

SEXUAL HOMICIDE: AN ANALYSIS ON ETIOLOGY,  
BE IT NATURE OR NURTURE

BY

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**DISSERTATION APPROVAL**

This dissertation submitted by Melissa Fenton and Stephen Craig Heelan has been read and approved by three faculty members of the American Academy of Clinical Sexologists.

The final copies have been examined by the Dissertation Committee and the signatures, which appear here, verify the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given the final approval with reference to content, form and mechanical accuracy.

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“Science may have found a cure for most evils; but it has found no remedy for the worst of them all - the apathy of human beings.”

Helen Keller, *My Religion*, 1927

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## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the relationship, if any, between the influence of nature and nurture on that population having committed sexual homicide. Homicide, egregious in and of itself, often catches the attention of both society and science by asking the question why? What drives man to the end beyond explanation in creating the horror served against another human being to achieve sexual gratification?

Can it be said that some of humanity is born evil; or does the environment create a social anomaly void of empathy and ingrained with a predatory fixation on satisfaction through destruction? We believe that it is a combination of the two. An individual who's hardwiring (nature) is vandalized by genetic insult that prevents him/ her from developing the coping strategies and successful executive functioning to integrate cumulative softwiring (nurture).

What follows is a discussion that continues to haunt man with each terrible headline...simply, "how could someone do that to another human being."

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION.....	7
	A. The Background of Sexual Homicide.....	8
	B. Statement of the Problem.....	12
	C. Definition of Terms.....	17
	D. Research Question; .....	23
	E. Limitations of the Study.....	25
	F. Objective of this Analysis.....	27
	F. Significance of this Analysis.....	29
II.	REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	30
	A. Introduction.....	30
	B. Theoretical Framework.....	31
	C. Model Typologies.....	32
III.	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	59
IV.	RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS.....	60
V.	CONCLUSIONS.....	62
	A. Implication of Findings.....	69
	B. Recommendations for Further Study.....	70
	APPENDICES.....	71
	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	72

## I. Introduction

This paper explores the etiology of sexual homicide and the impact if any by nature or environment (nurture). Are lust murderers (von Krafft-Ebing, p.57) born out of the womb destined to create murder and mayhem, or created from within their environment crafted over time by dysfunction and pathology?

Much has been written about the calamitous after-effects of the crime called sexual murder but how the perpetrators come to haunt societies remains elusive. Point in fact, the actual defined classification of what constitutes a sexual homicide has only been agreed upon within the last two decades (Ressler, Burgess, et al., 1992). The lack of true crime scene classification has undoubtedly led to confusion and misinformation from within the ranks of academia and criminal investigators alike. Thus, the magnitude and cost to society as a whole remains unanswered.

The questions surrounding identification, prevention, etiology, prognosis, treatment, and justice continue to be problematic. Is there a psychological framework existing from which science and research can offer society the pathological understanding of what drives the erotophonophilic (Purcell and Arrigo, 2006 p.1) to orchestrate his/her destruction?

What follows is a discussion regarding some of the research to date with the hopes of adding clarity to those trying to understand the crime of sexual homicide. The discussion will consider the limitations resulting from the historical lack of a definitive consensus on the subject matter and instead focus on recent collectivism exploring typology and model inferences. If for no other reason than furthering an answer to the

question of how humankind can perpetrate such an atrocity towards another human being, this discussion needs advancement.

### **I.A The Background of Sexual Homicide**

“By Their Acts Ye Shall Know Them” (Simon, 1996 p.25) is a good introduction to establish the background in our analysis of sexual homicide. To be sure, no society, no individual, is shocked more than that by the crime of lust murder. Given the diverse sexuality of humankind over history, it would come as no surprise to anyone to presume murder predicated on sexual deviance to be an anomaly unique to one period, one race, one gender, over another.

However, sexual perversions, or those acts perceived by a societies subjective analysis, as deviant did not officially exist until Krafft-Ebing’s *Psychopathia Sexualis* introduced the nomenclature familiar to us today. By the year 1886, Krafft-Ebing’s book became the definitive resource from which to classify and define aberrant sexual proclivities. Works prior to this date were minimal and not considered seminal on the subject matter due to the small niche audience of select physicians and scientists (von Krafft-Ebing, 1999 p.xxiv).

Kraft-Ebing’s (1886) in *Psychopathia Sexualis* wrote:

“The propagation of the human race is not left to mere accident or the caprices of the individual, but is guaranteed by the hidden laws of nature, which are enforced by a mighty, irresistible impulse. Sensual enjoyment and physical fitness are not the only conditions for the enforcement of these laws, but higher motives and aims, such as the desire to continue the species or the individuality of mental and physical qualities beyond time

and space, exert a considerable influence. Man puts himself at once on a higher level with the beast if he seeks to gratify lust alone, but he elevates his superior position when, by curbing his animal desire, he combines with the sexual functions ideas of morality, the sublime, and the beautiful” (p. 5).

Thus, what goes wrong? It becomes evident that Krafft-Ebing realized that something within us has the ability to drive us from the lofted position of this moralized evolutionary process into something much darker, and sublime. Something he later goes on to describe as “lust murder, or lust potentiated as cruelty, murderous lust extending to anthropophagy (a form of cannibalism in which the offender either eats the victim’s flesh directly from the body or slices it off for consumption)” (von Krafft-Ebing, 1999 p.85).

His ideas on lust murder, we believe, are born from his research involving case histories defined as sadistic. He defined sadism as a “sexual inclination toward persons of the opposite sex, with perverse activity of the instinct”. This sexual experience is in his literature described as pleasurable, orgasmic, and a common theme in sexual perversion. Sexual pleasure is gained from inflicting cruel and physical punishment. It can also be birthed by an innate desire to humiliate, injure, wound, or in extreme instances, destroy another for the goal of deriving sexual pleasure for oneself (von Krafft-Ebing, 1999 p.79).

Von Kraft-Ebing believed that sexual lust and cruelty often occurred together and has been thoroughly discussed by other authors. In his writing of *Psychopathia Sexualis*, he cites several cases to illuminate the correlation between innocent love games and horrific extremes of this association of pain and pleasure. For instance, the man who was

bitten by his sexually excited lover all over his chest at the pinnacle of their lovemaking. His reference of Friedreich's *Magazin fur Seelenkunde*, 1830, vol. 2, no. 5 wherein the Indian myths of Death and Lust (Shiva and Durga), human sacrifice during sexual acts, sexual instinct at puberty, lustful impulse to commit suicide, whipping, pricking of genitals, all in a cacophony of sexual frenzy to satiate sexual desire. He mentions Lombroso (*Verzeni e Agnoletti*, Rome, 1874) who also cited several examples of murderous desire that occurred with ever-increasing lustful cravings between victim and perpetrator.

The author Ball, in his *Clinique St. Anne*, tells of a patient who during coitus bit off the nose of his lovers and swallowed them. Continuing his theme of marrying sexual lust and sadism, he reveals to the reader the author Ferriani (*Archiv. Delle psicopative sessuali*, vol. 1, 1896, p.106) and the case of a young man, who prior to sexual intercourse with his lover, used to wrestle with her and then while during orgasm he had to bite and pinch her. The young man reported that in the absence of the physical violence (and increasing levels) he "felt no gratification." The case mentions that the level of intensity eventually brought legal charges against him by his lover.

When "homicidal mania has been excited, lust often follows," wrote von Krafft-Ebing (1999). Reaching back into historical accounts even further, he remarks how the plunder and spoliation by roving herds of bandits often are punctuated by accounts of brutal lust and rape. Described as a pathological transition, he describes the reports of Caesars Nero and Tiberius who by accounts delighted in ordering and witnessing the deaths of many youths and maidens.

Additionally there was the history of Marshall Gilles de Rais (Jacob, *Curiosities de L'histoire de France*, Paris, 1858), a man executed in 1440 for the eight- year reign of murder and mutilation of over eight hundred children. Rais was apparently stimulated and spurred on to these killings after reading about the orgies described of Tiberius, Caracalla, etc., fueling his interests in kidnapping, torturing, and killing the children. The heinous crimes he reported brought him “inexpressible pleasure.” Crimes completed by burning the bodies of the children and saving the heads of the beautiful children as memorials (von Krafft-Ebing, 1999 p. 81-82).

To sum up von Kraft-Ebing’s ideas on sadism, sexual sadism, and lust murder (sexual homicide) one has to look at his construct, or typology of the deviance, which will be developed later in this paper. For now however, sadism he thought, was “nothing other than an excessive and monstrous pathological intensification of phenomena – possible, too, in normal conditions in rudimental forms – that accompany the psychic sex life, particularly in males.” That when an “association of lust and cruelty is present, not only does the lustful emotion awaken the impulse of cruelty, but also the reverse is true; cruel ideas and acts of cruelty cause sexual excitement, and in this way are used by perverse individuals” (Krafft-Ebing, 1999, p. 83)

This idea rings true with us and other researchers. The act of sexual homicide has been pushed in front of society across the millennia and in a variety of mediums. An idea that is all shocking, all horrific, to most. However for some, and being the focus of this examination, the idea of horrific has been replaced with titillation and excitement.

How does an individual move from a psychosexual framework woven from expected normalcy, perceived order, and an accepted sexual taxonomy into the dark

deviant abyss of lust murder? How do we as a society identify the potential for such atrocities from these individuals? Further, can we? This is the problem, the challenge.

### **I.B Statement of the Problem**

This paper will examine the literature regarding the influence or correlation if any, between genetic predisposition (nature) and the environment (nurture) as they relate to the completion of sexual homicide.

Mankind has asked itself time and time again the question of why after reading a headline, watching a news story, or worse, being the victim of a personal crime, more so a horrific crime, such as the likes of when a life is taken. With the subject of sexual homicide, further questions are seemingly raised than answered and thus adding to the anguish of both survivor family and society as a whole.

To start, a lack of agreed definition of sexual homicide has persisted in the criminal archives for several decades, mainly due to a deficiency of understanding and recognizing motive. The following table illustrates the lack of consensus:

**Table 1.1** Various Terms, Descriptions, and Definitions of Sexual Murder

<b>Author</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Term</b>	<b>Description / Definition</b>
Krafft-Ebing	1886	Lust Murder	“The connection between lust and desire to kill” (p.62); “The sadistic crime alone becomes the equivalent of coitus”(p.64)
DeRiver	1958	Sadistic Lust Murder	“After killing the victim, the murderer tortures, cuts, maims, or slashes the victim...on parts (of the body) that contain strong sexual significance to him and serves as sexual stimulation” (p.40)
Brittain	1970	Sadistic Murder	Offers no specific definition but

			provides a nine-page description of personality traits and characteristics of sadistic murderers; differentiates from a murderer who kills in a sexual setting (such as one whom silences a victim of rape)
Hazelwood and Douglas	1980	Lust Murder	“Distinguished from the sadistic homicide by the involvement of a mutilating attack or displacement of the breasts, rectum, or genitals” (p.1)
MacDonald	1986	Sex Murder	“A sexual factor is clearly apparent... or deeper study will sometimes reveal that sexual conflict underlies the act of aggression” (p.164)
Ressler, Burgess, and Douglas	1988	Sexual Homicide	“Murder with evidence or observations that indicate(s) that the murder was sexual in nature” (p. xiii)
Money	1990	Erotophonophilia	Murder associated with sexual Sadism as defined in DSM (p.26)
Douglas et al.	1992	Sexual Homicide	“Involves a sexual element (activity) As the basis for the sequence of acts Leading to death” (p.123)
Douglas et al.	1992	Sadistic Murder	“The offender derives the greatest satisfaction from the victim’s response to torture” (p. 136)
Grubin	1994	Sexual Murder	“The killing may also be closely bound to the sexual elements of an attack... the offender’s control of his victim, and her pain and humiliation, become linked to his sexual arousal” (p. 624)
Malmquist	1996	Lust Killing	“The primary goal is to kill the victim as part of a ritualized attack... the motivation...is the enactment of some type of fantasy that has pre-occupied him or her for some time” (p. 295)

**Table 1.1** Variations on the definition of Sexual Homicide (Schlesinger, 2004, p.3-4)

Along with differences in definitions between homicide(s) (see table 1.2), many different terms have been used to describe sexual murder, including lust murder (Krafft-Ebing, 1986), sadistic lust murder (DeRiver, 1958), sadistic murder (Brittain, 1970), lust killing (Malmquist, 1996), and even erotophonophilia (Money, 1990), among others. Sometimes different authors (Hazelwood and Douglas, 1980; Krafft-Ebing, 1886) define the same term such as lust murder dissimilarly.

