplied useful information.
- In the Wellford (1999) study, he noted a significant difference when patrol initiated a neighborhood canvass right away.
- He also noted a higher clearance rate when investigators questioned the *neighbors* of the victim(s) as opposed to just the *family* of the victim(s).

## Case Review

- 90% reported some type of review system in place.
- Of the higher-performing departments,  
Almost 60% reviewed a case within the first **24 hours**, and 75% were reviewed within the first **72 hours**.

## TRAINING

When combined with other factors, those departments offering formal training *after* assignment to the homicide unit had a **7% higher CR** than those departments who didn't.

## Computerized Case Management System

Not everyone has a CCMS.

The 25-50 homicides per-year group of departments with a CCMS had a **5.4%** higher CR.

Those with a relational capacity had a **4%** higher CR.

## COMPSTAT

Of those departments who did have a "compstat-style" format, they had a **3.3%** higher CR than those who did not have compstat.

## Indoor vs. Outdoor

- One third occurred inside,
- Two thirds occurred outside.
- Departments who had more indoor than outdoor homicides had a **10.2% higher CR**.

## **Anti-Gang Squads**

- 40 of the 55 departments (72.7%) had an anti-gang squad.
- 25-49 homicides per year (hpy)      7.7 detectives
- 50-99 hpy                                      16.7 detectives
- Over 100 hpy                                      23.6 detectives
- Most (87.2%) reported actively working with their anti-gang squads.

## **Cold Case Squads**

- Over 80% of departments had a CCS.
- Some departments placed in the top third in UCR clearances based solely on the performance of their CCS.
- “two-fer” effect on clearances.

### *Variety of reasons a CCS can be effective*

- Ex-wives and ex-girlfriends.
- Former friends and cell mates.
- Death of documented suspect.
- Change of conscious.
- Advances in forensic science.

### ■What constitutes a CCS case?

- 6 months <too short>
- 1 year
- When all leads have been exhausted <too ambiguous>
- When the lead detective leaves homicide. Preferred method.

### ■Who should work in a CCS?

Most experienced – typical.  
Least experienced – for training purposes.

### ■Alternatives to manpower issues

- Use of retired homicide detectives.
- Use of retired CID detectives.
- Use of auxiliary officers.
- Use of criminal justice college interns.
  - Formation of a case review protocol
  - Prioritizes cases for solvability factors
  - Review/availability of forensic evidence
  - Interview/re-interview of witnesses

### Rotation Policies - *Just say NO!!*

No department with over 80 hpy had any type of rotation policy.

The 3 departments who did have any type of rotation policy are extending the amount of time they stay in the unit.

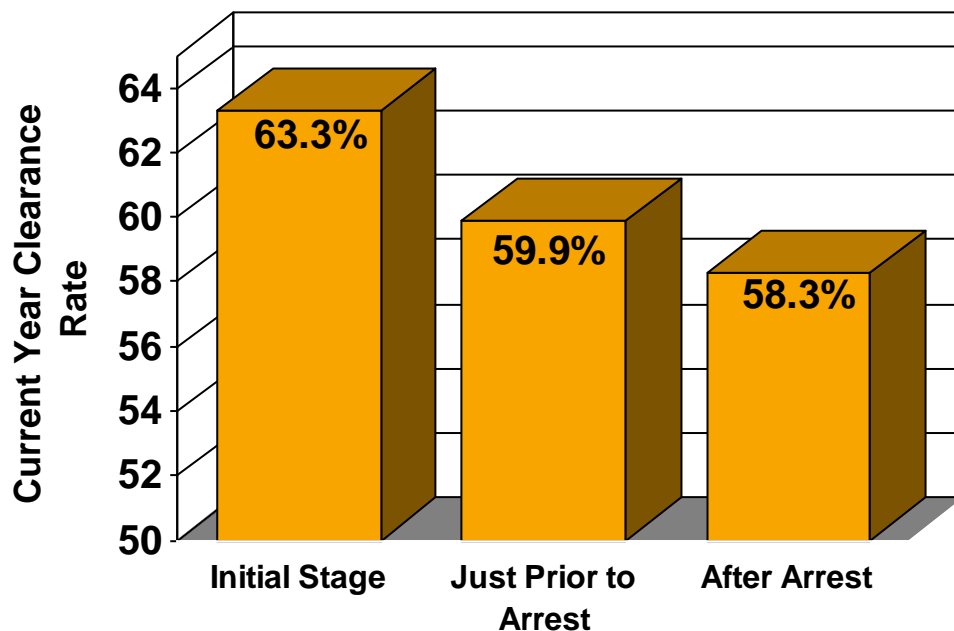
### Medical Examiners

- Detectives should always attend the autopsy of a homicide victim.
- Detectives should receive body diagrams.
- Of the higher-performing departments, almost 90% rated their relationship with the ME/Coroner as good (29.1%) or excellent (60%).

### Prosecutors

- Prosecutors role vary from state to state.
- While the ultimate goal of a rightful conviction is the same for both homicide detective and prosecutor, they have very different perspectives and procedures to getting there.
- 78.2% of departments rated their relationship either good or excellent.  
Those departments had a 6.2% higher CR than those who did not.

### At what stage does a prosecutor get involved?



However, those departments who were *required* to notify the prosecutor at the initial stage of an investigation had lower clearance rates than those who weren't required.

It appears that those departments who allow detectives to use their judgment as to when to notify their prosecutor, and those prosecutors who are comfortable enough to allow detectives



that discretion have a better working relationship, which subsequently allows for a higher clearance rate.

### **Death Penalty**

Over 92% of the departments, representing 25 different states, answered “Yes” to having the death penalty. Those departments had a **17.2%** higher CR than those departments that did not have the death penalty.

- In the individual surveys, there was one common theme among the top homicide units, which was the emphasis on ***TEAMWORK!***
  - This requires leadership, from the very top to the bottom of the investigative and administrative process.
  - The presence or absence of professional teamwork may have the biggest intangible impact on whether a homicide case is solved or not.

Roadblocks to solving homicides; **Lack of public/witness cooperation**

### **The Results**

- No more than 5 cases per year as primary for each detective.
- Two, two person units responding initially.
- Case reviewed by all within first 24 hours.
- Computerized case management system, with relational capacity to connect names.
- Incorporate computerized car stops and neighborhood canvass forms.
- Comstat style format within department.
- Good working relationship with Prosecutors and Medical Examiners.
- No Rotation Policy.
- Overtime available when needed.
- Cold Case Squads.
- Use of investigative tools such as the polygraph, blood-stain pattern analysis, criminal investigative analysis and statement analysis.
- Work together as a team.

No single procedure will guarantee a higher clearance rate. Knowing how successful homicide units throughout the country operate however, gives commanders and supervisors options to maximize performance. They can evaluate the “best practices” and implement what they believe will work best for improving their departments’ homicide clearance efforts.

Tim Keel is a retired Detective Lieutenant from the Baltimore Police Departments homicide unit. He now works at the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime's, Behavioral Analysis Unit as a Major Case Specialist. He can be reached at [tgkeel@fbiacademy.edu](mailto:tgkeel@fbiacademy.edu).

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Investigating How Far the Law Extends:  
Comparing Factors Influencing Homicide Clearances and Convictions  
**RESEARCH IN PROGRESS**

Wendy C. Regoeczi  
**Cleveland State University**

John P. Jarvis  
**Federal Bureau of Investigation**

**Abstract**

A growing body of literature exists which examines factors influencing case clearances for violent crimes, especially homicide. However, while the arrest of a suspect constitutes a successful investigation on the part of police, it does not guarantee that someone will ultimately be held responsible for the crime. In other words, not all homicide cases that are cleared by the police result in a successful prosecution in the court system. A largely unaddressed question concerns whether factors influencing arrest clearances for homicide differ from those affecting convictions in homicide cases. This study takes advantage of detailed data on homicide cases for Cleveland, Ohio from 1998 through 2002 to examine this issue. Hierarchical logistic regression will be used to investigate the impact of case- and neighborhood-level characteristics on homicide clearances and convictions.

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**Introduction**

In response to the increasing attention from both within and outside of the academic community focused on the issue of the substantial decline in the percentage of homicides cleared in the United States over the past four decades, a growing body of literature has emerged examining the causes and correlates of homicide clearance. This research has shed much light on what types of homicide cases are more likely to be cleared with respect to such factors as incident, victim, and offender characteristics, police organizational characteristics, and neighborhood characteristics. Many of these studies note, however, that the classification of a case as “cleared” does not necessarily mean an offender was convicted of the crime. The case is closed from the perspective of the police, but arrested offenders are not always successfully prosecuted for a variety of reasons. Do the factors that predict clearance also predict successful conviction? Can the same theoretical perspective contribute to explaining clearance and conviction patterns? The current study takes advantage of a unique dataset that contains information on both clearances and criminal justice outcomes of homicide cases to answer these questions. Furthermore, we investigate whether social disorganization theory can help explain patterns in both homicide clearance and conviction.

## **Theoretical Perspective**

The social disorganization perspective developed out of the University of Chicago during the 1920's. According to Shaw and McKay's work on urban communities, high levels of residential instability and poverty result in communities that are socially disorganized, in turn producing high rates of juvenile delinquency (Shaw and McKay 1942). Extensions and revisions of this theory have included more explicit discussions of the intervening processes between such structural factors as economic deprivation and residential instability and crime rates. In particular, these types of neighborhood conditions are believed to weaken social institutions and the ability of residents to exercise informal social control by regulating the behavior of individuals in the neighborhood, and weaken "collective efficacy" (social cohesion and mutual trust) (e.g. Sampson and Groves 1989; Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls 1997).

These same neighborhood conditions may interfere with the successful identification, apprehension, and prosecution of homicide offenders. Homicides occurring in communities where normal social control is not present and residents are not invested in the neighborhood may pose obstacles to both successful apprehension and conviction of homicide suspects. With high levels of residential instability and mobility, residents may be less likely to know the identity of persons involved in murders in their neighborhoods. Their unwillingness to intervene to regulate the behavior of others living in the area also likely means they will not be willing to invest their time and risk their safety to cooperate with police in identifying suspects and testifying as witnesses at trial.

## **Data**

Detailed incident reports derived from the Homicide Unit of the Cleveland Police Department are the primary data used in the current study. The Cleveland homicide data involve detailed information that was coded from each homicide file between 1998 and 2002 (N=414), including many victim, offender and event characteristics not present in publicly available homicide datasets such as the SHR. A narrative for each homicide was constructed describing the events leading up to the homicide, including any verbal exchanges between the victim and offender (if known). This data collection effort took 16 months to complete.

These 414 victims were killed by 534 homicide offenders. This included 19 justifiable homicides committed by police; these were eliminated for the purposes of the analyses described here. In addition, there were 16 cases committed by 23 offenders where the actual offense occurred prior to 1998 even though the death occurred between 1998 and 2002. These cases were also dropped, resulting in a final dataset of 495 offenders.

## **Preliminary Analyses**

### **Factors Affecting Likelihood of Clearance**

Cleveland police are relatively successful in clearing homicide cases. The 495 cases resulted in 368 arrest clearances and 6 exceptional clearances, for an overall clearance percentage of 75.6%. Based on prior literature, we examine the following victim and incident characteristics as possible predictors of clearance: victim gender, victim race, victim age, victim's prior criminal record, weapon, circumstances, location, and presence of third parties. Preliminary logistic regression analyses, reported in Table 1 below, indicate that victim age, victim race, circumstances, and location all have a significant impact on the likelihood of clearing the case.

