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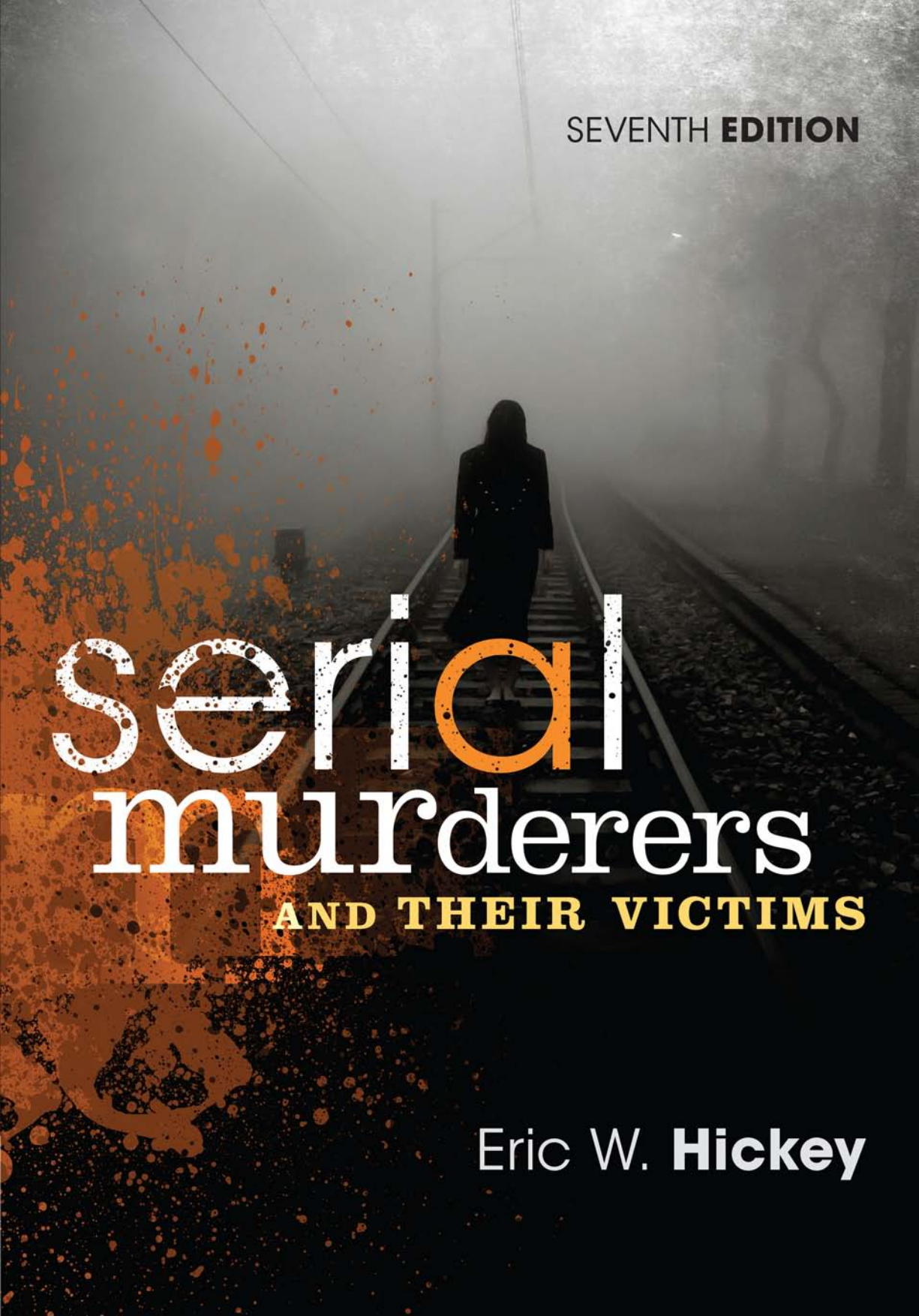
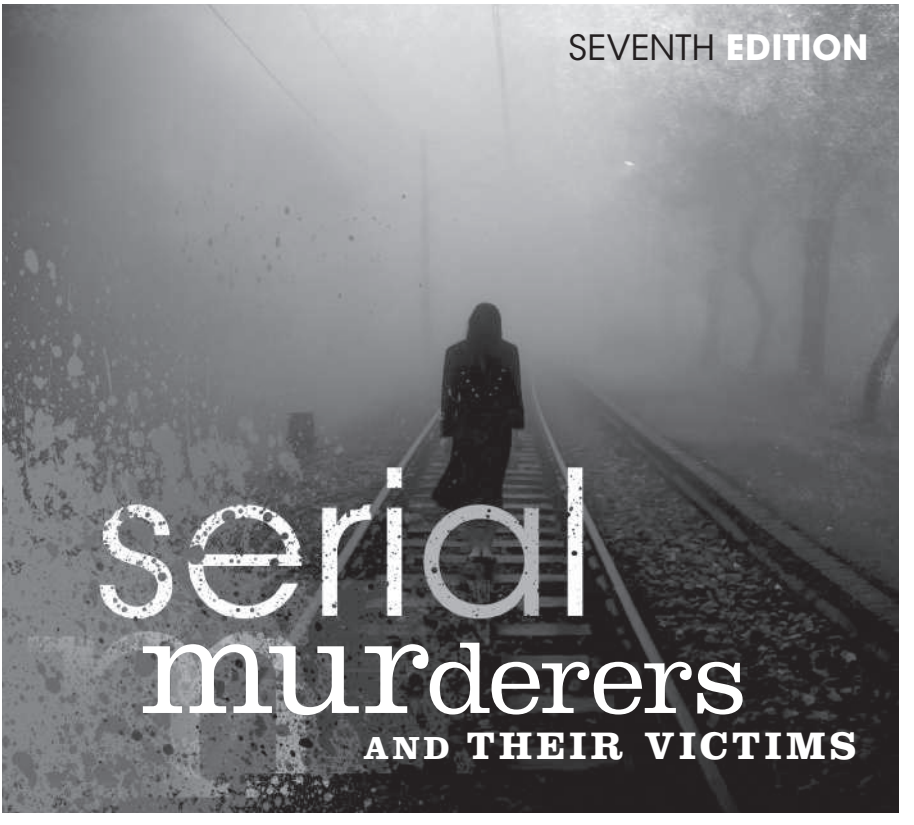