**Table 1.2** Comparison between Sexual Homicide and Non-Sexual Homicide

<b>Sexual Homicide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Often occurs without motive</li> <li>• Crime scene frequently lacks clues</li> <li>• Premeditated</li> <li>• Intentional</li> <li>• Sexual aspects of the crime may be undetectable</li> <li>• Ritualistic</li> <li>• Serial in nature</li> <li>• Sadistic-aggression is eroticized</li> <li>• Cruelty and infliction of pain pre-mortem</li> <li>• Postmortem mutilation of the body</li> <li>• No known relationship to the victim</li> <li>• Sexual fantasy prior to crime involving domination, control, mutilation, pain and violence, or a combination of these themes</li> <li>• Sexually arousing</li> <li>• Paraphilia(s)</li> <li>• Kills victim in personal manner commonly with hands or ligature</li> <li>• Takes mementos from crime scene</li> <li>• Not always blatantly sexual</li> <li>• Perpetrator often visits crime scene afterward</li> </ul>
<b>Non-Sexual Homicide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May or may not be intentional</li> <li>• Motive (money, jealousy, anger)</li> <li>• Domestic in nature</li> <li>• Murder committed while part of a felony</li> <li>• No sexual arousal</li> <li>• No sexual fantasies of committing the crime</li> <li>• Not serial in nature</li> <li>• May or may not exhibit guilty feelings after the crime</li> </ul>

- No paraphilias involved
- Victim may or may not have been raped
- More likely a gun or other weapon used as opposed to perpetrators hands
- Genitalia may or may not have been mutilated
- Often staged to appear like a sexual murder in order to thwart detection

**Table 1.2** A comparison of sexual homicide vs. nonsexual homicide. Many sex / lust crimes are filed under the heading UCR due to the ambiguity of properly differentiating sexual homicides from nonsexual homicide (Ressler, 1992; FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, 1992)

Similarly, definitions overlap in identifying sexual homicide versus non-sexual homicide (Table 1.2). The F.B.I. in their latest Uniform Crime Report numbers 39,146 sex-related, or potential sex-related felony or suspected felony type murders from 2004 – 2008. Of this total, 36,398 are categorized as unknown, or not otherwise specified (see appendix A). Clearly, everyone is in agreement regarding results from a physical perspective for this serves as the specter haunting us. However, what of the origin? What constructs are present or missing that are the motivation for the individual(s) accused of committing this atrocity?

A troubling fact is that the numbers of violent incidents is not appreciably diminishing and even if they were, if you were the one victim, the one parent of a child, the surviving spouse, the number of yet one would be too many. The point is, the problem is not going to disappear and we may well expect more acts to be committed throughout the future. A fact supported by the numbers reported by the F.B.I.

The question then becomes what can be done to ameliorate the understanding of lust murders? Is it a question of gathering more data? More research? Further analysis of existing research and data? Alternatively, could science start by reviewing the practical application of existing information? This paper will extol the benefits of a collective

approach. By using the aggregate of existing data, informing the end user of practical application, defining an agreed upon standard and examining the psychological and behavioral constructs, it is believed that a more consistent profile will emerge, a profile that could serve to advance better recognition for diagnostic treatment and predictive value.

The more science examines the origin of pathology in these individuals; the clearer becomes the road map for research. Beginning with the theory of genetic predisposition would appear to be a vantage starting point. Admittedly, while the idea of evil existing in the womb may be depressing to a society it begs to be explored.

If science is going to offer society a reprieve from the depravity caused by sexual killers then we need to know the foundation from which to build. By knowing with reasonable certainty that etiology may be genetically (nature) systemic sets the direction for research and creates a wide variant for prognosis. Limitations, as well as success can be projected. If, on the other hand, it is agreed that the environment shapes and molds lust murderers, then a different approach to research and practice is suggested.

However, presently, with a lack of consensus, both theories (nature or nurture) lack the momentum to drive research in a direction towards successful or even acceptable resolve. The present approach in analyzing the sexual killer is always post-facto and from a biased perspective. That is they commit the crime, and if apprehended, they tell their story. The researcher is left to assume, presume, accept, or deny the offender's history whether real or imagined, or some part in total.

Existing of course is the possibility that the two, nature and nurture, are unrelated to the development of the sexual killer. It is unlikely though given the evidence presented to date. Evidence that is examined in depth further in this paper.

Rather it is both together that sculpt and give birth to the lust murderer. Science can clearly state that there is more than a biological, or neural, basis for violence. While still not arguing away the idea of a genetic footprint for these killers, science and research have given us a better understanding of the brains development and how, even in-utero, one's environment has the potential to shape the central nervous system. In which manner the brain defines, this experience begins the process later recognized as normalcy or pathology. Further, we are shaped by our experiences, our bias, and our perceptions, from and while interacting with our environment (Niehoff, 1999).

How then could the idea that nature and nurture work in concert throughout ones lifetime be rejected? Columbia University neuroscientist Eric Kandal has written, "The central tenet of modern neural science is that all behavior is a reflection of brain function" (Niehoff, 1999, p. 5). We believe that brain dysfunction occurs at the cellular level, marrying nature and nurture and should not be dismissed.

### **I.C Definition of Terms**

Purcell and Arrigo in their writing describe what they determine to be an inextricable bond between lust murder (sexual homicide) and paraphilic behaviors (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006, p.11). It is a shared thought by the researchers of this paper and as such, we will describe for the reader some of the specific paraphilic behaviors highlighted in the literature.

Adams and Sutker write that the diagnostic criterion of paraphilias has changed considerably over the last few decades. Those coming to be defined in the Diagnostic Statistical Manual (DSM) supported by the A.P.A. since 1952 mostly reflect the changes (Adams & Sutker, 2004, p.750). It is important at this point to review some of these definitions as most authors offering research on sexual homicide write that they originate and involve sexual fantasy, or paraphiliac behaviors.

Where distinction may differ between the current DSM-IV and seminal authors occurs, is where we will offer both definitive views on the subject matter. Further, it is believed that the number of paraphilias may in fact number in the hundreds, though for the purpose of this paper, we will only review and define those paraphilias and associated behaviors thought to occur co-morbidly with the act of sexual homicide.

### **Paraphilia**

Having its roots originating with the Greeks, the word paraphilia is actually two word's *para*, a term for outside the usual, or beyond, and *philia*, a Greek term for love. Combined they denote "abnormal love" (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006, p.5; Money, 1993, p.1).

The recognized clinical perspective notes "paraphilias are a group of persistent sexual behavioral patterns in which unusual objects, fetishes, rituals, or situations are required for full sexual satisfaction (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006, p.5; DSM-IV TR, 2000).

Further writes Purcell and Arrigo (2006), "The average number of paraphilias is 4.8 per person. Multiple paraphilias are often found in an individual; however, one paraphilia typically becomes dominant until it is replaced by another." Adams and Sutker (2004) write that leading researcher John Money (1984, 1986) argued the existence of

more than thirty subtypes of paraphilias. What can be taken away regarding the defining of the word is that it is not without controversy.

Paraphilia, while having its roots in Greek language, was better known in the clinician's world as sexual perversion(s) or sexual deviation(s), a type of personality disorder as described in the DSM-II (APA, 1968). This definition remained until the release of the DSM III (APA, 1980) when sexual deviation(s) was duly changed to paraphilia(s) and classed as a category of psychosexual disorders and sexual dysfunctions.

The actual term *paraphilia* was believed borrowed from Karman (1954) because it was thought to be more descriptive than previously used clinical labels (taking the aberrant, *para-*, to that which the person may be attracted, *philia*) (Adams & Sutker, 2004). Different from past DSM definitions and criteria, the new classifications do not assume sexual interests to be necessarily deviant, nor to preclude dysfunctional interpersonal functioning, or represent a personality disorder. In years past, the clinical term had been used to specifically address an individual's sexual behavior and refers to the individual's preferred or exclusive means of attaining sexual pleasure (Adams & Sutker, 2004).

The new definition of paraphilia associates the proclivities for sexual urges, fantasies, and / or activities needed for arousal as interfering with "the capacity for reciprocal, affectionate sexual activity" (APA, 1994, p.524). Now it is recognized that sexual stimulus activity is specific, if not exclusive, to the paraphilic activities of the individual.

From this new definition, paraphilias are recognized as intense, recurring sexual urges along with fantasies specific to nonhuman objects, suffering or humiliation of oneself or one's partner in a manner that is not a simulation, or children or other non-consenting partner. Noting that most paraphilias are seen exclusively in the male population (Adams & Sutker, 2004, p.750).

Money (1986) defines the disorder as “*A condition occurring in men and women of being compulsively responsive to and obligatively dependent upon an unusual and personally or socially unacceptable stimulus, perceived or in the imagery of fantasy, for optimal initiation and maintenance of erotosexual arousal and the facilitation or attainment of orgasm. Paraphilic imagery may be replayed in fantasy during solo masturbation or intercourse with a partner. In legal terminology, a paraphilia is a perversion or deviancy; and in the vernacular it is kinky or bizarre sex.*”

### **Sexual Sadism**

Inflicting psychological or physical suffering (APA, 1994). Further the DSM-IV defines the disorder as consisting “*of sexual urges and fantasies centering on the actual (not simulated) infliction of psychological and physical suffering on a victim.*” It should also be noted that that the victim may or may not have given consent for such treatment. Fantasies often range from verbal humiliation, bondage, restraint by force, spanking and paddling, to the higher end of the continuum of torture, mutilation, rape, and murder.

### **Sadism**

Money (1986) defines sadism as a “*paraphilia of the sacrificial/expiatory type in which sexuoerotic arousal and facilitation or attainment of orgasm are responsive to, and dependent upon being the authority who imposes abuse, torture, punishment,*

*discipline, humiliation, obedience, and servitude. The reciprocal paraphilic condition is masochism”* (p. 269).

### **Erotophonophilia**

Arrigo and Purcell (2006) write, “Erotophonophilia is the acting out of sexually sadistic behavior by murdering one’s victims.”