**Table 1**  
**Factors Affecting Clearance of Homicide Cases, Cleveland, 1998-2002**

Characteristic	Odds Ratio	Standard Error
Female Victim	1.588	0.523
White Victim	2.179*	0.451
Victim Age	1.428***	0.356
(Victim Age) <sup>2</sup>	0.991***	0.003
(Victim Age) <sup>3</sup>	1.000***	0.000
Victim Prior Record Violent Crime	0.960	0.482
Victim Prior Record Non-Violent Crime	1.032	0.436
Contact Weapon	0.787	0.541
Other Weapon	1.686	0.991
Felony-Related	0.093***	0.608
Revenge/Retaliation	0.180**	0.666
Other Circumstances	0.845	0.795
Unknown Circumstances	0.007	0.750
Other Indoor Location	.103**	0.841
Outdoor Location	.110***	0.641
Third Parties Present	0.785	0.368

\* p <.10    \*\* p <.05    \*\*\* p < .01

### **Factors Affecting Likelihood of Conviction**

Of the dataset containing 374 cleared cases, 9 cases were dropped that resulted in the offender committing suicide. Another 3 cases were dropped for which conviction information could not be located. Of the remaining 361 cases, 294 offenders (81.4%) were convicted. The majority of these (198 cases) involved the offender pleading guilty to lesser charges. With less literature to draw from examining homicide convictions, we examined bivariate relationships between various victim, offender, and offense variables and conviction status. On the basis of these results, we included the following factors in our model predicting convictions: victim gender, race, age and prior record, offender gender, race, age and prior record, location, and presence of third parties. The preliminary results are displayed in Table 2 below.

**Table 2**  
**Factors Affecting Convictions in Homicide Cases, Cleveland, 1998-2002**

Characteristic	Odds Ratio	Standard Error
Female Victim	2.076	0.451
White Victim	2.295	0.508
Victim Age	0.998	0.011
Victim Prior Record Violent Crime	0.439**	0.406
Victim Prior Record Non-Violent Crime	1.697	0.458
Female Offender	1.852	0.533
White Offender	0.424*	0.468
Offender Age	0.989	0.015
Offender Prior Record Violent Crime	5.243***	0.417
Offender Prior Record Non-Violent Crime	2.112*	0.395
Other Indoor Location	.214***	0.589
Outdoor Location	.930	0.373
Third Parties Present	2.129**	0.351

\* p < .10    \*\* p < .05    \*\*\* p < .01

These results indicate that prior records for violent crimes on the part of either the offender or the victim increase the likelihood of conviction. Cases involving white offenders are somewhat less likely to lead to conviction. The presence of third parties, which according to Table 1 does not increase the likelihood of clearing the case, does increase the probability of a conviction. Cases occurring in indoor locations other than a residence are less likely to produce a conviction.

### Next Steps

Along with better identification of potential factors affecting convictions, the next steps in the analysis will involve linking the neighborhood level data to each individual offender case file in order to examine whether contextual characteristics such as concentrated disadvantage and residential mobility impact the likelihood of successful case outcomes for homicides in the city. Doing so will require that we address the potential problem of spatial autocorrelation.

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# Homicide Solvability: A Consideration of Cleared, Exceptionally Cleared, and Unresolved Cases

John P. Jarvis

**Federal Bureau of Investigation**

Wendy C. Regoeczi

**Cleveland State University**

## **Abstract**

This presentation will examine incidents of homicide as reported in the FBI NIBRS database for differing outcomes in terms of resolution. That is, we examine incidents that resulted in arrest, exceptional clearance, and apparently remain unsolved. Using these outcomes as a multinomial logistical dependent variable, we then examine victim, offender, and situational characteristics to determine the relative impact that each attribute has in various outcomes. By doing so, we hope to identify promising strategies for examining the solvability of homicides reported to the police.

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For homicide detectives, murder cases essentially result in one of three outcomes: they are cleared by the arrest of a suspect following an investigation, they are exceptionally cleared due to a variety of extraordinary circumstances, or the case remains unsolved (uncleared). From the perspective of police practice, homicides resulting in exceptional clearances typically represent a distinct group of cases in terms of what the investigation will require. For example, homicides resulting in the suicide of the offender at the scene produce cases that can be quickly closed, requiring virtually no investigative effort.

Although the issue of homicide clearance has garnered increasing attention from criminological researchers over the past decade, the existence of these two different forms of clearance - arrest and exceptional - has received almost no discussion. In fact, the authors are only aware of one study that examines exceptional clearances as a distinct category of homicide clearance (Riedel and Boulahanis 2007). That study uses Chicago homicide data and focuses on the exceptional clearance category of “barred to prosecution” (cases that are cleared where no lawful arrest has been made and not because the offender is dead), which constitute 80% of the exceptionally cleared cases in Chicago between 1988 and 1995. In most of the remaining studies on the subject, the issue of exceptional clearances is typically relegated to a footnote indicating whether or not exceptional clearances have been dropped from the analysis or combined with cases cleared by arrest.

The current paper directly addresses the question of whether or not exceptional clearances represent a distinct category methodologically, thereby linking the issue of police practice in homicide investigations to researcher practice in defining and measuring homicide clearance.

## **Methodology**

The data used for this study are drawn from the FBI's National Incident-Based Reporting System. They include all incidents of murder and non-negligent manslaughter reported in NIBRS between 1996 and 2002. We limit our study to cases involving single victims and offenders due to the overlap of information on incident characteristics for homicides with multiple victims. This also allows us to avoid violating assumptions of independence in modeling these data.

### **Dependent Variable**

The dependent variable in our analysis is a 3-category nominal variable: 0=cleared by arrest, 1=exceptionally cleared, 2=uncleared. Cleared by arrest is the most common outcome, comprising 54.7% of homicides in the dataset (see descriptive statistics in Table 1).

### **Independent Variables**

We selected as predictors those victim and incident characteristics that have been shown in prior research to influence homicide clearance, regardless of how clearance was measured. Of course, we are limited to the types of variables available through the National Incident-Based Reporting System.

### **Victim Characteristics.**

We include measures of victim gender (female victim), victim race (White vs. non-white victim) and victim age (victim under 10; victim 11-64 years; victim 65 years and over). The category of victims under 10 has been examined in prior research on clearing homicides. Victims 11-64 years are the reference category.

### **Weapon.**

We categorize weapons into firearms, contact weapons (knife/cutting instrument, blunt object, personal weapons such as hands and feet, and asphyxiation), and other weapons. Firearms are the reference category.

### **Location.**

Locations are categorized as residential locations/homes, other indoor locations (air/bus/train terminal, banking/savings and loan, bar/nightclub, church/synagogue/temple, commercial/office building, convenience store, department/discount store, drug store/doctor's office/hospital, government/public building, grocery/supermarket, hotel/motel, jail/prison, liquor store, rental storage facility, restaurant, school/college, specialty store), outdoor locations (construction site, field/woods, highway/road/alley, lake/waterway, parking lot/garage, service/gas station), and other locations. Homes are the reference category.

### **Time.**

Time of the homicide is broken down into those incidents occurring between 8 a.m. and 3:59 p.m. or what is commonly the first policing shift, 4 p.m. and 11:59 p.m. or what is commonly the second shift, and midnight and 7:59 a.m. or what is commonly the third shift.

### **Circumstances.**

Circumstances are categorized as those that are felony-related (drug dealing, other felony involved), arguments (argument, lovers' quarrel), other circumstances (assault on law



enforcement officer, gangland, juvenile gang, mercy killing, other circumstances), and unknown circumstances. Arguments are the reference category.

### **Analysis**

We use multinomial logistic regression analysis to handle our 3-category nominal-level dependent variable. We run models to produce results comparing each clearance category to the other two categories. A small amount of missing data on a few of the victim variables reduces the sample size from 5,680 to 5,352 cases.

### **Results**

Descriptive statistics for all of the variables included in the analysis are displayed in Table 1.

[Table 1 About Here]

Table 2 displays the results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis. The first two models compare each of the two different forms of clearance - cleared by arrest and exceptionally cleared - to uncleared homicides. The third model (last column) shows the results of the remaining comparison- exceptionally cleared to cleared by arrest homicides.

### **Cleared by Arrest vs. Uncleared and Exceptionally Cleared vs. Uncleared**

The first two models compare each form of clearance with uncleared homicides. Several of the predictors show similar effects on the likelihood of clearance, regardless of whether this is by arrest or by exceptional means. In particular, victims under the age of 10 and white victims are more likely to be cleared, although the impact of these victim characteristics on the odds of clearance are greater for exceptional than arrest clearances (3.589 vs. 2.308 and 3.024 vs. 1.281). Contact weapons, other weapons, outdoor locations, other locations, felony-related killings, other circumstances, and unknown circumstances reduce the odds of both types of clearance. These findings are consistent with much of the literature on arrest clearances and homicide clearances more generally.

However, the impact of several predictors differs for the two types of clearance. For example, cases with female victims or victims aged 65 and over have an increased likelihood of being exceptionally cleared but not cleared by arrest. Contact weapons increase the odds of an arrest clearance but decrease the odds of an exceptional clearance. Homicides occurring in other indoor locations as opposed to homes are less likely to be cleared by arrest, while homicides occurring during third shift are less likely to be exceptionally cleared. Thus, comparing these first two models indicates that while these two different types of clearance share some common influences, there are also a number of factors that impact one or the other but not both, or impact the two clearance measures in different ways. Model 3 (the last column) depicting the results directly comparing exceptional and arrest clearances further underscores this point.

[Table 2 About Here]

## **Exceptionally Cleared vs. Cleared by Arrest**

When factors predicting exceptional versus arrest clearances are compared, we find that the impact of victim and incident characteristics on the two forms of clearances differ in a number of ways. For example, cases involving females, Whites, and victims aged 65 and over all increase the odds of an exceptional clearance compared to an arrest clearance. Relative to homicides committed with firearms, the odds of an exceptional clearance are reduced in cases involving contact weapons and other weapons. Homicides occurring in outdoor locations, and on second or third shift relative to first shift also have reduced odds of being exceptionally cleared compared to cleared by arrest. Finally, relative to homicides involving arguments, felony-related homicides are less likely to be exceptionally cleared than cleared by arrest.

### **Preliminary Conclusions**

This study uses a multinomial logistic regression analysis to examine whether homicide case outcomes that are often distinct from an investigative standpoint are also distinct methodologically. Overall, the results suggest that while some incident and victim characteristics have a similar impact on the odds of clearing a case by means of arrest or exceptionally and/or do not distinguish between the two forms of clearance, there are a number of factors that influence the clearance categories differently. In other words, it appears that not only is police practice typically different for cases that result in arrest compared to those that are cleared by exceptional means such as the death of the offender - they differ methodologically as well.

Our study identified a number of factors that influence the likelihood of either an arrest or exceptional clearance compared to cases that remain unsolved. The finding that cases involving young victims increases the odds of both forms of clearance is consistent with prior research. Previous studies looking at the impact of race on homicide clearance have produced very mixed results; the current research finds cases with White victims have an increased odds of both arrest and exceptional clearances. While this pattern can be seen as consistent with Black's (1976) theory of law in the sense that minorities are receiving "less law" with fewer of their cases being cleared, we believe there are a number of equally plausible explanations for this pattern, including the greater distrust minorities have of the police that may hamper homicide investigations. Additionally, homicides of females are more likely to result in exceptional clearances. These cases likely involve women murdered by intimate partners who then turn the gun on themselves or other circumstances that prevent adequate evidence collection to support a solution to the case.

Residential locations have a strong impact on clearances, as these may be the sight of more homicides involving intimates, other family members, or at least individuals known to one another. Evidence may also be better preserved in such locations. Cases involving arguments are also more likely to be cleared. Again, these types of homicides frequently involve people who are related or know each other. In contrast, we found felony-related homicides are less likely to be cleared, a pattern that is consistent with existing research. Our findings also support a number of studies with respect to the impact of weapons on arrest clearance; contact weapons increase the likelihood of clearing the case by arrest compared to cases involving firearms.

Our finding that homicides are more likely to be exceptionally cleared than cleared by arrest when they involve victims aged 65 and over may reflect cases of elderly couples who enter into a pact to end their lives together. It is perhaps not surprising that exceptional clearances are less likely than arrest clearances to involve contact weapons or other weapons, or alternatively, they are more likely to involve firearms. Since many of these cases involve the death of the offender, these types of murder-suicides are frequently committed with guns, facilitating the desire of the perpetrator to end their own life as part of the incident. Lastly, exceptional clearances were found to be more likely to occur on the first shift as compared to clearances by arrest. This may have more to do with when the case is discovered and processed by authorities than when it actually occurred (see Addington, 2006).