# serial murderers

## AND THEIR VICTIMS

Eric W. **Hickey**

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*To the victims—both the living and the dead. May their suffering not be ignored nor forgotten.*

*To every person who has an interest in the Dark Side and a passion for the study and application of forensics.*

*I think I have a wonderful career and greatly enjoy telling others about all the interesting things that I get to do. But next to the work of my wife, Holly Peacock-Hickey, who is a stellar victim specialist for the FBI and has one of the most prized careers imaginable in helping crime victims, my work pales by comparison.*

*Eric W. Hickey, Ph.D.*

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# About the Author

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**Dr. Eric Hickey** is the dean of the California School of Forensic Studies at Alliant International University. As professor emeritus at California State University, Fresno, Dr. Hickey has taught many courses involving the psychology of crime, serial and mass murder, the profiling of sexual predators, crime scene investigations, victimology, criminal personalities, threat assessment, and school and workplace violence prevention. He has also taught seminars at several universities and colleges, as well as for jail and prison staff trainings, and supervises theses and dissertations involving forensic psychology.

Dr. Hickey has considerable field experience working with the criminally insane, psychopaths, sex offenders, and other habitual criminals. He consults with private agencies and testifies as an expert witness in both criminal and civil cases. He is a court-qualified expert in paraphilia, including pedophilia, child molestation, and fetishes; stalking; adult rape and sexual assault; and violent criminal behavior, including robbery, burglary, and homicide (solo and serial). A former consultant to the FBI's UNABOM Task Force, Dr. Hickey currently assists local, state, and federal law enforcement in training and investigations as well as assisting in the review of cold case files. His seminars for law enforcement and mental health practitioners focus on profiling, investigation, classification and prevention of sex crimes, arson, robbery, homicide, stalking, workplace violence, and terrorism. He has worked closely with California's Peace Officer Service Training (POST) in developing course material and job aids for investigators. Dr. Hickey is a member of an FBI Threat Assessment Regional Evaluation Team that addresses campus violence and potential threats. Dr. Hickey is also an independent contractor with Robson Forensics.



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He is internationally recognized for his research on multiple homicide offenders and has conducted seminars in countries throughout Europe, Asia, and North America. He has also trained VIP protection specialists in Israel in profiling stalkers, threat assessment, and interventions. His current research focuses upon the development of his theory of relational paraphilic attachment (RPA) and sexual predators. He is also writing his first novel, *The Crib*, a disturbing journey into the minds of psychotics, psychopaths, and the criminally insane. His expertise is regularly sought out by the media and has led to appearances on CNN, History Channel, NPR, Larry King Live, 20/20, A&E Biography, Oxygen, GMA, CBC, True TV, Discovery, OWN, and TLC.