While Money (1986) describes the paraphilia as “The sacrificial /expiatory type in which sexueroetic arousal and facilitation or attainment of orgasm are responsive to, and dependent upon stage-managing and carrying out the murder of an unsuspecting sexual partner. The erotophonophile’s orgasm coincides with the expiration of the partner. The reciprocal paraphilic condition is autassassinophilia.

It is believed that lust killers have the propensity for serial killing due to the idea that their paraphiliac behaviors exist on a continuum, or that the need for ever-increasing excitement levels predisposes them to serial efforts to satiate their anxiety. Further, (Holmes & Holmes, 2002a) have theorized it that erotophonophilia is comprised of several other paraphilias and (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006). Because of their relevance to the examination of lust killing, they are included and reviewed in this paper. Thought to be the most frequent coexisting with sexual killing (erotophonophilia) are:

### **Flagellation**

“*A form of sadomasochism in which satisfaction is achieved by whipping others or by being whipped* (DeRiver, 1949; Hickey, 2001). *Beatings and clubbings are also common manifestations of this behavior”* write Purcell & Arrigo, (2006). Given to the belief that paraphilias exist on a continuum and that the activity is necessary to both

arousal and orgasm they would presume to be linked to frequency, intensity and duration of the pain inflicted or received.

### **Picquerism**

Is defined by Purcell and Arrigo (2006, p. 21) as “A profound desire to stab, wound, or otherwise cut the flesh of another (DeRiver, 1956; Holmes & Holmes, 2002a).” They go on to describe these potentially lethal wounds as occurring on or near the genitalia and/or breasts. To the lust killer, the frequency and intensity fuels their desire for orgasm. Again leading to speculation that increased efforts are needed to achieve continued spiraling sexual pleasure.

### **Anthropophagy**

Write Purcell & Arrigo (2006, p.21) “Is a form of cannibalism in which the offender either eats the victim’s flesh directly from the body or slices it off for consumption. Some lust murderers are known to have eaten the breasts of victims, while others have cooked portions of the person’s thighs in a casserole (Hickey, 1997, p.16).” The theme of ritualization and sexualized violence is maintained through this act and allows the erotophonophilic to experience a new high in erotic pleasure.

### **Vampirism**

Has a long history of familiarity starting with early films and literature. As was the case in history, this paraphilia involves the smelling or drinking of blood. The exception in this instance is that the purpose is not for nourishment, but sexual gratification and arousal. It is thought that the lust killers who engage in this activity do so before, during, or after the victim is assaulted (Purcell and Arrigo, 2006).

## **Necrosadism and Necrophilia**

Both involve a desire to have sexual intercourse with a dead body. Purcell and Arrigo (2006) write that (Holmes & Holmes, 2002a) talk of the necrosadistic murderer who sets pre-meditates to kill his victim for the express purpose of enjoying sex with the victim after death. They acknowledge that when this activity “is linked to erotophonophilia, the behavior becomes serial in nature. Indeed, over time, the only way this type of lust murderer can experience sexual fulfillment is through intercourse with a corpse.”

In summary, paraphiliac behaviors, are considered recurring, intense, and believed to be ever increasing in intensity. Involving arousing images detailed into fantasy by the lust killer, all are used to stimulate or produce sexual urges, desires, or behaviors involving either nonhuman objects (fetishes) and or/predicated on the suffering (typically physical) of oneself, a partner, child, without consent. The behavior is thought to be concomitant with one becoming the dominant behavior until replaced by another, and employed commonly in men (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

What differentiates the behavior in lust killers from humanity in general may best be described as normal paraphiliac behavior versus criminal paraphiliac behavior. The etiology of deviance from the norm, and often considered harmless is again the nature of this analysis and is further explored in the literature.

### **I.D The Research Question**

The sexual killer, a predator who walks amongst us unannounced, is frequently invited in by his victims because he/she has no label, no sign, typically with no outward appearance that he is a broken misfit residing in the hierarchy of humankind. The kind of

architect whose designs cause considerable anguish and suffering across so many of societies strata. The individual whose crimes elicit in us a myriad of emotions ranging from disgust, fear, hatred, suspicion, revilement, and confusion.

Along this emotional rollercoaster exists also a macabre curiosity for the crime itself. Why is it that in spite of the headlines depicting horror, murder, and mayhem, do some of us ignore, if only for an instant, the basic idea of what is right from wrong? Whereby the basic belief in most of us that the world operates from a paradox pitting good and evil gets put on hold so that one's prurient interests can be appeased.

Witness the box office results at the success of the movie Halloween that, by our guess, has released its 8<sup>th</sup> edition. Harken your attention back to the wildly popular paperback (Helter Skelter) written by Vincent Bugliosi detailing the Manson murders almost 40 years ago and the continued interest the media continues to afford this psychopath. What is it that continues to draw a nation, moreover, a world's interest on such unsettling and disturbing subjects?

In his book titled "Bad Men Do What Good Men Dream," Robert Simon, M.D. points out that "we are frightened and yet fascinated by the dark side." The discussion between good and evil originates with that first literary piece of work, The Bible. Are we to believe from those collected passages that the descendants from Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel are the forerunners of the dichotomy previously mentioned; the dichotomous presence of good and evil, with its origination infamously detailed as having begun in the Garden of Eden?

Freud entered the cerebral discussion many, many years later when he depicted his views on the ideas of human nature as being driven by powerful natural instincts of

aggression and passion in his title *Civilization and Its Discontent* (Freud, 1962).

Emotions, that when moved to an extreme, can result in what he defined as rape, incest, and murder. Emotions held with fragility by guilt and social institution (Simon, 1996, p.2).

Simon went on to write what we feel is apropos in asking the research question.

Simon wrote (1996, p.3):

“The basic difference between what is socially considered to be defined as good or bad people is not one of kind, but one of degree, and of the ability of the bad to translate dark impulses into dark actions. Bad men such as serial sexual killers have intense, compulsive, elaborate sadistic fantasies that few good men have, but we all have some measure of that hostility, aggression, and sadism. Anyone can become violent, even murderous under certain circumstances.”

The explanation for such rage to manifest itself and cause a human being to act out is the question research and science needs to explore, given, our brains are now believed to be hardwired for aggression. This explains evolution and earmarks the idea of self-survival. However, what is the contributing factor, the source, if you will, for violence, the kind of violence witnessed from the hands of the lust killer?

### **I.E Limitations of the Study**

Like most if not all studies, analysis, case history, and predictive nosology of sexual crimes, they are all examined post-facto. The same malaise limits this analysis. The criminology and pathology both are camped in the examined author's theory, and mostly predicated on the subjects self-report. Moreover, while objective discernment

might be the focus from the onset by those engaged in research on the subject of sexual homicide, over the course of work it remains to be seen what level and degree of personal bias creeps into the final product.

Admittedly, our individual and then collective reasoning and interpretation of the data reviewed shaped the analysis conducted by us for this report in part. While making every earnest effort at minimizing what we presume to be a homogenized phenomenon in most research, we cannot ensure that our thoughts are very free from personal and bias perception. Nor do we believe the same can be said from the focused authors in our analysis.

This we believe to be a fundamental limitation to the analysis of subject matter. We do agree with Purcell and Arrigo however, that the data and “models collectively advance our understanding of those assailants whose actions involve sadistic deviance and sexualized violence.” In answering the question regarding a definitive etiology of sexual murderer’s, whether it be nature, nurture, or both in some potpourri of variance, ultimately is speculative.

As we developed our thesis idea, we could not help but begin our approach from a cause and effect perspective. The existing data surrounding our subject matter and as offered earlier, all sexual criminology, the research focuses on theoretical motives. The predominant of which we surmised is the motivational model (Burgess et al.(1986), MacCulloch’s et al. (1983) model based upon classical conditioning, Hickey’s (1997, 2001) model permeated on the idea of trauma control, Schlesinger’s model depicting catathymic and compulsive homicides, and finally the insights of Money (1990)

regarding the potential for neurological deficits within the limbic system of the brain and a major source thought by Money to seat sexual arousal, and the drive for reproduction.

Unfortunately, all these models fail to provide a definitive prescription for etiology in suspected and confirmed sexual homicides. Each model has merit, does indeed correlate with observed behaviors, and while widely accepted they are not without criticism (e.g.Kafka, 2003; Schlesinger, 2003). (Purcell and Arrigo, 2006)

Concluding that current research regarding aberrant sexual deviance as well as the processes linking to the fantasy, manifestation, and maintenance of sexual homicide is not fully explained, we have limited the focus of our analysis to the ideas of nature and nurture as viable constructs of the crime sexual homicide.

### **I.F Objective of this Analysis**

Primarily this paper examined the framework of sexual homicide and back-engineered the criminal act with the hopes of exploring the behavior(s) and psychology driving the individual to commit such a heinous act. It is a brief look into the face of evil manifested through the commission of murder; a sexual murder. An act perpetrated by people oftentimes considered ordinary, people living outwardly ordinary lives doing ordinary things.

However the lust murderer is far from ordinary, instead is discovered a complex individual with the sophistication to identify a victim's intimate frailties and vulnerabilities of self and devise a protocol of horror, humiliation, pain, suffering, and ultimately death. What is the process by which ordinary evolves to unspeakable and immense cruelty? Can it simply be explained away as mental illness? What of the idea that the evil perpetrated on another human being may for some, be rooted in an innate

self-centeredness sourced in the soul or the mind? What is the driving force behind the individual who can produce such contempt and devaluation of others that becomes the impetus to lust murderers?

Simon (1996, p. 13-14) writes, “Can we figure out whether, when, why, and how an element of destructive self-centeredness enters into our everyday social intercourse and causes hurt misunderstanding and psychological harm to others?” Simon (1996) further opined that a duality exists in all mankind, and that more often than not, society attempts to explain away acts of violence as an idea of them and not us and as such contributes to a distrustful myth regarding safety.

He continued, “The greatest danger comes from denying that there is a beastly part of humanity. If we can acknowledge the beast and attempt to control it, the beast is less likely to leap out when we least expect it” (Simon, 1996, p. 15). The object of this analysis is to identify the “beast” by his roots, to control the beast by illuminating his pathology, and to hopefully develop from the information a continued effort in directing research aimed at quieting the insatiable appetite from the beast for sexual homicide.

Asking the question as to the source of motivation of the sexual killer we feel is important on two fronts. The first is the research congruent. Does it appear that the majority of data agrees in direction, or like leaves in the wind, is the scientific community scattered across many domains. In our analysis, we have focused on two domains believing biology (nature) and environment (nurture) to be fundamental and foundational.

The second objective had us asking ourselves the question “dependent upon the data indicatives, is there a positive prognosis available to society by which we might form treatment guidelines?” Is it possible to classify the lust murder as a specific and

distinct category of sexual homicide, and what are the underlying motives driving one to commit the crime?

### **I.G Significance of Analysis**

Advancing questions related to criminal acts and behavioral biology serves to providing answers across many spheres in understanding the problems of violence.

Violence exists. The potential for violence exists in all of us, a fact noted in the earliest of literature, the Bible, and violence still has a hold on humanity today. In the end, it matters not the argument of degree, but whether violence holds some measure of predictability, and for what context?