Only one of the factors this study identified as distinguishing between exceptional and arrest clearances supports the findings of Riedel and Boulahanis (2007) - the increased odds of an exceptional clearance for White victims. There are several possible reasons why we did not replicate more of their findings. One is that we used slightly different measures and different reference categories than they did. But a more important reason may be the differing nature of exceptional clearances in Chicago compared to what is found in the National Incident-Based Reporting System data. Chicago's exceptional clearance category is dominated by cases deemed to be "barred to prosecution" whereas the majority of exceptional clearances in NIBRS are due to the death of the offender. Homicide cases that are closed by police because there is not enough viable evidence available to support an adequate case for prosecution to proceed certainly present much different investigative issues than cases which can be closed immediately because the suspected offender committed suicide at the scene. Thus we might expect that the factors influencing these different types of exceptional clearances may differ as well. It is interesting to note that the two studies which combine arrest and exceptional clearances as the dependent variable but report that the results remain the same when the exceptional cases are removed both involve Chicago data. In other words, they are based on datasets that are dominated by barred to prosecution cases in the exceptional category. These cases entail some kind of police investigation and likely involve an arrest or at least the identification of a likely suspect, much like cases that are cleared by arrest. In other words, in Chicago the exceptional clearances may share similarities to arrest clearances that are not seen in other jurisdictions due to the rather unique make-up of the exceptional clearance category in that city. An interesting avenue to explore would be to see whether studies of homicide clearance in other jurisdictions yield the same results with and without the exceptional clearances included in the cleared category in order to get a sense of whether Chicago is something of an anomaly regarding this pattern.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics, Homicides Reported to the National Incident-Based Reporting System 1996-2002 (N=5,680)**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Case Outcome</b>		
Cleared by Arrest	3106	54.7%
Exceptionally Cleared	376	6.6%
Uncleared	2198	38.7%
<b>Victim Age</b>		
Under 10 Years	327	6.0%
11-64 Years	4720	86.8%
65 Years and Over	392	7.2%
Missing	241	
<b>Victim Gender</b>		
Female	1925	34.1%
Male	3716	65.9%
Missing	39	
<b>Victim Race</b>		
White	3076	55.6%
Non-White	2461	44.4%
Missing	143	
<b>Weapon<sup>a</sup></b>		
Firearm	3037	53.5%
Contact Weapon	1757	30.9%
Other Weapon	988	17.4%
<b>Location</b>		
Residence/Home	3316	58.4%
Other Indoor Location	489	8.6%
Outside Location	1501	26.4%
Other Location	374	6.6%
<b>Time</b>		
First Shift	1465	26.7%
Second Shift	2189	39.9%
Third Shift	1833	33.4%
Missing	193	
<b>Circumstances<sup>b</sup></b>		
Argument	2006	35.3%
Felony-Related	341	6.0%
Other Circumstances	1157	20.4%
Unknown Circumstances	2265	39.9%

<sup>a</sup> Percentages add up to over 100 due to multiple weapons used in a single incident

<sup>b</sup> Percentages add up to over 100 due to multiple circumstances being identified in a single incident

**Table 2: Multinomial Logistic Regression of Uncleared, Exceptionally Cleared, and Cleared by Arrest Homicides Reported to the National Incident-Based Reporting System, 1996-2002 (N=5,352)**

Predictor	Cleared by Arrest vs. Uncleared		Exceptionally Cleared vs. Uncleared		Exceptionally Cleared vs. Cleared by Arrest	
	B	Exp (B)	B	Exp (B)	B	Exp (B)
Victim under 10 years	.836**	2.308	1.278**	3.589	.441	1.555
Victim aged 65 & over	-.159	.853	.421*	1.523	.580**	1.786
Female victim	-.041	.959	1.714**	5.552	1.756**	5.786
White victim	.248**	1.281	1.107**	3.024	.859**	2.361
Contact weapon <sup>a</sup>	.549**	1.731	-1.593**	.203	-.2141**	.118
Other weapon <sup>a</sup>	-.223*	.800	-1.732**	.177	-1.509**	.221
Other indoor location <sup>b</sup>	-.386**	.680	-.220	.802	.166	1.180
Outdoor location <sup>b</sup>	-.566**	.568	-.949**	.387	-.383*	.682
Other location <sup>b</sup>	-.451**	.637	-.934**	.393	-.483	.617
Second shift <sup>c</sup>	.089	1.094	-.191	.826	-.281*	.755
Third shift <sup>c</sup>	-.024	.977	-.419*	.658	-.395*	.673
Felony-related <sup>d</sup>	-.596**	.551	-1.343**	.261	-.747*	.474
Other circumstances <sup>d</sup>	-.895**	.409	-.763**	.466	.133	1.142
Unknown	-1.729**	.177	-1.816**	.163	-.086	.917

circumstances<sup>d</sup>

Intercept	1.256**	-1.414**	-2.670**
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\* p <.05 \*\*p<.01 -2 Log Likelihood = 2546.559, Chi-Square = 1513.662, p<.001

<sup>a</sup> Reference category = Firearm

<sup>b</sup> Reference category = Residential location

<sup>c</sup> Reference category = First shift

<sup>d</sup> Reference category = Argument

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## Discussion Notes

### Session 7: Consideration of Homicide Clearance Research: Some New Insights

Moderators: Marc Reidel, Recorder: Chris Rasche

#### Paper #1: Detecting Clues in Homicide Management: Identifying “Best Practices” in Homicide Investigations

Tim Keel (presenting), Yvonne Muirhead, John Jarvis, FBI

#### Paper #2: Homicides cleared by arrests and exceptionally

Wendy Regoeczi and John Jarvis (presenting)

#### Paper #3: Investigating How Far the Law Extends: Comparing Factors Influencing Homicide Clearances and Convictions

John Jarvis and Wendy Regoeczi (presenting)

Moderator Marc Reidel said that all the papers would be presented first, and then questions would be entertained, since the papers were related.

#### Questions and Comments:

Tom McEwen: Wendy—Just a suggestion: The analysis of forensic evidence is done post-arrest and as such affects conviction, not arrest.

Gabrielle Salfati: Tim, when the police departments you studied picked their analysis services, do you know whether they picked inside or outside services?

Tim: No, we just know whether they picked any analysis units at all.

Gabrelle: Well, there are different kinds of analysts: Do you know what kinds of analysts they used?

Tim : No, just whether thy used any analysts at all.

Chris Fisher: Wendy, another important point is whether the detective goes to the autopsy.

Wendy: In Cleveland they do not.

Unknown questioner to Tim: How were the agencies you analyzed selected?

Tim: We went to BJS and used, of all departments who reported to them, all departments who reported more than 25 homicides per year over a 5-year average.



Darryll ?: John, were other homicides considered cleared if the agency chose not to prosecute because they pursued him for another one?

Jarvis: A prosecutor would have to sign off on this, and this is an important point—there are cases which are not cleared, but are essentially closed. That is, no one is working on them—they have exhausted all leads. In Baltimore they considered some cases as closed but they were not cleared. Sometimes there is debate between prosecutors and police over what the status of the cases really are.

Dwayne: How is the status of a case defined—on an annual basis or whether it is ever cleared/uncleared?

Wendy: For our data, whether it is ever cleared.

Jarvis: For our data, the data goes up to 2004, so its status goes up to that point.

Vance McLaughlin: When I started going through historical cases, I asked the investigator about some cases and sometimes learned that he had been transferred out of the homicide unit and the case was just left behind. There was no transition of cases, the next person who inherited the case was just left on their own, and sometimes difficult cases just sort of died in the process.

Jamie Fox: An odd thing happens with regard to historical cycle: As homicides in a city go down over time, work loads in homicide units go down, which can affect homicide clearances. As homicides are coming down, then clearances will go up since there are not as many to build up over time, right? Does this kind of work load affect clearances?

Jarvis: Yes, except where there is a growing pool of cases which are the harder kind to solve—such as stranger homicides, drug-related homicides, etc.—this impacts the clearance rate even when homicides in general are going down.

Katherina Gruenberg: Can you match the year of....(sorry, I did not get the rest)

Jarvis: There may be an impact of new methods on clearances.

Fox: So much is driven by the denominator—if a bunch of homicides happen in November or December, that would drive up the numbers of uncleared homicides for the year.

Jarvis: We could probably come up with an algorithm for this.

Roland: I need to clear up an impression that I have: Have clearance rates been going down over the past 5-6 years nationally?

Fox: Actually they have been going down now since mid-90s.

Tim: According to my survey, the police agencies think lack of witness cooperation is the biggest factor in declining clearance rates.

Jarvis: The reality is that cases are messy—we probably can't solve every case. There is some level of solvability which is probably higher than 66% and probably lower than 90%, but we need to figure out what factors will increase that likelihood.

David David: We need to know what the potential mitigating factor of money might be to pay confidential informants more money to come forward? or to pay analysts? What is potential of a third party of roll over to give information?

Riedel: Unfortunately, our time is up.

## **Chapter Nine: Session 8: Homicide Clearances**

**Moderator: John Jarvis**

**Child Abduction Murder: An Overview of Factors Affecting Solvability.** *Katherine M. Brown, Sam Houston State University and Robert Keppel, Seattle University.*

**Trends and Patterns in Homicide Clearances: A Study of Houston.** *Marc Riedel, Southeastern Louisiana University*

**The Decline in Homicide Clearance Rates in Phoenix, Arizona.** *Tom McEwen, Institute for Law and Justice.*

**Discussion** recorded: Christa Polczynski

# Child Abduction Murder: An Overview of Factors Effecting Solvability

Katherine M. Brown  
**Sam Houston State University**  
**and**

Dr. Robert Keppel,  
**Seattle University**

Child abduction murders are incredibly difficult to solve and deeply impact our society and law enforcement officials involved in the investigation. A considerable amount of scholarly material on murder exists; far less is available on the murder of abducted children. This research provides an overview of descriptive information about the victims, offenders and other factors affecting the investigations of child abduction murders. The research includes characteristics of the victims as well as the characteristics, motives and actions of offenders. A description of the victim's cause of death, offender's post-offense behavior, variables affecting case investigations, physical evidence, and a comparison of single-victim and series cases in this sample will also be included. Finally, the relationship of time and distance to solvability will be explored.

The child abduction murder dataset (CAM) includes 833 child abduction murders. Only cases in which the victim was 17-years-old or younger were used for this analysis (N = 735). Offenders in this sample (n = 589) were not identified in all child abduction murder investigations included in the CAM dataset.

The typical child abduction murder victim is a white (74.5%) female (74.0%), approximately 11-years-old (M = 11.52). Victims are predominantly from a middle-class (35.2%) or "blue-collar" (35.8%) family, living in an urban (29.3%) or suburban (35.2%) neighborhood, in a single-family residence (71.1%). The victim's relationship with their family is good (49.8%) and the family situation is not generally considered high risk (83.5%). The typical child abduction murderer is a white male, approximately 27-years-old. The data indicates some interesting and meaningful characteristics of child abduction murderers which may enable law enforcement professionals to quickly identify and guard against potential offenders.

It is critical to understand the victim-offender relationship in order to properly protect our children. The data indicates interesting differences in the victim-offender relationship by age and gender. The data also indicates that our children are at a higher risk of victimization from those that they know than strangers. In addition to information, on victims and offenders and their relationship; variables relating to the actual investigation process may prove valuable to detectives. A descriptive analysis of variables related to witnesses, canvasses and searches, investigative steps in the first 48 hours and physical evidence will be provided.

Finally, the relationship of time and distance to solvability will be explored. Information from each case relating to time spans and intervals of distance between murder incident component pairs was analyzed to determine if the time and distance relationships are critical solvability factors in murder investigations of abducted children. This research determined that while time and distance relationships contribute in some ways to case solvability for murders of abducted

children, the effect of time and distance relationships on solvability is unique to child abduction murders.

Results indicate that when any information on the dates and locations of the four murder incident components was known, the probability of child abduction murder case solution increases. There is a strong positive correlation between knowing the dates of occurrences for the murder incident component locations and the ability to identify a perpetrator. This research also shows that in child abduction murder cases, shorter time proximity between murder incident locations has no significant impact on case solvability. Previous solvability research has shown that the more investigators know about the distances between the pairs of the murder incident components, the more case solvability will increase; this study of murder investigations of abducted children showed similar findings. These findings support that relatively close time and distance proximity between murder incident component pairs do not contribute significantly to case solvability. In addition, when the time and distances proximity decreases among pairs of murder incident components, the relatively distant proximity in time and distance do not contribute to case solvability.