Dr. Hickey, current Editor-in-Chief for the Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology (Springer Pub.), has published several books and articles on the etiology of violence and serial crime. His most frequently cited book, *Serial Murderers and Their Victims*, 7th ed. (Thompson-Wadsworth-Cengage Publishers, 2015), is used as a teaching tool in universities and by law enforcement in studying the nature of violence, criminal personalities, and victim–offender relationships. Another of his books, *The Encyclopedia of Murder and Violent Crime* (Sage Publishers), explores the phenomenon of murder and violence through the eyes of some of the world's most noted experts. His book *Sex Crimes and Paraphilia* (Prentice Hall) is a comprehensive examination of sexual perversions, sex offending, and sexual predators. A coauthored book, *The Myth of a Psychiatric Crime Wave* (Carolina Academic Press) examines the misperceptions and reality of the mentally ill and mentally disordered as criminals.

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# Preface

*Serial Murderers and Their Victims* was the first scholarly, comprehensive, and empirical examination of serial murder in the United States. Chapter 1 examines the emergence of serial and mass killing in the United States and the many problems involved in adequately defining the phenomenon. Chapters 2–4 explore cultural, biological, psychological, and sociological frameworks as explanations for serial murder and present a model for understanding serial killing as a process. This includes exploring psychopathy on a spectrum rather than as a dichotomy.

Chapter 5 explores criminal paraphilia, fantasy, and sex offenders and predators, some of whom attach themselves to their victims through a process of relational paraphilic attachment. Paraphiliacs such as those interested in sexual relations with corpses or others sexually attracted to children are presented in spectrums of subcategories rather than as individuals exhibiting the same psychosocial and behavioral traits.

Chapters 6 through 9 sort out the demographic, social, and behavioral characteristics of male and female offenders, those who murder with accomplices, and others who find their victims as healthcare providers. Readers are provided red flags associated with code blue killers. The role of stalking in serial murder is also examined and placed into a classification system.

Chapter 10 examines the victims and victim–offender relationships in cases of serial murder as well as certain more vulnerable populations, including prostitutes, young women, gay men, teens, children, and the elderly. Chapter 11 explores serial killing around the world and compares serial murder in the United States with its occurrences in other countries, including Canada, Japan, Germany, Russia, and South Africa.

Chapter 12 examines how society responds to serial murder. This includes the role and utility of forensics as a science in studying and investigating serial crime; current issues faced by law enforcement officials, such as the detection and apprehension of offenders using a variety of emerging profiling techniques;



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and the challenges of cold case files and the role of NCAVC and ViCAP. Chapter 12 also explores the process of interviewing serial killers and includes an interview with an incarcerated serial killer. The chapter concludes by exploring sentencing, punishment, treatment, and prevention tactics in cases of serial murder.

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

## THE SEVENTH EDITION

The seventh edition has received considerable updates, with new cases and current demographic analysis of serial killers in the United States. All chapters have a set of Learning Objectives to assist readers and instructors with the direction and overarching features of each chapter. The Objectives will help readers in developing their expectations for each chapter.

In Chapter 1, readers are challenged to think more analytically about the nature of killing and how committing homicides can, for some persons, become part of a socialized way of life. Updates are provided for these sections: Myths of Serial Murder, Homicide Facts, Modern Mass Murderers, and the Sampling of Bifurcated Mass Murders in the United States, 1927–2014.

In Chapter 2, I added the American Hosanna Church satanic cult case and a description of the Nazi mobile killing units, the *Einsatzgruppen*. Chapter 3 explores the *DSM-V* updates in terms of psychopathy; a new PCL-R study of male serial murderers, deception, and language of the psychopath; occupations of psychopaths; components of psychopathy and antisocial personality disorder; influences of parenting on psychosis; and explanations for the fearlessness hypothesis surrounding psychopaths. Both autism and psychopathy are introduced in spectrum formats that provide much more clarity in identifying persons with these characteristics. I also included an interview and analysis of Brendon, an admitted child offender yet to be caught who expresses serious aspirations in becoming a serial killer.

In Chapter 4, readers are introduced to Stanton, a seedling sexual predator formed from birth, and his level of dangerousness and prognosis; a closer look at social learning theory as it pertains to fire-setting and animal abuse; and updates on school shootings and stabbings. Video gaming and movies are discussed as facilitators in future violent behavior by select youth. The attempted mass

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murder of high school students by Alex Hribal is introduced and some additional explanations for homicide are explored.