Understanding that neuroscience in the last two decades has moved appreciably forward in developing new methods of examining the brain, its structure, its function, suggesting that science re-examines the foundational relationship between the brain, behavior, genetics, and environment. Critics and proponents of the debate between nature and nurture over the last century can no longer ignore the opportunities neuroscientific technology has afforded us in coming to a better understanding of the causes related to human behavior, and in this instance, sexual homicide (Niehoff, 1999).

## **II. Review of Literature**

### **II.A Introduction**

Schlesinger (2003) wrote, “Sexual homicide cannot be understood in isolation”(p. xiv). Nor can it be said that the motivation for sexual killing could be discussed from a narrow focus. There does indeed exist a dark side to humanity, as evidenced in the last 30 years the more than 37 million Americans who can claim to be an injured victim. At the rate of every 22 seconds someone in America is stabbed, battered, shot robbed, raped, or killed (Simon, 1996). Some of these victims have fallen prey to the sexual killer.

In researching the subject matter, a simple Google Scholar search indicated more than 95,800 articles on “Sexual Homicide,” 82,700 articles on “Sexual Homicide Cases,” and over 10,500 hits on “Sexual Homicide Nature or Nurture.” Determining that much has been authored on the subject is without question, therefore for the sake of this analysis; we have focused on the causes of motivation. What are the factors that have the power to transform innocence on one level into violence the next? Could it be parents, neighborhoods, morals, abuse, the internet, illegal/legal substances, neglect, stress, rejection, “soft wiring” (nurture), or “hard wiring” (nature), what?

What we suspect is that sexual homicide like violence is a complex behavior given rise from various components. A process developed from an integration of biology, sociology, and pathology. Each one interdependent on the other and needed to create the lust killer. We will analyze in a broad sense these three spheres; biology, sociology, and pathology in the selected literature reviews that follows.

## **II.B Theoretical Framework**

Deviant sexual behaviors have existed as long as man and women have realized the possibility of orgasm. To experience this pinnacle of pleasure could only lead to personalizing the methods to achieve them. The roadmap developed by each of us to arrive at our carnal destinations can be direct and enjoyable on a wide, well-lit pathway. Yet for others their route may be winding, filled with curves, and filled with potholes...still, for some it becomes a dead end.

We will examine the constructs leading to the development of the carnal destination defined as sexual homicide in this analysis. Erotophonophilia or lust murder as it may be commonly referred (Hickey, 2003). His profound acting out within the context of sexual gratification and violence that is fatal identifies this type of killer. For these perpetrators, sexual enjoyment and erotic fulfillment are derived from and dependent upon the amount of torture, fear, humiliation, and mutilation they can inflict on their victims (Holmes & Holmes, 2002a).

Research on the origins, onset, and the idea that these paraphilias are escalating has been somewhat limited and largely anecdotal (Hickey, 2005). However, we will investigate the theorized relationships between sadistic and sexually deviate behavior and lust murder with the belief that there exists an association between the two, and that this association is developed from a process whereby erotic and violent behavior escalates to the ultimate horrific crime of sexual homicide. This paper will examine the prevailing conceptual models on sexual homicide and serial homicide.

## II.C Model Typologies

Our review begins with one of the earlier researcher's on the field of forensic and clinical psychiatry and the author of *Psychopathia Sexualis* (1886) a classic text on sexual science and after many translations, many editions, still serves as a seminal source for sexology as studied today.

Richard von Krafft-Ebing it was said, "Was a physician who wrote for physicians" (Krafft-Ebing, 1999, p. xvii). His book was technical and used the vernacular of the day. The style of his writing was masculine and muscular; relying on case illustrations to expound on a particular pathological point. "A clinician who reported what he found, he stripped aside the twin veils of sham and shame which covered the pathology of sex" (Robinson, 1939).

Credited with devising such terms as paranoia, sadism, masochism, sexual bondage, among others, Krafft-Ebing also studied the numerous individuals proclaiming uncontrollable sexual impulses but for who could not complete, or found normal coitus impossible. Robinson (1939) calls him "The founder of modern sexual pathology" (Krafft-Ebing, 1999, p.xxiv).

Robinson (1939) in his introduction of Krafft-Ebing's 12<sup>th</sup>. edition of *Psychopathia Sexualis* proclaimed the "foremost figures in the Sexual Science of the Twentieth Century are Iwan Bloch (1872-1922), Magnus Hirschfeld (1868-1935), Havelock Ellis (1859-1939), and Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)," each whom have, in their lives, recognized Krafft-Ebing as the pioneer advancing human sexual understanding and the inverted boundaries of sexual pathology.

Krafft-Ebing did not practice or live in a vacuum and his authored ideas did draw criticism. But, in perspective and testament against his detractors, Leon-Henri Thoinot, of Paris noted for his medic-legal aspects of moral crimes was fond of telling his students “There is a name that should be put above all others, that of Krafft-Ebing, of Vienna.” writes Robinson (1939), and it should be noted “That while there is no longer a Vienna, Krafft-Ebing will never be forgotten” (Krafft-Ebing, 1999, p.xxi).

### **II.B.1 Krafft-Ebing**

It was said that Krafft-Ebing was a disciple of Benedict Augustin Morel who authored the *Treatise on the Physical, Intellectual and Moral Degeneration of Mankind* (1857) which it is suspected, influenced the clinical orientation of Krafft-Ebing (Krafft-Ebing, 1999). The term *degenerate* was used at the time with medical connotation and was correlated by Morel in reference to the Bible and the fall of Adam and Eve in the Book of Genesis. Furthering the idea, that humankind is now “*tainted*” and potential victim to external influences. Humanity is suspected to have degenerated from the standard once set (Krafft-Ebing, 1999).

In 1881 there existed in the United States a variation of Morel’s theory of degeneration, that promoted by George M. Beard and given the clinical name of “neurasthenia” and was introduced to the field of science in his book titled *American Nervousness: Its Causes and Consequences* (1881). Its cause he believed was the industrialization of modern civilization, a disease without rigid symptomology and not being diagnosed as hysteria, madness, melancholia, epilepsy, or any other noted endogenous or degenerative illness recognized in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was widely embraced on both continents.

Combining Morel's theory of degeneration and Beard's theory of neurasthenia in their most narrowed sense to that of his theory that all forms of sexual deviance or aberration from excessive masturbation to necrophilia and cannibalism were effectively caused primarily by the evils of bad heredity and secondly by the evils associated with modern civilization. Krafft-Ebing gave a title to this theory; he called it *Psychopathia Sexualis*. A theory that explained away the unnatural predisposition for one's lust to heredity and the unnatural excited predilections that fueled such lust were attributed to the new modern environment.

Money, we believe furthered a similar idea when he described in *Lovemaps* (1993) his theory on paraphilia and what is believed the engine that initiates sexual homicide.

### **II.B.2 John Money**

What is about her that drives me crazy...the way she walks into a room, her smile, the way my brain seems to freeze when I look into her eyes. How is it that when she walks away from me her hips undulate in a melody that plays repeatedly in my mind when I am alone. Thoughts that fuel the passion residing in my loins begging, exalting me for release? Why do I feel like this? And why this particular woman? Are all questions I have asked myself when first realizing that I found the opposite gender attractive. John Money discussed and authored this reaction as my *Lovemap* (1993) and opined everyone has one.

Not present at birth, yet theorized by him to develop and differentiate within a few years after entering this world. Existing in our brains, this developmental template arises from the input experienced from our environment through special senses. This

lovemap depicts our human-erotic idealisms and identities. Born from and existing in our minds this imagery begins as dreams and fantasies but may become later translated into performance with a partner or partners. If differentiation occurs without incident, a lovemap could expect to differentiate as heterosexual (Money, 1993).

Money (1986) does describe lovemap pathology however, and writes that “Age-concordance, gender-deference, sexueroetic rehearsal play in infancy and childhood is prerequisite to healthy heterosexual lovemap formation.” The culprits to “vandalizing” a lovemap are deprivation, neglect, prohibition, prevention, and abusive punishment and discipline. Timing is also a consideration, as exposure to forbidden sexueroeticism before age one prevents an individual from being able to process the emotional experience and may thus traumatize lovemap formation.

The course of pathological lovemapping occurs early in life but its full manifestations erupt after puberty. Money (1986) describes three categories of pathology, “hypophilia (also referred to as sexual dysfunction), hyperphilia (erotomania), and paraphilia (legally known as perversion). Existing in all three are designs of both love and lust, but these emotions become disjointed because of pathology or being vandalized.

Writes Money (1986), “In hypophilia, the cleavage is such that lust is dysfunctional and infrequently used, whereas love and lovebonding are intact. In hyperphilia, lust displaces love and lovebonding, and the genitalia function in the service of lust alone, typically with a plurality of partners, and with compulsive frequency. In paraphilia, love and lovebonding are compromised because the genitalia continue to function in the service of lust, but according to the specifications of

a vandalized and redesigned lovemap, and often with compulsive frequency. The redesigned lovemap manifests itself in fantasy, and in the staging of that fantasy in an actual performance” (p. 31).

Paraphilia is thought to be a key component in developing and driving the act of sexual homicides (Purcell and Arrigo, 2006) and is worthy of further scrutiny as Money develops the foundational properties of paraphilia(s). He starts by opining that they typically have a dual existence one in fantasy and the other as fantasy acted upon. A paraphilia is a mental template or lovemap, which in response to traumatization, neglect, or abuse, develops in the individual distorted with omissions, displacements, or inclusions outside the boundaries of expected normalcy. The paraphilia allows sexual arousal, sexual performance, and orgasm to occur but only while engaging in paraphilic fantasy or live performance specific to the substituted image or vandalized lovemap (Money, 1993).

Additional information regarding paraphilias is they are thought to be specific and not generated at random, Money (1986) identifies six categories: “sacrificial/expiatory; marauding/predatory; mercantile/venal; fetishistic/talismanic; stigmatic/eligibilic; and sollicitational/allurative.” They are thought to exist on a continuum from mild to extreme and have been described as playful and harmless to an excessive of bizarre and deadly (Money, 1993; Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

Money believes that the Victim Sacrifice idea sets the stage for lust murder. The victim is sadistically sacrificed as an obverse of self-sacrificial masochism against a self-perceived transgression the paraphile feels he must satisfy. The paraphilic methods of sacrifice are as varied, macabre, and sadistic as is the nature of the paraphile. At its

extreme, paraphilic sadism includes horrible sexually criminal acts and sexual orgasm with the extreme being sexual homicide or lust murder whereby the anticipated death of the victim sexually arouses the killer and when death occurs induces the killer to achieve orgasm with the corpse. Orgasm may be achieved via oral, genital, anal, or something personally appealing to the killer.

Biomedically, paraphilia is considered a syndrome that is not under the control of the individual. It should not be thought of as behavior driven by voluntary choice.

### **II.B.3 Biological Theory**

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, biological theorist Cesare Lombroso (1876/1911) believed that hereditary and constitutional characteristics limited an individual to a predestined criminal hierarchy. A theory he popularized in his doctrine titled “*Criminal Activism.*” Lombroso postulated, “An individual was born a criminal and had no choice but to remain one.” He based his theory on the shapes and sizes of human skulls and arrived at the assumption that those resembling pre-historic man were suspect of being criminal. An idea that lost popularity at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century when the shapes and size hypothesis was dispelled by Goring (1913) who found no evidence of anatomical differences between criminal and non-criminal groups.