These findings are a valuable investigative tool for use in murder investigations of abducted children. This research adds to the understanding of victim and offender characteristics, investigations, and provides several critical findings on case solvability. This research indicates that because time and distance do not play the same role in case solvability in child abduction murder investigations as in general murder investigations, there may be other factors which can impact case solvability in murder of abducted children.

# TRENDS AND PATTERNS IN HOMICIDE CLEARANCES: A STUDY OF HOUSTON

Marc Riedel

**Southeastern Louisiana University**

## **Abstract**

Nationally, the linear decline in homicide arrest clearances has gone from 92% in 1960 to 62% in 2004. The first part of the paper will be a comparison of arrest clearances in Houston with other major US cities for the same years to learn more about where the decline in arrest clearances is occurring. The second part of the paper will be a cross-sectional analysis of homicide clearances and comparisons with earlier research using data gathered by Victoria Titterington and colleagues.

This will be a regular paper although I certainly welcome suggestions for change

## **Introduction**

Variations in murder rates claim more public and media attention than the percent of arrests of homicide. What is a far more serious problem, and less publicized, is the declining percent of homicides for which no offender is arrested.

Using Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) data on crime and clearances for 1960 through 2005, the percent of homicides cleared by arrest declined linearly from 92.3% in 1960 and 62.1% in 2005. Illustrative of the linearity, a bivariate regression indicates a slope of  $-.715$  and a coefficient of determination of  $.934$ . Practically, the clearance percentage of 62.1% means there are 6,326 homicide events in 2005 for which no offender has been arrested.

The most widely used definition of arrest clearance is provided by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports (UCR). The UCR states that a law enforcement agency clears or solves a particular offense when "at least one person is arrested, charged with the commission of an offense, and turned over to the court for prosecution . . ." (FBI, 2006) The number of arrest clearances refers to the number of offenses for which an arrest is made, not the number of offenders arrested; the arrest of one individual may clear a large number of crimes and the arrest of many persons may clear only one offense.

Arrest clearances are extremely important to individual officers, law enforcement agencies, policy makers, and the public for several reasons.

- Regardless of the goals of criminal justice, the process begins with the arrest of offenders. Without arrests, there is neither further processing of offenders nor reduction of crime.
- If offenders are not arrested, they are free to offend again which increases the risk of victimization.
- Failure to arrest further traumatizes the victim's families and contributes to an increase in the fear of violent victimization.
- Because clearances are a performance measure, failure to arrest undermines the morale of law enforcement personnel and agencies.
- When there are no arrests, there is no information on offenders which hampers criminologists doing research on the characteristics of offenders (Riedel & Jarvis, 1998).

The purpose of this paper is twofold. First, despite a significant number of studies on homicide clearances, there are none on the decline of clearances. The research in this paper will indicate what jurisdictions have very high clearance percentages and show that cities vary substantially in clearance trends. Second, I will contribute to the cross-sectional research on clearances by examining arrest clearances in Houston from 1985 through 1994. The results of this part of the study will be compared to existing studies.

## **Method**

### **The Decline in Clearances**

To study the decline in clearances, crime and clearance files were downloaded from ICPSR for the years 1960 through 2004. From this nationwide collection, data on the twenty largest cities according to the 2000 census were selected. For this part of the paper, Houston, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Phoenix were selected because of general similarity in size as well as complete reporting for 1964 through 2004.

Clearance percentages or clearance rates, as they are called by law enforcement, were not used. Instead, homicide and clearance crude rates were calculated using as a denominator annual city population. This was done so homicides and clearances could be compared using a common metric. The annual difference between the two rates was calculated. Homicide, clearance rates, and difference scores were plotted; the difference scores were plotted using lowess as a smoothing technique.

#### **Houston Data 1985-1994**

Clearances were also studied cross-sectionally using a data set originally collected by Victoria Titterington and Kelly R. Damphousse (2002). While the original study was on patterns of homicide, a variable indicating whether homicides were cleared was included in the data set. Because the question of clearance is irrelevant in the case of justifiable homicides, ten cases were deleted leaving a total of 4934 cases. Blank and unknown values were recoded as missing. The clearance percentage for the ten-year period was 70.7%.

## **Results**

### **The Decline in Clearances Among Four Cities**

In this short paper, it is impossible to present graphs and remain within five pages so I will generally discuss the conclusions. First, among the twenty largest cities, no clearances were reported from 1960 through 1963 except for Austin, Texas which reported clearances in 1963. Since many of the twenty largest cities were reporting approximately 80% clearances in 1964, one hypothesis is that the very high clearances in the early sixties may be very small jurisdictions where homicide is a rare occurrence that commands a large police expenditure of resources for investigation.

Second, if anyone needs to be disabused of the notion that clearances have a deterrent effect and are therefore inversely related to homicide rates, there was no evidence in any cities of an inverse relationship. Instead, all the cities examined have a very high positive relationship between homicide rates and clearance rates.

Third, the picture with respect to homicide and clearances varies substantially among cities. Houston, for example, provides a very different set of rates and trends from Detroit and Phoenix. If we assume that difference in rates and trends correspond to differences in causes,

differences in rates and trends would serve to explain differences in some of the results of cross-sectional studies. This suggestion may be most useful in explaining findings using organizational and investigation variables rather than crime related variables. For example, Puckett and Lundman (2003) found that workload was unrelated to clearances while Cloninger and Sartorius (1979) found that major changes in police effort would increase clearances.

Fourth, it is noteworthy among the cities that while clearance rates are correlated with homicide rates, the difference score becomes much larger when the homicide rates increase sharply as they do in the late seventies and eighties. What this suggests is that the resources of law enforcement may be increasingly overwhelmed and require some time to readjust. Walker (1998) in his discussion of criminal justice bureaucracies points out that bureaucracies have a limit to the number of cases they can process; beyond that, they divert cases or find some other way of not processing.

Finally, the graph of Phoenix homicides, clearances, and difference scores is startling because the smoothed difference score almost pursues a positive linear trend. It is worth noting that the homicide rates in Phoenix are low in comparison to other cities; they range from about 7 per 100,000 to about 14 per 100,000. The city with the next highest homicide rate is Philadelphia with 31.7 per 100,000. Because arrest clearances are poorly published and little understood by the public, is it likely that city political leaders and media personnel do not really care about arrest clearances as long as the homicide rate is low?

### **Results of the Houston Logit.**

The preliminary results of the Houston logistic analysis replicated some of the results found in previous studies. For positive significant odds ratios, argument as a motive, and being victimized in a residence or a business increase the odds of clearances. In addition, victims under the age of 30 were more frequently cleared; victims age 15-19 had an odds ratio of 18.2. Victim variables that decrease the odds of clearances were felony homicides and child abuse cases.

These preliminary results do not include offender variables. In addition, further analysis will be done to understand how drug related and interracial homicides play a role.

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# Homicide Clearance Rates in Phoenix, Arizona

Tom McEwen

## Introduction

This paper analyzes changes in clearance rates for homicides in Phoenix, Arizona over a 25 year period. As a starting point, Exhibit 1 shows the number of homicides and clearance rates in Phoenix from 1980 through 2006. Homicides show a steady increase over the years with periodic fluctuations. Interestingly, homicides peaked in 1993 and 1994, decreased for a few years, and then steadily increased. The trend in Phoenix differs from the overall experience in the United States, which had a 35 percent decrease during the 1990s followed by an increase of 7 percent since 2000.<sup>5</sup> The bottom portion of the exhibit shows clearance rates over the same period for Phoenix. In the 1980's, clearance rates ranged between 70 and 85 percent, and have steadily decreased since 1990. In 2006, the department's clearance rate for homicides was 40.2 percent.

## Changes in Homicide Characteristics

In a previous study, Maraget Zahn collected detailed data on homicides for 1980-1994 from three cities: Philadelphia, Phoenix, and St. Louis. From Phoenix, her data consisted of 1,851 homicide victims. More recently, I collected similar data on all homicides in Phoenix over a two-year period from July 2003 – June 2005, a total of 404 homicides and 435 victims. The overall clearance rate (cleared by arrest and exceptional clearances) for her 15-year period was 74.0 percent, compared to 43.2 for the homicides during my two-year study. The comparison is somewhat misleading because cases from the earlier period could have been solved years after the homicide (for example, a 1980 case solved in 1990), while about two years was the follow-up period for most cases in my more recent project. However, that factor would not fully account for the change between the two studies as most clearances occur within a few months.

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## Exhibit 1: Annual Number of Homicides in Phoenix, 1980 - 2006

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<sup>5</sup> In 1993, the number of homicides in the United States reached a peak of 24,530 and then decreased to 15,586 in 2000. In 2005, there were 16,692 homicides amounting to a 7.1 percent increase.

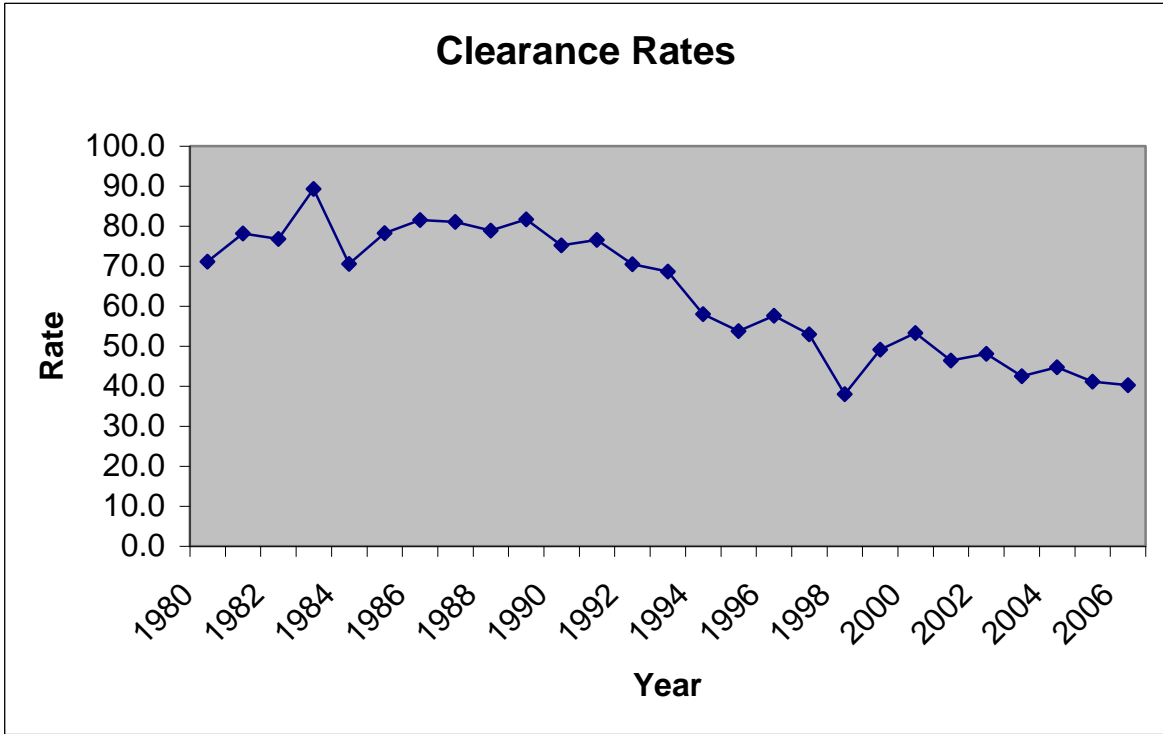
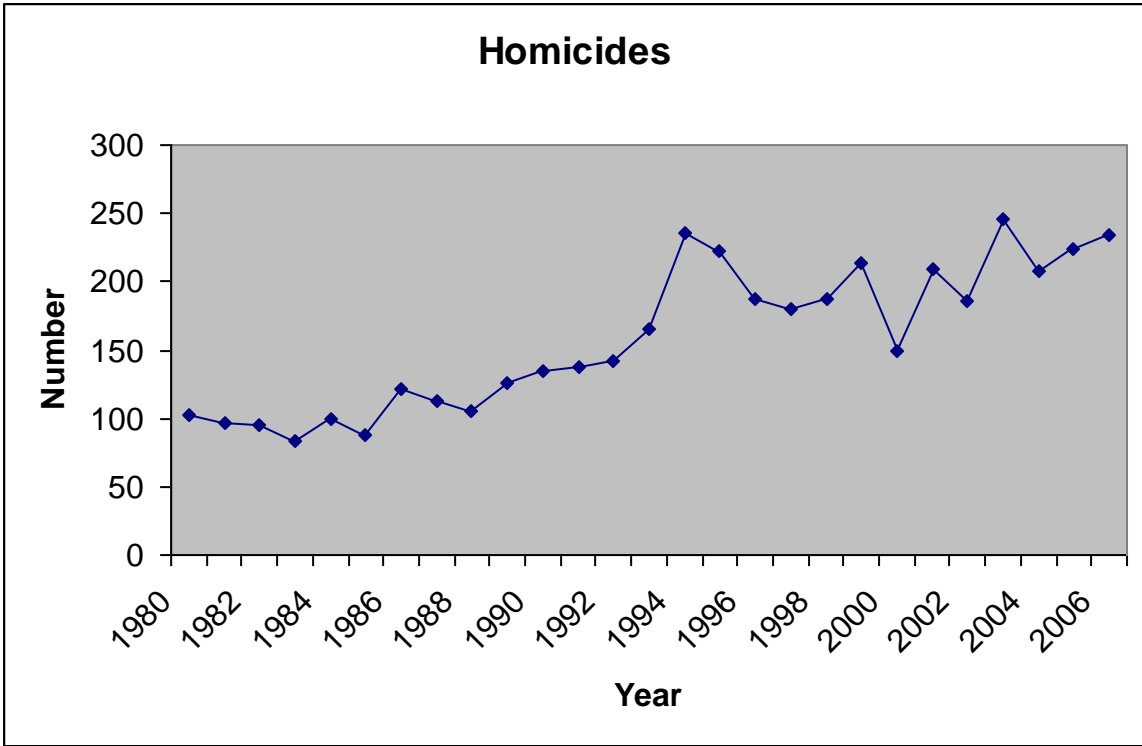