Chapter 5 brings *DSM-V* updates on paraphilia, minor-attracted persons, sexual sadism and rape, and updates in sexual homicides. Readers will learn about the hunting process of serial sex offenders, why sexual predators are so successful in hunting their victims, their drives and motivations, their fantasies, verbal strategies with their victims, and sex offenders who target children with disabilities. Paraphilia, such as necrophilia, is explored in a spectrum format that can be progressive for certain offenders. Child offenders are also examined in a spectrum framework. Chapter 6 introduces the role of forensic nursing and nurses' need to understand behavioral characteristics of homicidal predators. Warning signs are provided for nurses dealing with vulnerable patients. Also, "code blue killers" are examined in their role as serial offenders. Chapter 7 includes explanations for the decline of traditional cases of serial murder, introduces the Radford Project and its data, and updates the profile of the male solo serial killer. The chapter also provides updates on African Americans as predators and victims in cases of serial murder. The case of Henry Howard Holmes is examined as an example of a male place-specific serial killer as is Samuel Little, a 72-year-old who has spent his life devoted to killing. Chapter 8 explores the differences between cases of individual and multi-perpetrator homicides. The profile status of these offenders has been updated. The incredulous case of Franc Cano and Steve Gordon is examined as an example of the creativity of serial killers when they operate together. Chapter 9 provides updates on female serial killers, focusing on violent female youth and traits of female psychopaths. Issues in studying gender-based psychopathy are discussed along with the case of Megan Huntsman, a serial baby killer. Chapter 10 examines current serial murder data that indicate a significant decline in overall cases of serial murder and victimization. Research on elderly lethal assaults and sexual homicides of elderly females, victimization in cases of serial murder, victim selection, victim–offender relationships, weapons, race and age in victim–offender relationships, sexual murders of children, and NISMART updates contribute to this chapter. Chapter 11 includes an expanded section on Canadian serial murder and a comparison of Canadian youth homicides to those in the United States. Updates on serial murder in South Africa are also included.

Finally, Chapter 12 provides more research on forensic investigations, including homicidal injuries, weapons used by juveniles and adults in sexual homicides, a discussion involving serial stabbings in the United States, findings in psychological autopsies, updated information on victim profiling, the identification of crime scene sexual sadism, and new methods in determining risk of offending. Also included are professional organizations such as the FBI (and its mission statement), the Office of Victim Assistance (OVA) and the services of victim specialists embedded with the FBI, and the founding of the American Investigative Society of Cold Cases (AISOCC) and the Society of Forensic Interviewing (SoFI). New research involving current and emerging areas of forensic expertise is also discussed, including preparing female forensic psychologists in working with predators. Some important thoughts by Dr. Michael Welner,

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author of *The Depravity Standard*, are included that examine ways to reduce mass killings; this is followed by new data on the death penalty. Updates of current literature and research have been added throughout the seventh edition. Finally, certain tables, charts, and graphs have been updated.

*Serial Murderers and Their Victims*, 7th edition, debunks the myths and stereotypes that have evolved from public efforts to find easy explanations for the relatively rare yet horrifying phenomenon of serial murder. It also raises many questions about serial killers and their behavior. My research for this book has included visits to prisons, police departments, and numerous university libraries across the United States as well as extensive Internet searches and interviews with numerous sexual predators, such as pedophiles; child molesters; stalkers; paraphiliacs; and several serial murderers, their spouses, ex-spouses, lovers, and friends. I have explored the lives of dead victims and victims who survived the attacks as well as communicated with families and relatives of the victims. Despite the extensive social, psychological, physiological, and financial devastation inflicted by serial murderers on their victims and the victims' families, the victims are often reduced to little more than crime statistics. The etiology of victimization and the continued suffering of survivors must not be forgotten or neglected.

## SUPPLEMENTS

To further enhance the use of this textbook, the following supplements are available to qualified adopters. Please consult your local sales representative for details.

### Instructor's Resource Manual with Test Bank

Prepared by Amy Hembree, the manual includes learning objectives, key terms, a detailed chapter outline, a chapter summary, discussion topics, student activities, and a test bank. Each chapter's test bank contains questions in multiple-choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and essay formats, with a full answer key. The test bank is coded to the learning objectives that appear in the main text and includes the page numbers in the main text where the answers can be found. Our instructor-approved seal, which appears on the front cover, is our assurance that you are working with an assessment and grading resource of the highest caliber.

The manual is available for download on the password-protected website and can also be obtained by e-mailing your local Cengage Learning representative.