Sheldon (1940) believed that criminal behavior could be distinguished between delinquent and non-delinquent boys by their physiques. A result of biology and not environment, allowed the delinquent boys to be better developed.

During the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Bachevalier (1951) thought *criminal behavior might be predicted by identifying the criminal from the non-criminal by measuring brain function* using the newly developed electroencephalogram (EEG). His study was

conducted on populations of both men in prison and outside of prison. He concluded that greater abnormal brain functioning existed in the prison population and therefore accounts for their criminal behavior (Schlesinger, 2004).

#### **II.B.4 Psychological Theory**

Leading the list of psychological theorists regarding criminal behavior is Freud and his notion that unconscious guilt is a root cause of crime: “It is a fact that large groups of criminals long for punishment. Their superego demands it and so saves itself the necessity for inflicting the punishment itself” (Freud, 1928, p.178). Freud argued that this sense of guilt correlated to his Oedipus complex and results from the two inherent criminal male intentions, that of killing one’s father and having sex with his mother. Stating further that criminals commit criminal acts “precisely because they are forbidden. Paradoxical as it may sound, I must maintain that the sense of guilt was present prior to the transgression that it did not arise from this, but contrariwise, the transgression from the sense of guilt. These persons we might justifiably describe as criminals from a sense of guilt” (p.342).

The concept of *psychopathic personality* (see Table II.1) was advanced by Pritchard (1835) when he studied the condition he termed “moral insanity or moral imbecility.” The descriptions born from individuals whose capacity to reason was intact but who lacked morality and displayed depraved conduct that he concluded were incapable of conducting themselves within the boundaries of social law.

Koch (1888) on the in keeping with the camp of psychological theorists advanced the biological view that psychopaths suffered from a “*constitutional psychopathic inferiority*” that from birth, predisposed them to become a criminal. Patridge (1928)

would refer to this type of offender as *sociopaths* and argued that a lack of socialization rather than genetic predisposition rooted their criminality.

Cleckley (1976) hypothesized that psychopathy is actually a form of psychosis as evidenced by the lack of integration between the individual's emotional framework from the rest of his personality. He surmised further that this psychosis is covert, or "*masked*" and lies deep within one's personality making it difficult to recognize. Cleckley believed "That the relative state of this outward appearance is not necessarily consistent with the degree to which he is really affected by the essential psychopathic disorder. In the psychopath, the observer is confronted with the convincing *mask of sanity*. All the outward features of this mask are intact; it cannot be displaced or penetrated by questions directed toward deeper personality levels. The examiner never hits upon the chaos sometimes found on searching beneath the outer surface" (p. 368).

Yochelson and Samenow (1976) and later Samenow (1984) proposed after years of research, that *criminals and noncriminals are distinct from one another based upon their thinking patterns*, regardless of social environment or general factors from their personality.

**Table II.1 Various Views of Psychopathic Personality**

Author	Year	Conception of Disorder
Pritchard	1835	“Moral insanity”; intellectual functions remain intact while moral principles are depraved.
Koch	1888	Constitutional psychopathic inferiority; born criminals.
Kraepelin	1913	Constitutional psychopathic state includes sex offenders plus anxious and despondent individuals. Psychopathic personality includes born criminals, murderers, liars, and swindlers.
Patridge	1928	Sociopathy; the problem is lack of socialization.
Cleckley	1941	Underlying disturbance involves lack of emotional bonding to others which extends to the level of a psychosis. The psychosis is “masked,” and the outward façade appears normal.
Fenichel	1943	Impulse neurosis; psychopaths release tensions the way an infant does.
Karpman	1948	Anethopathy (primary psychopathy); true psychopathic state, which is inborn.
Revitch	1950	Condition marked by emotional immaturity and superficiality.
Schlesinger	1980	Differentiates psychopathic, sociopathic, and anti-social personality disorders.
Hare	1980	Developed a test to assess psychopathy in an objective manner.
DSM-IV-TR	2000	Antisocial personality disorder marked by a pervasive pattern of disregard for others, including behavior such as deceit, manipulation, conning, lack of remorse, and unlawful conduct.

(Source: Schlesinger, 2004, p. 76)

### **II.B.5 Sociological Theories**

The group of theorists comprising this group believes that the root of criminal behavior starts with such social factors as broken homes, poverty, lack of education, peer pressure, social repression, and lowered socio-economic status and opportunities.

The most prominent of these researchers Sutherland (1937, 1949) and Sutherland and Cressey (1939) advanced the theory of “*differential association.*” They believed that individuals learn criminal behavior as a result of interacting with others in intimate personal groups, as well developing a distorted rational and attitude regarding criminal behavior, The theory has been criticized for lack of clarity and precision, failing to account for certain forms of criminological acts such as sexually motivated crimes such as sexual murder. Nevertheless, Sutherland’s concept has played a dominant role in criminological theories since it’s conception over a half century ago and is still widely regarded (Schlesinger. 2004, p.76-77).

### **II.B.6 Catathymic Theory**

The term catathymia is derived from the Greek *kata* (“according to”) and *thymos* (“spirits or temper”). Hans W. Maier (1912) used the term as an explanation in the development of delusional content. Its association with violence grew from Fredric Wertham’s use of the term when describing extremely violent criminal acts like homicide and some types of sexual crimes.

Maier’s professional background has many successes, but our focus is on his work regarding the theory on catathymia and the relationship he makes to delusional thought content. He believed that catathymia would explain how underlying emotional

conflict can trouble an individual to the point of delusional thought replaced an intact cognitive process.

His research included searching for unconscious connections that he believed could determine the contents of psychotic ideas. He believed these associations “can go in a wrong direction through the predominance of a relatively strong affectivity” (p. 556). Researching further, he concludes that delusional content is then greatly influenced by emotionally charged unconscious “*complexes*” such as a wish, a fear, or an ambivalent ambition. Delusions that originate from these underlying conflicts are catathymic delusions, and are different from delusions that may be primarily organic in origin such as those associated with manic or depressive psychosis.

The differentiating component to catathymic delusion is that they are caused by an emotional underlying conflict and closely connected to the individual’s life experiences and shaped by emotional attitude. Because of this connection, they are not easily dissipated. An example used by Maier to illustrate the environment one could expect to discover catathymic delusion occurrence is paranoia, where in the absence of positive and negative symptoms needed for a clinical diagnosis all that remains is the individual’s strong paranoid belief. Catathymic symptoms exist only where “the balance between logic and affectivity is displaced” (p. 193).

Wertham furthered the work by Maier in a clinical environment at Bellevue Hospital in New York where he organized the nation’s first court clinic, which conducted psychiatric screenings on every convicted felon. In 1947, he began a treatment center for sex offenders that offered him a venue as a social justice and human rights advocate in addition to noted work on violence and murder.

In *A Sign for Cain: An Exploration of Human Violence* (1966) Wertham writes, “The murderer can never kill without a transformation of values which may come from his innermost mind, but is always derived ultimately from social prejudgments and prejudices (Wertham, 1949, p.253). The underlying emotional conflict causes otherwise rational thinking to reach delusional proportion. The individual deludes himself into thinking that he must carry out a violent act against himself or others. The idea does not begin as an obsessive thought but is definitive and accompanied by a tremendous urge to act it out. The plan for violence is resisted at first by the rational mind and it is then the ever-pressing urge that develops the conflict and creates the delusional content.

Adding to the pressure is the belief that the violence has some symbolic significance far greater than its obvious meaning and fuels the conflict between rational and delusional thinking to the point the individual has to act on the thought. The syndrome excludes impulsive or explosive acts of violence and should not be associated with psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia. Rather, the delusional process is gradient and increasing. After the crescendo of violence is acted upon such as sexual murder many of the individuals actually improve and return to a state of calm safeguarding the individual from further regression and possibly psychosis.

Catathymic crisis (Wertham, 1978) can be depicted as five stages as follows:

1. An initial thinking disorder that follows an original precipitating, or traumatic circumstance.
2. Crystallization of a plan, when the idea of a violent act emerges into consciousness. The violent act is seen as the only way out. Emotional tension becomes extreme and thinking becomes increasingly

egocentric.

3. Extreme emotional tension culminating in a crisis in which a violent act against one's self or others is attempted or carried out.
4. Superficial normality, beginning with a period of lifting of tension and calmness immediately after the violent act. This period is of varying length, usually several months.
5. Insight and recovery, with the reestablishment of an inner equilibrium.

### **II.B.7 Revitch and Schlesinger's Catathymic Process: Acute and Chronic Homicides**

In their review of Wertham's cases of catathymic crisis, Revitch and Schlesinger found that while literature depicted acts of violence that culminated after a protracted period that involved delusional rumination there also occurred murders that were spontaneous and unplanned. The question of difference and similarities then presented itself. The following table illuminates a summary of similarities between these two types of homicides.

#### **Table II.2 Similarities between Acute and Chronic Catathymic Homicides**

- Cases primarily involve men killing women.
- Victim is viewed in symbolic terms.
- Victim triggers underlying emotionally charged conflicts.
- Conflicts center on strong feelings of inadequacy, extending to the sexual area.
- Homicide releases emotional tension.
- Following homicide, psychic homeostasis is quickly reestablished.
- Feeling of relief or flattening of emotions (or both) is common after the act.
- Offenders typically do not attempt to elude authorities for long and often tell a friend what happened or call the police themselves.
- Mental health professionals do not recognize the ominous significance of the offender's conflicts prior to the act.
- Investigators sometimes miss the underlying sexual motivation because overt

manifestations of genitality are often absent.

(Source: Schlesinger, 2004, p. 138)

These similarities led Revitch and Schlesinger (1978, 1981, 1989) to conclude that sudden and protracted homicide share the same underlying psychodynamic process whose expression is only different in form. This distinction was differentiated in the terms describing catathymic homicide as either *acute* or *chronic* (see table II.3).

Acute catathymic homicides are distinct from situational acts of sexual violence. In acute catathymic homicides, the individual who is superficially integrated and struggles with strong feelings of sexual inadequacy, resort to violence when a victim challenges their sense of integrity, adequacy, or sexual competence. The inadequacy needs to be at the sexual level because suffering from low self-esteem by itself is not enough to stimulate the process to violence.

The chronic form of catathymic homicide as conceived by Revitch and Schlesinger (1978, 1981, 1989) is simply an update of Wertham's (1937) catathymic crisis model. Whereas Wertham identified five stages, Revitch and Schlesinger reduced the process to three stages: (1) incubation, (2) violent act, and (3) relief (see Table II.4).

During the first phase, incubation, the individual is depressed and displays bizarre behavior(s) at times, while other times he is observed as being his "old self." While in this stage the offender will have developed an obsessive preoccupation with his potential victim that maybe either overt or covert to those around him. Because of his depression, he may voice suicidal ideation that later escalate to mixed ideations involving homicide and directed at the victim. The idea of killing emerges slowly in the offender, takes hold, and then becomes a fixation of thought.

It is at this point that the offender often reaches out for qualified help. While expressing his desires of contemplated mayhem to support members, he will mask these ideas with assurances that he would never, could ever act on such heinous thoughts. He gives the impression that he is in control, when the opposite is true. Indeed, he may be struggling within his inner mind the battle between irrational thought and rational behavior, but it is a battle decidedly lost when the diagnosis is thought to be catathymic homicide. He will be driven to carry out the commission of violence.