Exhibit 2 gives case characteristics from the two studies. By comparing the percentages from each study, the changes over time quickly become evident. In summary, my study shows:

- A higher percent of male victims—86.4 percent from my study compared to 77.7 percent for 1980-94.
- A higher percent of Hispanic victims—60.7 percent compared to 32.1 percent.
- A higher percent of victims killed with handguns—72.6 percent compared to 58.1 percent.
- A higher percent of victims killed outdoors—62.3 percent compared to 48.2 percent.

In addition to the characteristics in Exhibit 2, both studies recorded circumstances surrounding the incident. Comparison of the circumstances is more difficult because two different coding schemes were used in the studies. However, some conclusions can be drawn. In both studies, arguments and felony crimes were the leading circumstances for the incidents. One difference was that drugs were involved in 19.1 percent of the incidents during my study, while the earlier study indicates about five percent drug involvement.

Another difference in circumstances is with incidents involving illegal immigration. The earlier study did not list any such incidents. Illegal immigration was apparently not a significant problem during the years of the earlier study. My review identified 23 victims (5.3 percent) in which illegal immigration played a role.

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**Exhibit 2: Comparison of Case Characteristics**

<b>Victim's Sex</b>	<b>1980 – 1994</b>		<b>Baseline/Test Periods</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	1,439	77.7	376	86.4
Female	412	22.3	59	13.6
<b>Victim's Race</b>				
Hispanic	592	32.1	264	60.7
White	819	44.4	101	23.2
African American	360	19.5	54	12.4
Other	75	4.1	16	3.7
<b>Victim's Age (medians)</b>				
Male	1,439	28.0	376	30.4
Female	340	30.0	59	36.5
<b>Weapon</b>				
Handgun	1,064	58.1	316	72.6
Other firearm	122	6.7	27	6.2
Stabbing/cutting	303	16.5	38	8.7
Blunt force trauma	167	9.1	34	7.8
Strangulation	70	3.8	10	2.3
Asphyxiation	21	1.1	6	1.4
Arson	10	0.5	1	0.2
Unknown	74	4.0	1	0.2
<b>Number of Victims</b>				
1 Victim	1,668	95.4	376	93.1
2 or more victims	81	4.6	25	6.9
<b>Incident Location</b>				
Outdoors	871	48.2	271	62.3
Inside	937	51.8	164	37.7

Source: Data for 1980-1994 are from *Changing Patterns of Homicide and Social Policy in Philadelphia, Phoenix, and St. Louis, 1980-1994* by Margaret A. Zahn. Available from the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, ICPSR 2729.

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The significance of these changes is that the homicides in my study are more difficult to solve than homicides in the past. For example, the literature indicates that lower clearance rates for homicides are associated with use of a firearm as the weapon (Addington, 2006; Litwin, 2004; Roberts, 2007) and occurrence of the incident outdoors (Alderden & Lavery, 2007).

### **Staffing Considerations**

Another contributing factor to the decline in clearance rates in Phoenix is that the number of investigators assigned to the homicide unit has not kept pace with increased caseloads. During the time of my study, the homicide unit had an average of 24 investigators for case assignment plus three investigators in the cold case unit. According to the commander of the unit, during the 1990s, the unit had about 28 investigators for case assignments plus five investigators for cold cases. In summary, there has been a 20 percent decrease in investigators.

Given the number of homicides during my study, each investigator was assigned 10 new cases on average each year. That average contrasts significantly from the overall average of 5.01 cases per investigator found in a recent nationwide survey of police agencies (see (Keel, Muirhead, & Jarvis, 2007), this volume). Further, agencies with clearances rates above 65 percent had average caseloads of 4.74 for a primary detective. By comparison, each homicide investigator in the Phoenix Police Department is assigned twice the number of homicides as found in the national survey and have a significantly lower clearance rate.

### **Conclusions**

In summary, two factors are especially significant in accounting for the decline in homicide clearance rates in Phoenix, Arizona. The first is that the characteristics of homicides have changed in recent years, and the direction of the changes is towards homicide cases that are more difficult to solve. Second, the number of homicide investigators available for assignments has decreased from previous years. With the increase in the number of homicides, the result is that caseloads of homicide investigators have increased significantly.

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## Discussion Notes

### **Session 8 Homicide Clearances**

#### **Katherine Brown's Presentation:**

Gaby: What is the source of the data and is it part of the Hit Data set?

Katherine: The data is from the Washington State Attorney General Office and the OPJGG which was collected by police and other interviews. This data was available in 1993 before the Hits Data.

Darryl: Did you include family income, race, and sex in your analysis of victims?

Katherine: I have not yet included those but plan to include race and sex as I continue with the analysis. Family income may not be an available variable.

Katharina: Suggested to complete series and non series tables vs. victim-offender relationships as a comparison

Katherine: I would like to do that in future analysis.

#### **Marc Riedel's Presentation:**

Wendy: The decline in clearance from 1960, where the percentage of clearance was very high, do you feel that these numbers from the 1960s were artificially inflated?

Marc: I am unsure, because there is not way to verify the clearance rates or even compare the rates to the time period before the 1960s. The workloads of the officers per city may affect the rate of clearance.

#### **Tom McEwen's Presentation:**

Tim: Due to the location of your study being in the desert where there any body identification problems?

Tom: Two cases bodies were unknown and two other cases were identified because families eventually responded to police inquiries of missing family members.

Tina: When you use the term Hispanic, are you mostly referring to Mexican?

Tom: Yes.

Tina: Did the rise in legal and illegal immigration impact the clearance rate?

Tom: There are no variables which identify the victim's resident status, so this is unknown.

John J: What affect does the city council mayor, etc. relationship with the police have on the clearance rate?

Tom: Agencies cannot keep pace with the population. Police compete for resources with the city council.

John: Team work of the police and the city council seem to have an affect on the clearance rate. Coalition building may have an affect.

Jamie: Two serial murders happened in Phoenix after your data was collected. Was Phoenix prepared to respond to serial murders?

Tom: They did a good job in response to media, but had trouble in the logistics of solving the two sets of crimes.

Chris R: Is the low clearance rate an effect of the accumulation of unsolved cases?

John J: The slope of solvability is 30 days. One or more years later a very small percent of the case would be solved. I am lead to believe there is a ceiling and floor level for clearance rates. If clearance rates ever reach the floor money and resources will be poured in to improve the rate.

Gary: Have you looked at the data in a time series?

Tom: No, I have not.



**Chapter 10:**  
**Session 9: Homicide: Contextual and Motivational  
Characteristics**

**Moderator: Lin Huff-Corzine**

**Understanding the Role of Gender In Suicide Bombing.** *Chris Rasche, University of North Florida.*

**Linking Offender Behaviors at Bias-Motivated Homicide Crime Scenes to Their Background Characteristics.** *Chris Fisher and C. Gabrielle Salfati, John Jay College of Criminal Justice.*

**Discussion** recorded by Tom Petee

# Understanding the Role of Gender In Suicide Bombing

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Paper summary prepared for the Homicide Research Working Group Annual Meetings, Minneapolis, MN June 7-10, 2007.

## **Introduction**

Suicide bombing terrifies and mystifies Americans. The idea that an individual would hate others so completely, or be willing to pursue a cause so fervently, that he or she is willing to also die in the process is difficult for most Americans to really grasp. While we understand (even if we do not condone) those who kill in rage, and even sympathize to some degree with those who kill in revenge, and underlying assumption for most of us is that the killer does not wish to be caught and punished. And, indeed, most homicide offenders around the world and throughout time have seemed to validate that assumption, taking pains to cover their homicidal acts or at least the clues which would link them to those acts. Not so the suicidal homicide offender, whose murderous act toward another (or sometimes many others) is followed by self-destruction, as in the case of many familicides or mass murders.

This is different in some respects from the act of using one's body as a destructive device, causing the death of others and oneself simultaneously. Americans first confronted suicide attackers in large scale during the end days of World War II, when the Japanese sent thousands of *kamikaze* pilots on doomed missions to fly into U.S. warships as living dive bombers. Their actions were completely outside the scope of American understanding, since we did not then, and still do not now, have a culture which includes the notion of an *honorable self death*. Thus, the actions of suicide bombers today strains our ability to grasp their motivations. Understanding the suicide bomber is made more difficult by the fact that among the factors that may influence an individual to decide to become a suicide bomber, it now appears that sex or gender is no longer a barrier. What was once a singularly male activity, like most killing, has suddenly become an activity pursued by women as well, some of them mothers of young children, which makes their acts all the more bewildering to Western sensibilities.

## **The Historical and Criminological Context of Suicide Bombing**

Many civilians believe that suicide attacks are a modern phenomenon, and surely suicide *bombing* is---but only because bombing itself is a relatively modern achievement. However, suicide *attacks*, on the other hand, have an long history. The ancient Jews, the early Christians, and the early Muslims all had suicide attackers and martyrs of one kind or another (Schweitzer, 2000; Zedalis, 2004). History is replete with stories in virtually all cultures of martyrs who gave their lives in attacking an enemy, and such suicide attackers have generally been venerated as heroes. Interestingly, apparently few of these hero-suicide-attackers have been *females*.

But, then, killing is generally a predominantly male phenomenon. Traditionally, for all of the seven decades in which the FBI has been collecting national crime data, males have comprised 90% or more of all those arrested for murder in the United States. For 2005, the FBI reported that once again 89.9% of all known murder arrestees were male (FBI, 2006). In some forms of murder, however, males are even more dominant as the offenders, comprising virtually all of them--e.g., familicides, mass murders, spree killings, school shootings, etc. Women are almost non-existent as offenders in these types of homicidal events. Until recently, this was also true of suicide bombing.