Once the violent act is committed, (usually a homicide) the offender is returned to a state of calm. However, in some instances the act leads to the offender taking his own life, or an attempt at suicide. The violence is often recalled in a detached, remote manner during the incubation period(s) as being dreamlike and ego-dystonic if the offender is questioned.

Recognized for almost a century now the chronic catathymic process is a clinical entity whose usefulness in both forensic and clinical practice is undervalued. Perhaps the omission of catathymia from the latest edition of the diagnostic manual or perhaps because it is a psychodynamic and complicated construct, its applicability has been relatively limited. However, the devastating consequences resulting from a catathymic homicide underscores the need to further research in the direction of developing effective risk-assessment strategies.

**Table II.3 Differentiating Characteristics of Acute and Chronic Catathymic Processes**

Characteristic	Acute	Chronic
Activation of process	Triggered by a sudden overwhelming emotion attached to underlying sexual conflicts of symbolic significance	Triggered by a buildup of tension, feeling of frustration, helplessness, and inadequacy sometimes extending into the sexual area
Relationship to the victim	Usually a stranger	Usually a close relation such as an intimate or former intimate partner
Victim symbolization	Often a displaced matricide	Rarely a displaced matricide, but victim may have symbolic significance
Incubation period	Several seconds	One day to a year; may involve stalking
Level of planning	Unplanned	Planned, frequently in the form of an obsessive rumination
Method of attack	Sudden, violent; often overkill	Violent but not sudden
Crime scene	Very disorganized, reflecting complete lack of planning	Less disorganized
Sexual activity	Occasional sexual activity just before attack; impotency common	Sexual activity rare at time of homicide
Postmortem behavior	Sometimes necrophilia and occasionally dismemberment	Rarely necrophilia or dismemberment
Feeling following the attack	Usually a flattening of emotions	Usually a feeling of relief
Memory of event	Usually poor	Usually preserved

(Source: Schlesinger, 2004, p. 162)

**Table II.4 Revitch and Schlesinger's Catathymic Process**

Stage	Description
Incubation	The subject becomes depressed and obsessively preoccupied with the future victim. Suicidal thoughts may emerge, but slowly the subject develops a desire to kill. The thought grows in strength, takes hold, and becomes fixed, rootlike, and intractable.
Violent act	The violence is usually homicide, but other forms can occur (e.g., arson, assault, or a variety of other aggressive acts, including self-mutilation).
Feeling of relief	Once the catathymic tension is discharged, the offender typically feels a sense of relief, although he is simultaneously horrified by what he has done. If all the catathymic tension is not completely released, the homicide may be followed by suicide or a suicide attempt.

(Source: Schlesinger, 2004, p. 162)

### **II.B.8 Sexual Homicide: The Classical Conditioning Model**

Over the decades several noted theorists and social scientists have attempted to ascertain the dynamics involved in the commission of sexual and sadistic homicide (e.g., Brittain, 1970; Burgess et al., 1986; Hickey, 2001; MacCulloch et al., 1983; McGuire et al., 1965; Ressler, Burgess, & Douglas, 1988). However, for this model we will examine the distinctive work of MacCulloch and colleagues (1983) that set the literature on sexual homicide apart. Their model proposed that fantasy plays a crucial role in stimulating the internal mechanism driving the commission of sexual homicide. The fantasies it is believed from existing research, is pivotal for the emergence, development, and maintenance of paraphilic behavior.

Gleaned from MacCulloch's work emerges a pattern of violent fantasies that influenced the offenders' impulsivity to act on these ideas. Given the sexual nature of

crimes being examined, it was suggested that when sexual arousal was involved in a sadistic fantasy, analysis of the fantasy itself could be understood based on *classical conditioning*. Especially when fantasy and masturbation are involved and presumed components of sustaining erotic excitement. MacCulloch et al (1983) found that the more the offender relied on the sexual image, or fantasy for arousal and orgasm the greater the need for a progression of violent content and habituation and coincides with the belief that the greatest amount of sexual pleasure, either normal or abnormal, occurs just prior to orgasm.

MacCulloch et al., (1983) built off the research conducted by Brittain (1970) who studied the sadistic murder syndrome. The clinical description of Brittain's sadistic murderer describes the individual as: (a) introverted and timid; (b) low self-esteem, yet extremely egocentric; (c) having an over-controlling mother; (d) socially isolated; (e) sexually prudish, reserved, and inexperienced; (f) sexually deviant ( i.e., prone to voyeurism, fetishisms, or tranvestism); and (g) rich fantasy life with violent pursuits. It is believed that the traits are interactive with one another and contributed to the social isolation of the offender. Additionally, when self-esteem was challenged or regarded by the offender to be in jeopardy, the risk for homicide rose.

In MacCulloch's et al. (1983) study, 13 of 16 subjects reported that prior to their indexed offense they fantasized about their crime, which was identical to all or part of the act committed. They self-report that the fantasies were of rape, sodomy, bondage, kidnapping, flagellation, anesthesia, torture, and killing. They also reported that masturbation was an integral part of the sadistic images that stimulated their sexual arousal and mental pleasure even while committing their acts sexual violence.

These traits, along with the introduction of fantasy, serve as the functioning precipitating internal stimuli as the primary impetus behind sadistic criminal activity. MacCulloch et al., (1983) summed it all in the following working definition of the sadistic offender: “The repeated practice of behavior and fantasy which is characterized by a wish to control another person by domination, denigration, or inflicting pain, for the purpose of producing mental pleasure and sexual arousal (whether or not accompanied by orgasm) in the sadist” (MacCulloch, 1983, p. 20).

### **II.B.5 Sexual Homicide: The Motivational Model**

Burgess et al., (1986) conducted their study on 36 sexual murderers and identified specific behavioral patterns linked to their criminal activities and analyzed them according to their *five-phase motivational model*. The model is depicted visually as follows:

1. Ineffective Social Environment

2. Formative Events

Child/Adolescent

*Trauma*

(e.g., physical, sexual)

*Developmental Failure*

(e.g., negative social attachment)

*Interpersonal Breakdown*

(e.g., deviant parental models)

3. Patterned Responses

*Critical Personality Traits*

(e.g., social isolation, fetishes, preference for autoerotic activities, aggression)

*Cognitive Mapping & Processing*

Structure

(e.g., daydreams, fantasies, nightmares)

Themes

(e.g., dominance, revenge, violence,

power/control, torture, mutilation, rape)

#### 4. Actions Toward Others/Self

##### *Childhood*

(e.g., cruelty to children, lack of joy, aggression, repetitive play patterns, disregard for others)

##### *Adolescent/Adult*

(e.g., assaultive behaviors, rape, non-sexual murder, sexually oriented murder)

#### 5. Feedback Filter

(e.g., justifies acts, sorts out errors, discovers increased arousal states, increased dominance and control)

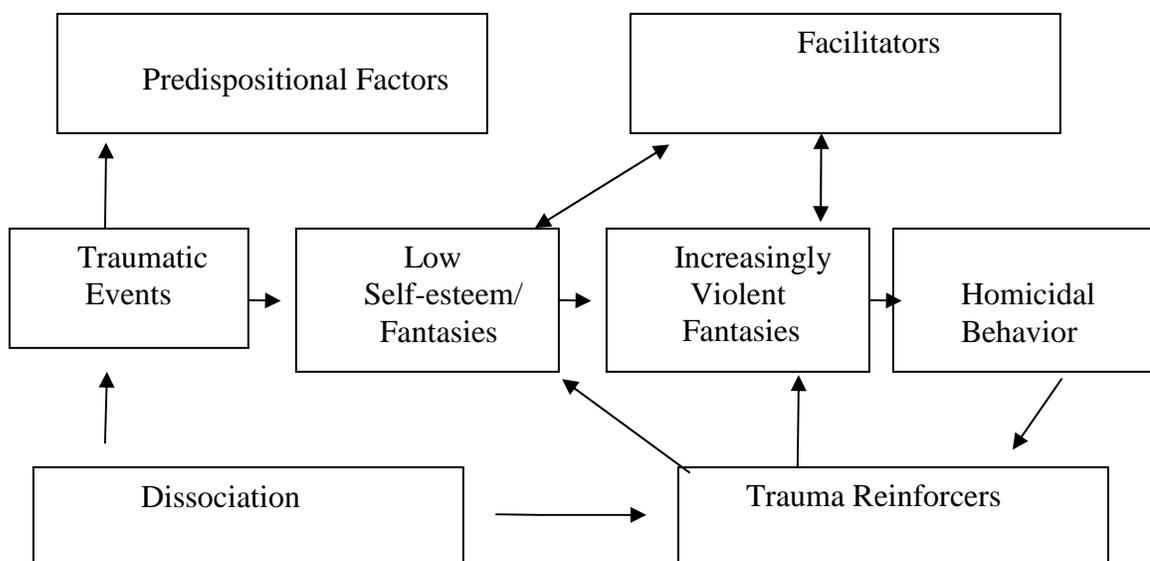
Burgess et al., (1986) viewed sexual homicide to be murder with evidence or observation that indicate to the investigator the crime had a sexual component to it and identified these as sexually evident: (1) victims attire or lack thereof; (2) exposure of the victims sexual organs; (3) sexually positioning of the victims body; (4) insertion of foreign objects into the victims body, or body cavities; (5) evidence of sexual intercourse (oral, anal, or vaginal); and (6) evidence of substitute sexual activity and interest in sadistic fantasy (Ressler et al., 1988, p. xiii).

This motivational model focuses principally on psychosocial and cognitive factors. The researchers believed that the men in their study were motivated to kill because of what they were thinking prior to and at the time they killed. Early in their lives they developed and relied upon aggressive fantasies (via social isolation and daydreaming), experienced sexual reinforcement from their fantasy life (utilized compulsive masturbation).

Combining these behavioral traits with the five-stage motivational model completed in the minds of Burgess et al. (1986) the requisites for sexual homicide.

### II.B.10 Sexual Homicide: The Trauma Control Model

Hickey (1997) contributed to the research on sexual homicide with his introduction of the *trauma control* model. Incorporating the work by Burgess et al. (1986) with what he believed were predispositional factors often exacerbated by using facilitators, he describes the conditions suspected of inducing an individual to commit serial acts of murder. His trauma control model is depicted as follows:



According to Hickey's (1997) model, some serial killers are known to have certain predispositional factors that can influence their behaviors. The factors are biological, sociological, and psychological in nature, or some combination. Traumatic events in the formative years (pre-adolescent) are believed to manifest over time and seriously affect the individual's capacity to interact with others. The most common childhood trauma is rejection and from the context of serial offenders, the rejection comes from a relative or parent (Douglas, et al., 1995).

When children experience rejection or trauma in their early development, the experience can foster feelings of inadequacy, self-doubt, worthlessness, and low self-esteem. In the absence of healthy bonding, fantasy and daydreaming may substitute for their social ineptness (Purcell and Arrigo, 2006).

When children experience psychological or physical trauma in their early development, they simply are unable to effectively confront and cope with it (Kennerley, 2000). This may lead to a distorted sense of self within their environment. This process is called dissociation (Putnam, 1997). By constructing an artificial façade or alter ego, the individual attempts to retake that which was held back by a parent(s), or authority figure. It is in fact their attempt to show the world they are in control. The truth however, is these youths are mostly socially bankrupt and morally inept (Schoore, 2003).

For the adult serial murderer, childhood traumas serve as the psychosocial springboard denying him the coping skills to deal with certain stress and disappointing life events (Hickey, 1997, p. 87). By retreating into an internal world of fantasy, the individual receives the relief from relived feelings of rejection; a world free from criticism, a world he controls.

Through this journey of dysfunction and confusion, it is believed customary for the sexual offender to immerse himself in the use of various facilitators. The most often used are alcohol, drugs, and pornography (Hickey, 1997, p. 89). The offender uses these facilitators to both amplify and sustain the fantasy's sadistic imagery (Hickey, 2005; Holmes & Holmes, 2002a). Along the way, the offender may become addicted to the facilitator as well (Hickey, 1997; Cleveland, 2002; Jung, 2000).

This phase of the process generates more stress in the offender's daily routine and this serves to transition the individual to the next level, the escalation stage. It is during this period that the appetite for more intensely bizarre, deviant, and sexually explicit material is heightened. For the serial murderer, lack of escalation anchors him to his diminished sense of self ((Hickey, 2001).

According to Hickey (1997, 2001), the experience of killing may generate new images of brutality for the killer. Each subsequent act of violence represents an attempt to completely satisfy and fully realize the perpetrators fantasies. Indeed, one serial murderer during an interview remarked, "he felt good about himself and more in control of his life directly following a murder" (Hickey, 1997, p. 93). Ultimately, the fantasies can and do result in the serial torture and killing of men, women, and children in this world (Hickey, 2001, 2005; Holmes & Holmes, 2002a).

### **II.B.11 Sexual Homicide: The Integrated Paraphilic Model**

The elements of the *integrative paraphilic model* accounts for the paraphilic process as a system of behavior(s), in relation to the etiology of erotophonophilia. It is a logical synthesis of the motivational model by Burgess et al. (1986), Hickey's (1997, 2001) trauma control model, and incorporates much of the MacCulloch et al. (1983) model. Its design was to establish paraphilia as the motivational impetus in serial sexual offenses, particularly, the crime of lust murder (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

Research on serial murder has examined various causal agents for this type of criminality, including biological, behavioral, psychodynamic, and cognitive dimensions (Egger, 2002; Giannangelo, 1996; Holmes & Holmes, 1998). Collectively it has been argued that future researchers would do well to construct an integrative model to account

for the underlying motivation for violent crimes and those committing them, including studies that describe the phenomenon from a feminist perspective (Canter, Alison, Alison, & Wentink, 2004; Canter & Wentink, 2004; Schlesinger, 2003; Cameron & Frazer, 1988).

Grubin (1994) explained that the lack of scientific study regarding sexual homicide should be addressed because of the considerable attention given the act by sadistic and serial offenders. It has been suggested that the knowledge of sexual homicide is presently underdeveloped and remains in its infancy (Hickey, 2005; Holmes & Holmes, 2002a).

The integrative model was developed to distinguish lust murder from sexual and serial homicide as well to specify how paraphilias operate as an underlying motivation in the commission of erotophonophilia. The elements of the integrative model begin with an explanation of the systemic composition of paraphilic behavior. These elements include: (1) formative development; (2) low self-esteem; (3) early fantasy development; (4) paraphilic development.

Formative development, which consists of predispositional factors and traumatic events, low self-esteem, and early fantasy development are all factors considered etiological agents. Paraphilic development, paraphilic fantasy/stimuli, facilitators, and the orgasmic conditioning process are interactive elements. Collectively they comprise the paraphilic process. Increasingly violent fantasies materialize and when insufficient to establish sexual arousal and/or gratification give way to behavioral manifestations in this process. Given the fundamental role of the paraphilic process in the commission of sex crimes, these behavioral manifestations in their extreme, include lust murder.

Initially, a stressor, either, internal or external, functions as a trigger to some past, unresolved childhood trauma. The stressor causes a temporary lack of control for the paraphilic offender. A response to that stressor is a behavioral manifestation. If the individual is unable to cope with the triggering stimulus, he retreats into the paraphilic process, where comfort and relief offer themselves. The behavioral manifestation of paraphilia can escalate and intensify, especially if the offender chooses to act on his fantasy.

Masturbation (also linked to orgasmic conditioning) is a component of the paraphilic process. When violent erotic imagery no longer satisfies the offenders sexual appetite, behavioral manifestations follow. Examples of behavioral manifestations include sadistic deviance and sexualized criminality (including homicide). When coupled with masturbation, these actions become reinforcers that are sequenced back into the individual's overall fantasy system. The cyclical paraphilic process as an increasingly violent system of sexual imagery and conduct is self-sustaining, especially if there exist a history of failed attempts at maintaining arousal or achieving orgasm. The intensity, duration, and frequency of the process are dependent on the effects of the etiological agents themselves, as well the interactive elements, particularly as they relate to the offender (Purcell & Arrigo, 2006).

### **II.B.12 The Biological View**

The biology that advocated phrenology, eugenics, and psychosurgery as solutions to the problems of violence viewed violent behavior as an isolating defect in a single individual; the violent criminal. This is also considered to be an over simplistic statement.

Violence it has been written cannot be linked to one gene, one brain region, one actor; it cannot be viewed in isolation, and it cannot be detached from history. Aggressive behavior, violence, is the product of both nature and nurture, an ongoing collaborative effort between the world of genes and proteins inside the neuron and the constantly changing and occasionally hostile world on the outside. Violent, aggressive, behavior may be constrained by the structural and functional boundaries of the brain, but it is never locked in place.

We are not helpless ploys of either DNA or the environment. True, that from inside the womb the environment reaches in to select and activate relevant genes, to shape and weave the tapestry of our unique central nervous system, but the freedom of choice is born with us when we enter this world. Beginning from this baseline level of responsiveness, intensity, and adaptability set during development, each of us strives from birth to make sense of our personal worlds, define the limits of safety, and establish a measure of control over self and others.

Our mature social interactions build on the template laid out by the first exchanges between brain and environment. We experience the reciprocal interactions over time that mold and shape reactions, shape neural pathways, and switch on genes. It is the repeated experiences of empathy, encouragement, conflict, danger, aggression, that lead to adaptive response for most of us. Occurring not only at the behavioral level, but also at the level of cell and synapse, shaping neural activity to meet the demands originating from our environment.

Biology views violence as a developmental process rather than a genetic or cultural mandate. The path between brain and behavior is not a straight line. Rather, it is

developed from a process that is designed to equip us with the acuity to respond aggressively or fearfully when the threat to survive is extreme. It is biased towards survival and social responsiveness with boundaries not constant but varying from individual to individual, reflected in differences of our experienced interactive style, attentiveness, and social orientation. One could say it is an interactive process between gene and environment, performed by a brain, a normal brain, seeking balance.

### **III. Research Methodology**

The design of this study relied on a thorough review of literature culled from a collection of textbooks, scholarly articles, peer reviewed journals, data from annual Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reports, and published literature by noted authors on the subject of sexual homicide. Because of the prurient nature of the subject, only information considered seminal or psychiatrically relevant became the qualifying criterion.

The focus narrowed even further by our examination of the crime sexual homicide or erotophonophilia, when we reviewed the literature as to motive and any correlation to the ideas of nature or nurture. We simply asked ourselves of the information, was there an etiology in biology, environment, or both.

A careful analysis included our considerations for biased, outdated, duplicitous, and scientifically unproven theory. The range of literature and case histories date back as early as the Neolithic period, to that published a mere two years ago. In the end, we feel confident that the information serving as the source for our study was reliable, relevant, and deserving.

#### **IV. Results and Data Analysis**

From one of the earliest cases of sexually motivated homicide, human remains were found in the regions of Basta and Sabra, located in Arabia Petraca, which existed during the pre-ceramic Neolithic period. There it was discovered the calvarium of a boy between the ages of eight and nine who was evidently killed after two blows to the skull. These blows were delivered while he was still alive.

The cause of death was forensically reconstructed using available parallels from ethnological and forensic medical research. The authors present the following working hypothesis that the motivation for the murder was a rape that took place while the boy was probably in a semi-conscious state after receiving an initial light blow to the left forehead with some type of sharp weapon. Later, after recovering and rising to his feet he suffered the fatal blow to the back of the skull from a blunt instrument. The authors report the body lay where it fell over. This type of crime has been observed as occurring among purely male groups such as herdsmen, and as in the case of the boy from Basta, this would be the earliest evidence for the occurrence of this type of sexual crime in prehistoric times (PMID:3114039; PubMed).

Had the trail of sexual homicide ended in Arabia several thousand years ago it is likely that the mention of this incident would be only a footnote on someone's paper on abnormal social psychology. Instead, the act of erotophonophilia has filled several annals over time with mention of this heinous act. It has spurred mountains of data and theory as to both cause and effect across several spectrums of society.

The data reviewed by us in our study leaves us to conclude that there is cause for alarm and concern. Appendix A illuminates the numbers of sexual crimes, crimes that

include sexual homicide, to be in the several thousands. It also depicts a number that appears steady over the several years studied and reported on by the FBI. We note from the literature that while much has been written, more remains unanswered.

We do believe that our analysis has prepared us to offer a valid conclusion to the thesis statement developed from our question as to the source of influence underlying the crime of lust murder.

## V. Conclusion

Clearly, growing evidence continues to emerge suggesting a genetic contribution to psychopathology. Earlier studies conducted on twins, adoption, and families have indicated that heritability of antisocial behaviors exists (Rhee and Waldman, 2002). The focus of our paper was to discover if a preponderance of evidentiary literature exists to answer the question if genetics plays a role in influencing an individual's specific behavior, that of being a sexual killer. The alternative to genetics we surmised was environment.

Blair, Mitchell, and Blair (2005) write that it is extremely unlikely that there exists a specific gene or genetic contribution to a specific behavior; however, genetics are likely to play a role in determining the probability that an individual will learn pathological strategies for self-gain. These strategies would be opposed to the traditionally expected cultural norms.

Many have argued the idea that emotional dysfunction displayed in pathological individuals makes them more likely to engage in criminal behaviors to exact a personally identified goal (Blair, 2005; Eysenck, 1964; Lykken, 1995; Trasler, 1973). The suggestion is that there is a potential genetic contribution to the emotional dysfunction behind the behavior. Data from new research and technologies suggests there is indeed a genetic contribution to emotional dysfunction such as depression, anxiety, as well as pathology.

In a large study involving the examination of almost 3,500 twin pairs within the Twins Early Development Study (TEDS), the callous and unemotional component of psychopathic tendencies was indexed at age 7 (Viding et al., in press). This study

revealed a significant group heritability equal to 0.67 and no shared environmental influence on the callous-unemotional component, where genetic factors account for two thirds of the difference between the callous-unemotional probands and the population (Blair, Mitchell, and Blair, 2005, p. 30).

Another genetic link to be considered exists in the fight or flight syndrome. Science is aware that there exists a dedicated neural circuitry to allow the expression of *reactive aggression*. It is the inherent system to respond to perceived threats from our environment. It is not exclusive to humans, but is shared with other mammals and at basic operates as follows: At low levels of stimulation, from a distant threat it initiates *freezing*. At higher levels, from a closer threat, it initiates *escape related behavior*. At higher levels still, when the threat is very close and escape is impossible, it initiates *reactive aggression*.