By most accounts, suicide bombing has been relatively rare throughout history. It became a modern instrument of warfare in the 1980s when Hezbollah began to utilize it as a tactic in the Lebanese civil war. For most Americans, the defining moment was the suicide car bombing of the U.S. Marine barracks in Beirut, in which 241 Americans and 58 French nationals were killed, and scores of others were wounded. Both the Americans and the French had been sent to Lebanon as part of a multinational peacekeeping force, but the catastrophic bombing resulted in all Americans and French forces being withdrawn (Bailer, 2003; Scan, 2006). After what could only be viewed as a monumental success by a small rebel force against two powerful Western states, other organizations began to make use of suicide attacks. The first in 1987 were the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka; then in 1994 the Palestinian Islamist group Haas used suicide bombers in Israel; in 1996, the Kurdistan Workers Party used them Turkey; in 1998 al-Taeda employed suicide bombings of the U.S. embassies in Kenya, Tanzania and elsewhere; and in 2000 the Chiacoan rebels began a campaign of suicide attacks. It was, of course, the September 11, 2001 airplane attacks against the World Trade Center in the United States which "catapulted suicide bombing into a global threat" (Scan, 2006, 9).

While suicide attacks have an ancient history, their use in modern times has dramatically increased. They went from being very infrequent prior to the 1980s, to occurring monthly, weekly or more often worldwide at present. Terrorism experts estimate that at least 17 terror groups in 14 different countries had made use of suicide bombing by 2001. In the span of the two decades between 1980 and 2001 such attacks had been deemed responsible for about three percent of all terror incidents, which seems like a small proportion until it is understood that these incidents were believed to account for approximately half of all the fatalities caused by terrorism in that time, not even including the 9/11 deaths (Paper, 2005a; Zedalis, 2004). Furthermore, such attacks seem to be increasing, even while the rate of terrorist incidents overall appeared to fall prior to 2001 (Paper, 2005a, 2005b) and prior to the U.S. invasion of Iraq.

### **The Participation of Women in Suicide Bombing**

Though rarely mentioned in historical texts, and still uncommon among modern suicide attackers, the *female* suicide bomber is no longer the aberration she once was. According to the Council on Foreign Relations, women are responsible for at least two-thirds of the suicide attacks perpetrated by the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) and another one-third of the bombings carried out by the Tamil Tigers (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam or LTTE) of Sri Lanka (Council on Foreign Relations, 2005). This is consistent with a survey conducted by Paper (2005a), in which he identified 462 suicide attacks between 1980 and 2003. Of the 381 attackers

for whom Paper was able to identify the sex, 59 (15%) were female and the proportion of women attackers by organizational affiliation varied considerably, as shown in the table below:

Table: Use of Women Suicide Attackers 1980-2003 by Organization

ORGANIZATION	NO. OF ATTACKS BY FEMALES	% OF ATTACKS BY FEMALES
Kurdistan Worker's Party	10	71%
Chechens	14	60
Tamil Tigers	23	20
Lebanese Hezbollah	6	16
Palestinian	6	5
Al-Taeda	none*	0

\*Note: Al Taeda began using women suicide bombers after 2003.

Source: Adapted from Paper, 2005a.

Obviously, women's participation in suicide bombing represents a highly differentiated phenomenon. All observers seem to agree, however, that women's involvement as suicide attackers---like suicide bombing in general---is on the increase, and will continue to be so (Scan, 2006). Even organizations which previously explicitly banned the use of women in such attacks, often on religious grounds, have had sudden shifts in policy in recent years. For example, both al-Taeda and Haas, which had been quite explicit previously about the inappropriateness of women as suicide bombers, have apparently begun to make use of women bombers.

### **Trying to Make Sense of Suicide Bombing as a Form of Homicide**

While criminology has devoted relatively little attention to terrorism overall, there is an extensive literature on terrorism in the fields of political science and international relations. Needless to say, a good bit of that literature is focused on trying to understand (and thus deter or intercept) the terrorist, especially now that it is clear that Americans are highly likely to be targeted by some terrorist organizations. But, as noted earlier, the motivations of a warrior who does not necessarily wish to die---but is nonetheless intent on using his or her own body as a weapon of destruction---tends to be elusive to most Westerners. Suicide is more commonly conceived of by most Americans as the act of an extremely unhappy individual who seeks death for its personal escape values, or as a way to end intractable pain and suffering, or as a product of mental illness. Indeed, American experts assert that "over 90 percent of suicides are associated with mental illness including alcohol and/or substance abuse disorders" (Goldsmith, Pellmar, Kleinman & Bunney, 2002: 69). And yet, from the beginning of suicide research, there was in the work of pioneer sociologist Emile Durkheim the idea of *altruistic suicide*, or suicide committed entirely for the benefit of the collective good even when the individual did not seek

death. In his groundbreaking study Suicide: A Study in Sociology, first published in France in 1897 (1951), Durkheim argued that this seemingly most personal of acts was actually highly influenced by social conditions, particularly the bond which the individual does (or does not) feel with the collective whole. In particular, for the purposes of this discussion, some individuals may feel so strongly tied to the collective welfare of their groups that they decide to lay down their lives for the benefit of the group, even though they have no personal wish for death. Americans do understand this sort of sacrifice in the case of soldiers who fling themselves on grenades in order to spare the lives of their comrades, for example, or mothers who use their own bodies to shield their children from danger.

It is harder to grasp how a mother could decide that the welfare of her children or the larger society would be enhanced by her suicidal attack against a restaurant full of tourists or a military checkpoint. As noted earlier, modern Westernized societies do not appear to have cultural notions of *honor suicide* as often as do some others past and present. Most cultures and faiths have banned suicide, but not all of them. There are Hindu traditions of pyre suicide by widows (known as "suttee") or of ascetics who have realized full achievement of their religious aspirations (Murray, 2000; Inamdar et al, 1983), and the Japanese custom of ritual suicide or murder-suicide in response to shame, failure or defeat (Iga, M., 1996; Sakuta, T., 1995). "In traditional Chinese society, suicide was seen as an available option for coping with humiliation and also as a means for upright officials to criticize immoral and corrupt times" (Goldsmith, et al., 2002: 23).

The available analyses of the motives of suicide bombers suggests that there are some patterns to the behaviors, backgrounds and characteristics of those who become involved in this form of terrorist activity. However, it is important to note that this list of motivations was compiled from the study of mostly *male* suicide bombers, given the relatively recent initiation in the use of female bombers. It is natural to ask whether the motives of women who become involved in suicidal attack are the same as those of their terrorist brothers, or whether gender flavors the reasons why persons become dedicated to such acts.

Furthermore, the effort to understand suicide bombing as a form of homicide (rather than terrorism) may be strengthened if we apply to this effort some of the traditional typologies used in homicide research. One of the most common distinctions made in the field of homicide research with regard to motive is to categorize murders according to whether they are *instrumental* or *expressive*. First proposed by Richard and Carolyn Block (see Block, 1976; Block & Block, Dec. 1993), these concepts have been treated as both (a) end points on a continuum and (b) a mutually exclusive dichotomy. The Blocks themselves defined the concepts as follows: "In an expressive violent confrontation, the primary goal is violence or injury itself, and the other motives are secondary. In contrast, the primary purpose of an act of instrumental violence is not to hurt, injure, or kill, but to acquire money or property" (Block and Block, 1993, p. 8). However, the Blocks were among the first to argue that this distinction should be conceived of as a continuum, and that many violent acts (such as street gang crime) contained elements of both expressive and instrumental motivation (Block and Block, 1993). Nonetheless, many (if not most) writers who have used these concepts have employed them as distinct entities (Miethe & Drass, 1999; Miethe and Regoeczi, 2004).

Does applying the instrumental-expressive dichotomy (or continuum) to suicide bombing provide any insights into the motivations of the persons who engage in this act? Are the acts of female suicide bombers different from those of their male counterparts? These and other questions will be addressed by the presentation at the HRWG meetings in June.

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# **Understanding the Role of Gender In Suicide Bombing: A Preliminary Criminological Exploration**

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Prepared for the Homicide Research Working Group Annual Meetings,  
Minneapolis, MN June 7-10, 2007.

A few caveats are in order:

1. Suicide bombing is a far more complex subject than may be suggested here .
2. American understanding of it is hampered by Western orientations toward self and beliefs about what motivates people.
3. Also hampered by profound ignorance about other cultures and religions.



If you did not read the five page summary, here are the high points:

- Suicide bombing mystifies Americans partly because we do not have a culture which includes the idea of *honorable self-death*.
- Suicide *bombing* is a modern phenomenon only because bombing is modern, but suicide attacks have an ancient history going back to the early Jews, Christians and Muslims.
- Killing is a predominantly male thing.
- Suicide bombing is rare in modern history, but it does *disproportionate* homicidal damage.
- Its use has dramatically increased over the past several decades, and especially within the last five years.
- Women, though extremely rare as suicide bombers in the past, are now rapidly increasing their participation.
- But women are still considered shocking as suicide bombers, even in their own cultures—do they do it for the same reasons as males?

Analyses of the motives of suicide bombers in general (which means, of course, of *male* bombers) suggest that there are several reasons why persons such things:

1. One of the most popular ideas among Westerners is that suicide bombers are primarily *religiously motivated* (Skaine, 2006; Zedalis, 2004)
  - otherwise often described as the "*fanatical Islamist*" motive
- Indeed, one analysis of 300 suicide bombings between 2000 and 2003 concluded that the majority (70%) were religiously motivated (Atran, 2004)
- Religious motivations are often *articulated* in al-Qaeda attacks, as well as many in the Palestinian conflict and attacks by the Taliban, and now those in Iraq

This may be an a bit of an over-simplification--

- A) religious motives are often blurred with nationalist or other resistance-revenge goals
- B) strong religious belief by itself usually does not drive people to suicide attacks
- C) *suicide* is almost universally condemned by most religious systems—though not *martyrdom*

2. Some analysts argue, in fact, that it is not religion per se but *nationalism* or *resistance to oppression* which drives suicidal terrorism

As note previously, articulated religious motives are often blended with nationalist or resistance messages--which forms a kind of *secular moral cause*

- can be seen in arguments to "compel modern democracies to withdraw military forces" from homeland territories (Skaine, 2006, quoting Pape, 2005)

- e.g. the Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka, Hamas and Hezbollah in Palestine, Chechen rebels, now also in Iraq

**\*\*It is especially important to note the urgency of *perceived humiliations* or *past injustices*---where these remain unaddressed, and power differentials are great, terrorist acts may come to be seen as justified means to the ends**

3. Some analysts point to suicide bombings as a *response to American imperialism* in particular

- Osama Bin Laden apparently believes that the USA has insulted Islam by establishing military bases in the holy land of Saudi Arabia, views America as seeking to take over Middle Eastern countries for the oil, and supporting Israel at the expense of Palestine

Such offenses may justify "holy war"

- There is a long tradition of *revenge martyrdom* in Islamic culture, though other analysts see suicide bombings as simply strategically useful against vastly superior American military might
- McCauley (2005) refers to the need for warring parties to "outbid" each other in the marketplace of ideas and popular opinion -- and suicide bombing gets a lot of attention, scares a lot of people

4. One of the most popular motives attributed to suicide bombers is that they have *personal psychological motives*—  
e.g., that they are damaged, insane people  
or already suicidal
- However, most analysts note that suicide bombers are NOT drawn to their action through media or their own psychological problems, and are NOT suicidal or want to die in any other sense
  - Indeed, most are not loners, but are enmeshed within a community and a support group which helps them to fulfill their suicidal act when the time comes—suicide bombing is usually NOT a lone action
  - Important to note that actual lunatics and psychologically damaged people are usually avoided by terrorist groups for the same reasons that they are avoided by other groups—they are not dependable, and may cause more damage than good

The available evidence suggests that most suicide bombers in conflict areas were recruited by friends and family, and were supported in their acts by a network of helpers

*--the importance of community support is crucial in the view of most analysts.*

This is not to say that the suicide bomber may not have his *own personal emotional or psychological reasons* for becoming *willing* to get involved in such an activity:

- Some may feel the *humiliation* of their people/community/nation more keenly than do their peers
- Others may be more in need of a way to *prove themselves* in the eyes of their peers or family
- Many articulate their *desire for the heavenly rewards* which are purported to come to martyrs and which may sound much better than their current strained existence
- Some may expect to be *praised as martyr-heroes* after death, and to earn post-mortem honors/rewards for their families which would otherwise be beyond their reach
- Some may have responded more readily than others to the hype of the continuous media provocation today regarding occupation of homelands, insults to people, killings by the "enemy", etc., which enflame emotions

However, it should be noted that all of these individual factors are present everywhere in conflict zones

And yet only a few persons become suicide bombers, so these are not sufficient in themselves to explain the phenomenon.