The basic threat circuitry is regulated by executive regulatory systems. It is thought that executive regulatory systems act as the catalyst to ratchet up or down the baseline levels of stimulation. Here it is believed, genetic effects might be able to influence the functioning of the circuitry mediating/regulating reactive aggression in two ways; first, by having an effect on the average stimulation level of the basic threat circuitry, and second by influencing the efficacy of the executive regulatory systems.

It is likely that endogenous factors might predispose an individual's basic threat responsiveness to be higher or lower. Consider the following; there is an increased risk of reactive aggression is observed in children and adults diagnosed with anxiety and depression (Vitaro et al., 2002) particularly within the amygdale (Drevets, 2003; Kagan and Snidman, 1999). Blair, Mitchell, and Blair (2005) in agreement write, "We believe

that endogenous factors that predispose an individual to depression and anxiety may also increase the probability that they will express reactive aggression, especially in dangerous and criminogenic environments” (p. 32-33).

Again, looking further at genetic contributions to behavior one has to assess the etiology of these psychiatric conditions related to disrupting executive regulatory systems; intermittent explosive disorder, impulsive aggressive disorder, and childhood bipolar disorder. These individuals express higher levels of irritability and are at a higher risk for reactive aggression. Because of diminished efficacy of the executive regulatory system, there may be a genetic contribution.

One of the ways this could occur is through serotonergic functioning. Much research has studied the correlation between serotonin and the modulation of aggression and impulsivity (Brown et al., 1979; Lee and Coccaro, 2001; Swann, 2003). Experiments where manipulations of this neurochemical receptor were increased aggression levels went down, and when the receptor activation was decreased, there was an increase in aggression (Bell et al., 2001).

In short, evidence suggests that in at least two spheres, the baseline stimulation level of the basic threat circuitry (fight or flight) and the efficacy of the executive regulatory system demonstrate measurable reaction to genetic / biologic contributions (Blair, Mitchell, and Blair, 2005). Both it should be noted, are critical components of aggressive and impulsive behaviors; two hallmarks of behavior witnessed from and reported on the sexual homicide killer.

In writing about genetic influence and the implication for behavioral genetics Niehoff (1999) offered: “Newspaper accounts of advances in behavioral genetics and

their daily reports of genes for shyness and novelty seeking, handedness, and alcoholism, sociability, sexual orientation, even aggression, often seem to imply that behavior is no more than the read-out of a generic program. No wonder few aspects of the behavioral biology of aggression make people more nervous than the suggestion that violent, antisocial, or criminal behavior might have roots in the genome. Yet the opposing viewpoint...the safe viewpoint...that behavior and heredity are independent events can't be correct either. Behavior is not grafted onto the nervous system as a cultural afterthought. It begins and ends in a brain built according to recipes filed in the genome. Without genetic guidelines, neural architecture would be chaotic, neurophysiology lawless, behavior impossible, neurochemistry haphazard" (p. 228).

A persuasive statement for arguing certain behaviors of an individual who may have the propensity for mayhem, but for aggressive criminal behavior to occur alone, without an environmental predicate or influence, seems to be an erroneous conclusion. Heredity has and does add its *voice* to the chemical dialogue between the brain and the environment, but not in a simplistic, deterministic way that many outside the laboratory pontificate. Genes do not push behavior to a pre-destined or pre-arranged end point by themselves.

Genes are surprisingly malleable, and yes, sometimes vulnerable, but the gene is also open to interpretation throughout the individual's development, and the true impact

of genetic factors on the complex nature of human aggressive behavior can only be fully understood when genetic influence is properly positioned in the context of environment, timing, and one's personal history.

If the mind is predetermined by the genome, and the genetic framework so far as we currently know it to be, is equal in count for all humans, then how do we explain away the average intelligent white male who discards people like trash?

Yes, in this paper we refer to the serial sexual killer, as a sadistic sexual sociopath with a deviant personality and character flaws. To substantiate our claim we have canvassed scores of literature looking for the answer to whether his conscience is deformed or essentially absent from the early writings of Krafft-Ebbing (1886) to the current researchers the likes of Cleckley in the 50's to Ressler (1999) and Schlesinger (2004).

What we discovered is that in sexual killers, sexual and aggressive urges are fused together at an early age and that their sexually aggressive impulses are irresistible is an incomplete explanation of their behavior; rather, serial killers choose not resist these impulses in their quest for exciting orgiastic pleasure. Though they claim to be compelled to kill because of their deviant drives, they do know what they are doing and what they are doing is wrong.

Fueled by paraphilic fantasies of sexual imagery enmeshed and confounded with violence, they reside in a delusional world, a world created by them, and requiring the lethal combination of psychopathy and sadism. In the absence of a sadistic paraphilia these individuals might not kill, but instead be satisfied with just taking advantage of innocence. In conjunction with this idea, the sadist who is not a psychopath might be

content to direct his or her sexual desires to fantasy or to acting out the sadistic impulses with the cooperation of a consenting masochistic partner.

A small proportion of erotophonophiliacs, though no less deadly, are driven to murders by psychosis, hallucinatory thought, and delusions. For every 10 sadistic sexual psychopathic killers, there is one psychotic sexual serial killer (Simon, 1999). The importance of sadistic fantasy as an indication of a potential sex murderer cannot be overstated.

Individuals who commit compulsive sexual homicides after acting on their violent imagery do not develop sadistic fantasies overnight, nor weeks or even months prior to acting out. Instead, these fantasies have their roots in childhood, and the offender remains deeply immersed if not consumed by these inner thoughts for most of their lives’.

Their thinking and not their genetics motivate these murderers. While the number of individuals who have sadistic fantasies is much higher than the small subgroup of those who choose to act on their fantasies, and some from the smaller group report having entertained sadistic fantasies for over 30 years before acting on them (Schlesinger, 2004).

However, not every case of sexual homicide is scripted out. Similar patterns yes, but a predictive, measurable, and consistent framework is missing. We believe this to be the true complexity of the crime lust murder. There are just too many variables sourced in biology, environment, and personal development.

During our examination, for every case involving backgrounds of abuse and dysfunction there are cases where these variables are totally absent. In fact, there are cases throughout all of the literature we reviewed where the sexual killer is raised with

other siblings, an intact nuclear family, and everyone except the offender develops without incident. Point being, that a disturbed background while cause for concern does not of itself, predicate given rise to the erotophonophilic.

Clearly, social and psychological factors such as paraphilia play a role in sexual murder, and the biological component, as complicated as it might be, seems irrefutable. In fact, the influence of biology in most psychiatric and addictive disorders is considered paramount (Hedaya, 1996). “A fact shared with most theorist studying crime is the involvement of biogenetic etiology, especially violent criminality” (Schlesinger, 2004, p. 306).

We agree that a biological abnormality would be an integral component, but by itself, insufficient to explain away the behavior of the sexual killer. From birth, or subsequent organic insult, genetics, brain injury, hormones, neural pathway disturbance whether chemical or electrical, all could have an etiological role. By disruption of genetic mapping, mapping that has evolved in man throughout the ages does the stage become set for deviance. What becomes individualized is then described as pathology. In the case of the sexual killer pathology is delineated along a personally developed continuum set apart by extremes. These are extremes fueled by self-created imagery and reinforced by learned behaviors. The highest end of this continuum culminates in uncontrollable sadistic lethal rage promulgated in the direction of the victim

By understanding nature, the influence of nurture is illuminated for us in answering our question regarding the etiology of lust murder. There is in each of us a predetermined template. The initial design of this template is and has been argued

throughout history dependent upon ones orientation in debating creation versus evolution, but the fact remains that we as humans are born from a finite design.

We conclude by our analysis that this template is malleable, sustainable, reliable, and at times fragile. We believe best described as a biosocial template, this design incorporates that which allows us to exist (nature) and that which defines how we exist (nurture). The two are both separate and definable as they exist on their own, but together they describe the being of man.

Man could be described in his totality as responding to his inner thoughts and living out those thoughts in a directed manner, while at the same time responding, adjusting to, and continuing to develop within his environmental surroundings. This it could be surmised is man at his best. Man at his worst, driven by impaired thoughts, skewed perceptions, paranoia, abuse, trauma, vandalized biology, all enveloped in social dysfunction, and then responding to such a fractured potpourri in search of personal satisfaction describes the etiology of the sexual killer.

#### **V.A Implication from Findings**

Because so many variables must go awry in order for an individual to develop a compulsion to commit sexual homicide (poly-biological abnormalities, and abusive and psychological experience and cognition), the commission of compulsive, serial, sexually paraphilic lust murder can be expected to be quite low in number. The crime traverses different cultures with varying degrees of presence as evidenced by the multitudes of written case histories.

The motivation for sexual homicide is not homogenized; instead, it has many influences both internal and external. Working in concert together is most often the course seen in the commission of lust murders.

### **V.B. Recommendation for Further Study**

We believe that technology will do much to further underlying neurobiological influences regarding not only sexual homicide but also much of pathology believed to have biological underpinnings. If treatment considerations are to be advanced, we need to better understand the paraphilic process and the integration of same into the act of sexual murder. As a society, we need to consider at what point the pathological process of lust murder presents its best opportunity for intervention and together with that what if any, valid predictive value can be ascertained.

While it may be true that the number of sexual killers is thought to be the smaller of the collective group identified as a sexual offender, there has been a number of studies conducted that conclude the number of offenders who harbor violent sexual fantasies is much larger. As a result, the potential for paraphilic killers as yet unidentified exists.

Technological advances together with continued research in psychopharmacology becoming more and more directed at specific disorders paired to observe brain functionality would serve as the impetus in studying the heinous phenomena of sexual homicide.

## Appendix

### Appendix A. Expanded Homicide Data Table 12

#### *Murder Circumstances, 2004–2008*

<b>Circumstances</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>
Total	14,210	14,965	15,087	14,915	14,180
Felony type total:	2,099	2,189	2,472	2,204	2,101
Rape	37	45	32	32	23
Robbery	993	930	1,053	935	924
Burglary	78	91	80	86	87
Larceny-theft	17	12	16	10	16
Motor vehicle theft	36	32	16	20	19
Arson	28	39	27	59	26
Prostitution and commercialized vice	9	13	8	11	7
Other sex offenses	14	9	18	10	11
Narcotic drug laws	558	597	806	590	501
Gambling	7	2	4	4	10
Other-not specified	322	419	412	447	477
Suspected felony type	119	45	57	67	104
Other than felony type total:	7,008	7,096	7,328	7,165	6,975
Romantic triangle	97	118	104	105	104
Child killed by babysitter	17	26	27	35	51
Brawl due to influence of alcohol	140	123	106	118	125
Brawl due to influence of narcotics	99	97	53	65	68
Argument over money or property	221	210	198	192	192
Other arguments	3,772	3,718	3,644	3,695	3,558
Gangland killings	95	96	121	78	133
Juvenile gang killings	805	756	864	678	711
Institutional killings	17	12	22	11	15
Sniper attack	1	2	2	1	4
Other-not specified	1,744	1,938	2,187	2,187	2,014
Unknown	4,984	5,635	5,230	5,479	5,000

#### *Crime in the United States, 2008*

U.S. Department of Justice — Federal Bureau of Investigation  
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