*In short, the **willingness** to become involved must be matched with the calling to a **moral/religious cause** of some kind which **justifies** a suicidal attack which the attacker knows will hurt/kill innocent others*

Analysts agree that there is an *insufficient* understanding at present of the motives of suicide attackers.

Yet several have noted the tendency among policymakers to over-simplify motives (Vaisman-Tzachor, 2006).

As McCauley (2005) has observed, the dialogue seems to be between whether *they hate us for what we do or they hate us for what we are.*

But remember that, until recently, such attackers were almost exclusively *male* and that most analyses have been based on that preponderance of male behavior.

Now within the past decade women suicide bombers have suddenly become a much more frequent phenomenon (Hoogensen, 2005; Zedalis, 2006) and appear to be increasing at a rapid rate (Fighel, 2003)

Their presence in this kind of activity is shocking, both to Westerners and often within their own cultures

Almost universally women are viewed as life-givers, not life-takers, and are seen as less violent than men

It is especially shocking when women who are mothers of small children commit suicide attacks, as in the case of Reem al-Rayashi in January 2004, who left behind two small children to blow herself up at an Israeli checkpoint (Knight & Narozhna, 2005)

So what motives are attributed to *female* suicide bombers, and are they the same as the motives attributed to males?

Some are the same:

- \* Religious motivations - to defend religion
- \* Nationalist motivations - to sacrifice self to bring attention to the plight of one's people
- \* The desire to be viewed as heroes - to be revered by others after death, to get earthly rewards for the family
- \* The desire for religious reward in paradise
- \* To seek revenge for harm against loved ones or community
- \* To protect loved ones from future harm

Also, along similar lines to explaining male suicide bombers, are the following observations:

- Most analysts discuss the degree to which there has been a kind of “social contagion” in the idea of using women bombers, much like the idea of suicide attacks itself has spread from one conflict area to another
- In some cases, charismatic leaders have been important in fostering the use of female bombers just as they have been important in encouraging suicide bombing at all

But here is where it begins to get interesting!

On the one hand, most analysts assert that there are *few or no differences* between male and female suicide bombers

On the other hand, those same analysts often go on to discuss motivational factors which are *absolutely unique* to female suicide attackers

---that is, these are factors which are not mentioned in the literature on motives of male suicide bombers

Major unique motivational factors discussed in relation to female suicide bombers include:

1. The first factor raised by most analysts is that almost all known female suicide bombers have come from *highly restricted, patriarchal societies*

Thus women suicide attackers are viewed by some as rebelling against repressive gender constructs, or rising up against their second-hand status as women

"This was the only way women could be a part of the mujhadeen" (Carroll, Aug.17,2006)

There are few other ways women in these cultures can take direct actions which make them equal fighters to their male brothers

2. A second motivational factor frequently raised in relation to female suicide bombers is that this may be a way for "tainted" women to find salvation or erase personal or family stigma

Important to remember the importance of *family honor* in traditional societies

Also remember the importance of women getting married and bearing children in traditional cultures

Women who do not marry, cannot bear children, have unacceptable relationships, are divorced by their husbands or are raped are likely to be viewed as *tainted* by their families and communities.

An *honorable death* as a martyr can remove this taint and restore the family's honor.

Are sometimes referred to by their families and communities as "Brides of God" in post-mortem memorials



3. While these first two factors are very powerful, they might be ineffective without the factor of *clerical support* for female suicide bombers

(Though some female bombers are clearly following *secular* charismatic leaders, such as with the Tamil Tigers)

Until recently, Islamic religious doctrine did not permit women to fight along with men

Some religious leaders previously explicitly forbade women from serving as suicide bombers

No longer – even Hamas and al Qaeda now deploy women bombers

But note: This does NOT mean that these women are religious fanatics---there is not a lot of evidence of that women are acting primarily on religious fervor.

4. Another important factor is the presence (or absence) of *community support* for women to act as suicide bombers.

Community support for suicide bombing in general appears *crucial* to whether it occurs with any frequency

Interesting but depressing note: Suicide bombing enjoys widespread support among Middle Eastern and Muslim communities, even while the same respondents express appreciation for American culture and values in general.

Though it is still shocking in these cultures, there appears to be growing support for women to serve as suicide bombers, which is critical for them to break away in this way from traditional gender roles.

5. Discussion of women suicide bombers often brings up the possibility of the *exploitation of their personal losses and tragedies*.

First raised in relation to the Tamil Tigers and the Chechen “Black Widows,” many of whom were viewed as having been recruited after losing husbands, lovers, sons or other family/friends to their regional struggles

The concept is now expanded to the Palestinian conflict and other areas of the world

The idea is that women have become suicide bombers only because of their losses, or to fill in the ranks after all the men in these conflicts have been killed/imprisoned

6. Several analysts discuss how some women suicide bombers became involved due to romantic manipulation by or involvement with male terrorists

There are a number of cases in which women first became romantically involved, then became ideologically involved

There are also some husband-wife teams that have been in operation

7. Closely related to this is the argument that some women become suicide attackers because they have channeled sexual desire/energy into violence.

8. Finally, quite a few analysts argue that some women become suicide bombers because of some kind of *coercion* or *brainwashing*.

There is apparently evidence of some women being effectively coerced by first being lured into relationships with men or sympathetic friendships with older women, then blackmailed into cooperating in terrorist missions

A few analysts describe “zombification” processes which resemble the tactics used by cults

To the degree that a woman’s allegiance may be cultivated in the small tight-knit groups in which most terrorism is grown these days, this certainly might constitute “brainwashing” of a sort.

The important point here is that while coercion, or any of these other special motivations, might also apply to males they do not seem to appear in the general literature on suicide bombers.

These eight motivations or factors only seem to appear in discussions of *female* suicide bombers

despite disclaimers from quite a few analysts that there are no gender differences in the motivations of suicide bombers

“A suicide bomber is a suicide bomber.”

Clearly something is amiss here and begs further research and analysis

It is also clear that most of the literature to date on suicide terrorism comes from the fields of security and international/foreign relations, and a criminological/sociological analysis has yet to be applied to this form of killing.

Perhaps our understanding would be enhanced if we were to analyze suicide bombing as a form of homicide (rather than terrorism) and apply some of our traditional homicide typologies to that task

But time does not permit....so instead:

Here are some of the questions I am playing with:

- What would be the best criminological theoretical approach to use to understand female (or male) suicide bombers?
- Are there theoretical approaches from other fields which might lend insights to this behavior?
- Does applying the traditional instrumental-expressive homicide continuum lend any insight to suicide bombing?

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## Discussion Notes

RECORDER NOTES JUNE 10<sup>th</sup>

Homicide: Contextual and Motivational Characteristics

Presenters: Chris Rasche, C. Gabrielle Salfati & Chris Fisher

### QUESTIONS:

Katrina Gruenberg: What are the rewards for women in suicide bombing?

Chris Rasche: Interpretation varies in the Koran – you will be surrounded by 70 virgins (or angels). Some women have said they would be the head virgin. Others think that they will be surrounded by angels.

Mark Zelig: Do you have more multiple offenders in your sample? Might there be some confounding effects because of multiple motivations?

Chris Fisher: This was a concern... theory suggests that if you can identify the leader of this group, the other offenders share characteristics with the leader—will test this. Moreover, it was usually the case that one person in this group who does the killing.

Vance: Is suicide bomber the right term... aren't they really human bombs?

Chris Rasche: I used the term because of the familiarity of the audience with that term.

C. Gabrielle Salfati: There was an incident about four years ago where a little boy went up to an Israeli security station was strapped with bombs, where he didn't want to die. Was it just internal motivation.. maybe not...

Chris Rasche: Think of Durkheim's altruistic suicide... in this case, suicide is entirely a social phenomenon... there is some level of organization here... it is a group endeavor, not a lone lunatic.

Roland Chilton: I think you should look at other worldly orientations... not religion – like the civil rights movement, although thankfully that was non-violent. But, you have to look toward how they are looking to the next world. Taking this from a criminological perspective should avoid seeing this as simply a Muslim phenomenon.

Chris Rasche: Yes, it is having a moral cause of some kind.

Dallas Drake: I wonder if the suicide bombings are not similar to having someone who is expendable – we are seeing more female bombers, but we may be seeing another group who is expendable.

Chris Rasche: A surprising number are wealthier, although they are young.

Marc Riedel: No suicide bombers come from the families who are wealthy.

## **Chapter Eleven:**

### **Session 10: Homicide Studies: The First Decade of Our New Journal**

Jay Corzine, University of Central Florida.

## Oral History of Homicide Studies

The following is an oral history of the journal Homicide Studies as told by Dwayne Smith, Jay Corzine, and Tom Petee at the 2007 Annual Meeting of the Homicide Research Working Group in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Transcribed by Candice Batton.

**The Past:** Dwayne Smith, Founding Editor 1996-2001 It all started at the American Society of Criminology meetings in 1994 at a restaurant called Mango's on South Beach. There was a group of us - many core members of this group. We recognized that there was no scholarly journal devoted specifically to the study of homicide. We thought we could make a go of it. We introduced the idea at the business meeting in Miami the next day. We approached Terry Hendrix, the head of Sage journals, at the suggestion of Marc Riedel. Not much happened for the next several months, but the idea was revived at the 1995 Annual Meeting of HRWG in Ottawa, Canada. At the 1995 ASC meeting in Boston a committee was formed to move forward with Terry Hendrix. There were lots of email exchanges identifying ideas and outlining potential problems. For example, taking on a journal might be too much of a "big bite" for a group like HRWG, which was relatively small and informal. There was also concern regarding the financial drain - would raising membership dues deter interest in HRWG?

Could the journal have the opposite effect and attract members? As a side note, the journal has generated an average of \$9,000 in royalties for HRWG for each of the last three years so its actually proven to be a financial bonus for the organization. At the 1996 Annual Meeting of HRWG in Santa Monica we decided to move forward. The first issue was slated for February

1997 - this was a very short start up period, but with the help of a lot of people, we got it out the door on time. The journal started with Dwayne as editor and his resources consisted of a masters student named Natalie Hicks and two filing cabinets. Fast forward five years and at the 2001 Annual Meeting of HRWG, Tom Petee and Jay Corzine were named co-editors of the journal. Dwayne boxed everything up and sent it to Auburn University which would be the home of the journal for the next three years.

**The Present:** Tom Petee and Jay Corzine, Co-editors 2001-2007 Tom and Jay agreed to serve as co-editors for six years with each housing the journal at his respective institution for three years. Thus, the journal spent the first three years at Auburn University with Tom Petee and the second three years at the University of Central Florida with Jay Corzine. By the time they assumed editorship, the journal was starting to gain attention, especially media attention. We had a very capable Managing Editor who was a graduate student at Auburn. Started to gain momentum in terms of submissions. Special issues were one way of doing that and were quite well received. One challenge was learning APA format; working with authors on this was difficult at times.

In January 2006, Homicide Studies became an ISI journal. The first impact score will be for the calendar year 2006 (i.e., volume 11). To become an ISI journal, we had to guarantee that 15% of our Editorial Board was international since "international" was part of our title. Also, 15% of authors needed to be international. As of now, Homicide Studies has published 147 articles, 12 book reviews, and 14 other publications (e.g., commentary, rejoinders, research in progress). There have been 352 authors in the journal; of those, 37% are female, 14% international, and 19% nonacademic. The journal has a bright future! Sage is interested in



Homicide Studies' impact score for the ISI - should be available near the end of the summer. Special issues only go out as numbers 1 or 2; can't do as 3 or 4 because they are related to impact scores, which are linked with library usage and their decision making in terms of subscriptions.

The Future: Gary Jensen, Editor 2007-??

The journal is now passing to its new editor, Gary Jensen, at Vanderbilt University. A large portion of HRWG members have published in the journal.

Gary will be soliciting suggestions/ideas for topics, questions regarding the appearance of the journal (which may not be very important given the shift to electronic subscriptions and readers). The increase in royalties is linked to Homicide Studies being bundled with other criminal justice and social science journals. In the form of concluding remarks, all agreed that HRWG owes Dwayne Smith a huge debt of gratitude in recognition of the initial work put into starting the journal.

## **Chapter Twelve: Poster Presentation**

**Center for Homicide Research: Solving and Preventing Homicide.** *Dallas S. Drake and Joseph Shulka, Center for Homicide Research.*

**Clearance Rates for Canadian Homicides.** *Geoffrey Li, Statistics Canada.*

**Familicide: The Killing of Spouse and Children.** *Marieke Liem and Frans Koenraad, Utrecht University.*

**If I Cannot Have You, No One Can: A Decade of Intimate Partner Homicide.** *Frans Koenraad and Marieke Liem. Utrecht University.*

## Center for Homicide Research: Solving and Preventing Homicide

Dallas S. Drake & Joseph E. Shulka

Center for Homicide Research

### ABSTRACT

Center staff will provide information about the Center for Homicide Research as well as about progress in the development of a national database on gay, lesbian, bisexual and transsexual homicide. To date over 3,000 GLBT homicides have been identified and many cases are already coded into its almost 230 variables. Preliminary results will let researchers see for the first time, the scope and value of this groundbreaking project.

The Center for Homicide Research is an independent, volunteer-driven, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the capacity of the GLBT community, criminal justice professionals, and law enforcement to become more effective in identifying, solving and prevention of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender homicides. The mission of the Center for Homicide Research is to promote greater knowledge and understanding of the unique nature of LGBT homicide through sound empirical research, critical analysis and effective community partnerships. For more information, visit our website at [www.CHROnline.org](http://www.CHROnline.org).

## Homicide Clearance rates in Canada 1961-2005

Geoffry Li  
Statistics Canada

### **Background information for the poster presentation.**

Each year, the Homicide Survey collects information on the clearance status (i.e. solved by police or unsolved) of every homicide that occurs in Canada. However, because of the complex and time-consuming nature of many homicide investigations, some incidents are solved only after they have been reported to the Homicide Survey. This more up-to date information is not necessarily conveyed to the Homicide Survey resulting in historical police service clearance rates for homicides being continually under-estimated.

This poster presentation will illustrate the findings from a retrospective project which was undertaken to update the clearance status information on all unsolved homicides that had occurred in Canada since 1961 (when the Homicide Survey began data collection). This multi-year project was undertaken by Mia Dauvergne and Rick Labovitch (from the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics at Statistic Canada), in co-operation with every police service in Canada that had reported at least one unsolved homicide since 1961.

In total, 89 different police services were asked to update their information on 3,875 homicides that had occurred since 1961. In total, the clearance status of 427 (or 11%) of these previously unsolved homicides was updated to solved.

Between 1961 and 1973, homicide clearance rates are only available by province and territory. Starting in 1974, data according to police service became available. Analysis by individual police service will look at data between 1976 and 2005 to allow for an even 30-year timeframe.

# Results of a special project to update clearance rates in Canada

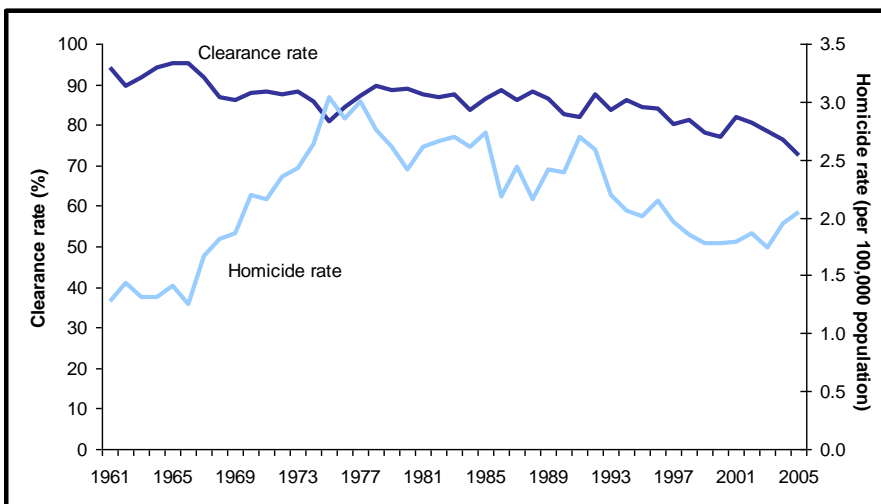
## Background

- In 2005, Statistics Canada completed a project to update the clearance status information on all unsolved homicides that had occurred in Canada since 1961.
- This update was needed as more up-to date information is not necessarily conveyed to the Homicide Survey resulting in historical police service clearance rates for homicides being continually under-estimated.

## Homicide rates and clearance rates

- Among the approximately 24,000 homicides that have occurred in Canada since recording began in 1961, 85% have been solved by police.
- Homicide clearance rates were at their highest during the early and mid-1960s (when the homicide rate was at its lowest).
- For the next three decades the homicide clearance rate remained relatively stable; then, beginning in the mid-1990s the rate began to gradually decline.

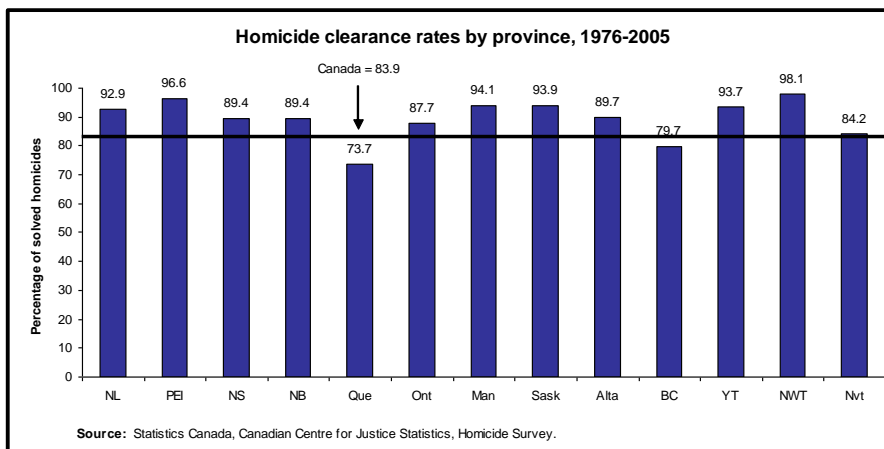
### Homicide and Clearance rates, Canada, 1961 - 2005



## Provincial variation

- Between 1976 and 2005, the highest clearance rates for homicide were reported in the provinces and territories reporting a relatively low number of homicides; namely, the Northwest Territories (98%) and Prince Edward Island (97%).
- Over the same 30-year period, clearance rates for homicide were lowest in Quebec (74%). Quebec's lower clearance rates may in part be a result of the province having a high proportion of shootings and victims involved in illegal activities.
- Homicides involving these characteristics tend to be less likely to be solved, as shown later.

## Clearance rates, by province, 1976 - 2005



## Relationships and Clearance Rates

- Among all the homicides which have been solved between 1991 and 2005, 7 out of 10 were solved by police within the first week of the incident occurring.
- Another 25% were solved within a year and only 5% took longer than a year.
- Homicides committed by criminal relationships, strangers, business relationships and interestingly, parents, tend to take longer for police to solve.

### Length Of Time Taken To Solve Homicides, By Accused-Victim Relationship, 1991-2005

Relationship	n	1 week or less	8 to 30 days	1 month to 1 year	> 1 year
Spouse	1,255	81%	7%	9%	3%
Parent	595	65%	9%	21%	5%
Other Family	743	81%	8%	8%	3%
Other Intimate	331	78%	7%	12%	3%
Close Friend	475	76%	8%	13%	3%
Neighbour	295	81%	7%	8%	3%
Authority figure	25	52%	8%	36%	4%
Business relation	200	64%	12%	15%	10%
Criminal relationship	606	45%	17%	23%	15%
Casual acquaintance	1,628	71%	11%	15%	3%
Acquaintance Total	3,229	67%	11%	16%	6%
Stranger	1,095	62%	14%	19%	6%
Unknown	123	28%	6%	28%	39%
Grand Total	7,371	70%	10%	15%	5%



## Characteristics of unsolved homicides

- While controlling for other factors (i.e. victim's age, gender and marital status as well as the location, time and number of victims killed in the incident),
  - homicides involving firearms were found to be 2.9 times more likely to be unsolved compared to homicides involving other types of weapons
  - Homicides against victims who were involved in illegal activities were also 3.5 times more likely to be unsolved compared to homicides in which the victim was legally employed or not in the workforce.

## Coming Releases

- Urban Rural Comparison (June 28)
- Aggregate Canadian Crime Statistics, 2006 (July)
- Homicide in Canada, 2006 (Fall)

# Familicide: The Killing of Spouse and Children

Marieke Liem & Frans Koenraadt

Utrecht University

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**Background** Familicide is a term used to denote the killing of multiple family members, its most common form spouse plus children. Although other forms of familicides do occur, for example the killing of parents (parricide) and siblicide (the killing of siblings), this type is considered to be very rare (Koenraadt, 1996).

A familicide involving spouse and children is considered to constitute an overlap of both uxoricide (the killing of a partner) and filicide (the killing of ones child(ren)). Familicides are almost exclusively committed by men (Byard et al., 1999; Harder, 1967; Marleau et al., 1999; Somander & Rammer, 1991), typically in their 30s or 40s (Ewing, 1997).

Given the extremity of this type of homicide, many researchers point towards psychopathological factors underlying these acts. In most case studies, the role of depression is particularly pronounced (Goldney, 1977; Polk, 1994, Schlesinger, 2000), sometimes evolving into a psychosis directly preceding the killing (Malmquist, 1996) or in other cases accompanied by morbid jealousy (Goldney, 1977).

So far, no study has examined the degree to which perpetrators of familicides differ from or correspond to perpetrators of filicide or those accused of uxoricide.

**Aim** To examine and compare the socio-demographic, conditional and psycho-pathological factors of familicide perpetrators to filicide-only and uxoricide-only perpetrators.

**Method** Data were extracted from files of a forensic psychiatric observation hospital in Utrecht, the Netherlands. The sample consisted of 536 persons: 23 were accused of (attempted) familicide, 133 of (attempted) ilicide and 380 of (attempted) uxoricide.

**Results** The typical familicide perpetrator is a male in his 30s who kills his spouse and his biological children in a violent manner.

**Conclusion** Although there exist similarities between the three groups, those accused of familicide cannot easily be equated with those accused of filicide or uxoricide.

# **If I cannot have you, no one can A DECADE OF INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDE**

Frans Koenraadt & Marieke Liem

**Utrecht University**

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**Background** Research systematically shows that one primary difference between male-perpetrated and female-perpetrated spousal homicide is that homicide committed by females is far more self-centred and/or child protective than killings by men.

Killings by men differ in that male violence is generally concerned with domination or control of women and exhibits a sexual proprietariness and concern with fidelity that is seldom found to the same degree in women (Felson & Messner, 2000; Gauthier & Bankston, 2004; Serran & Firestone, 2004; Wilson et al., 1993).

With the exception of some (e.g. Belfrage & Rying, 2004; Dutton & Kerry, 1999), relatively few studies examine the psychopathological background of those accused of intimate partner homicide. In the relevant studies, the main personality trait found among spousal homicide offenders is depression, (paranoid) psychoses and personality disorders.

**Aim** To examine and compare the socio-demographic, conditional and psychopathological factors underlying spousal homicide committed by men and women and to assess the elements of the male proprietariness and female self-defence theories.

**Method** Data were extracted from files of a forensic psychiatric observation hospital in Utrecht, the Netherlands. The sample consisted of 120 persons; 98 men and 22 women, who were accused of committing (attempted) uxoricide in the period 1996-2005.

**Results** There was an overrepresentation of ethnic minorities. Prevalent motives included fear of abandonment and feeling insulted. Women killing their spouse out of self-protection were in the minority. A threat to end the relationship constituted the main trigger for the homicide. The majority of the perpetrators were found to be diminished accountable.

**Conclusion** Several elements in support of the male proprietariness theory were found, with the exception of the type of relationship, which was more often dependent instead of dominant. It is suggested that some men use their dependency rather than violence to control their intimate partner and prevent her from leaving. Not much support was found for battered women using lethal violence as a form of self-protection.