### PowerPoints

Prepared by the author, Eric W. Hickey, these handy Microsoft PowerPoint slides, which outline the chapters of the main text in a classroom-ready presentation, will help you to make your lectures engaging and to reach your visually

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oriented students. The presentations are available for download on the password-protected website and can also be obtained by e-mailing your local Cengage Learning representative.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Working with doctoral students is a wonderful experience for me. They bring fresh ideas, enthusiasm, excitement, and promise to our California School of Forensic Studies (CSFS) programs. This is especially true of Bethany Walters, a doctoral student and my current teaching and research assistant. She is phenomenal in her productivity, organizational skills, punctuality, and enthusiasm. I have never met a more determined or dedicated person. Bethany volunteers for every task and project that I have engaged in during the past three years. She serves as my project manager for several research projects and coordinates other graduate students. I cannot thank her enough for her loyalty, enthusiasm, and assistance.

Every once in a while, someone appears on my doorstep wanting to help and collaborate. Enzo Yaksic does just that and keeps offering to collect serial murder cases for me to use in updating my tables for 2004–2014 in Chapters 7–10. His collaborative spirit is an example to us all. A special thanks to Dr. Mike Aamodt of Radford University, Virginia, and Dr. John White of Richard Stockton College Center for Public Safety and Security, New Jersey, for their help in identifying the race of specific serial killers who appear in the sixth and seventh edition updates constructed by Enzo. He also prepared the original profile for the Samuel Dixon case that was facilitated by the use of the Serial Homicide Expertise and Information Sharing Collaborative. Enzo, thank you so much for your assistance. Your passion for the field of forensics is exactly what is needed to further the work. Working with you is most enjoyable, and I am sure that we will collaborate for many years to come. Also, a special thanks goes to James A. Reavis, Psy.D., director of forensic services at the Relationship Training Institute in San Diego, California, for his assistance in developing the profile of Samuel Dixon. Your collaboration is much appreciated.

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In recent years, I had the good fortune of meeting Mark Songer, former FBI, professional document examiner, contractor for Robson Forensics, entrepreneur, and owner of the Songer Institute, an online service for forensic and criminal justice courses. He has become my trusted friend and colleague. His experience and insights have significantly influenced how I think about forensics as an emerging field. I also deeply appreciate the assistance of Dr. Gérard Labuschagne, brigadier general of the Investigative Psychology Unit of the Forensic Science Services Division of the South African Police Service, and of Dr. Charisse T. M. Coston, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, in helping me better understand ethnic, racial, and cultural differences in serial murder. Indeed, there are many sensitive issues discussed in this book. In no way do I mean to be critical or disparage any group, regardless of nationality, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, socioeconomic class, or sexual orientation. My goal is always to expose the truth in order to help reduce victimization, provide greater understanding of the nature of multiple homicide, and better identify the perpetrators. I also thank Dr. Susan Williams of Kansas State University, Kansas, for her friendship and passion for teaching. Her enthusiasm is contagious.

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And to my dear son, Chad P. Hickey, who left this world far too soon without understanding how much I have always loved him.

*Eric W. Hickey*

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*The tragedy of life is what dies inside a man while he lives.*
*—Albert Schweitzer*

*Now ask yourself this question and see if by the time you have finished reading this most horrifying book, you have discerned the answer:*

*What is required to live the life of one's own image?*

*The answer is within….*

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# 1

# Introduction

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To understand the many myths surrounding the phenomenon of serial murder and how society perpetuates those myths
- To explore the definition of homicide and the various classifications of murder in American society
- To explore the extent of mass and serial murder in the United States
- To examine the definitions and differences between mass and serial murder
- To evaluate case studies of mass and serial murder as they relate to the reality and frequency of multiple homicide in modern society

## THE PHENOMENON OF SERIAL MURDER

Multiple murder is undoubtedly one of the most terrifying and fascinating phenomena of modern-day crime. We are frequently reminded of how vulnerable we can be when persons who decide to kill us can do so with relative ease. No one ever imagined that in 2014, a soldier from Fort Hood, Texas, under stress and angry with fellow soldiers, would kill three people and wound more than 16 others before committing suicide; that in 2009, a radicalized military psychiatrist at the same military base would go on a shooting rampage, killing 13 military personnel and wounding many others; that in 2010, a female college professor in Alabama would shoot six members of her department; that in 2011, a college student in Arizona would walk into a grocery store and shoot to death six people and seriously wound many others, including a congresswoman; or that a man would walk into an IHOP restaurant in Nevada and shoot several people before ending his own life. As of 2011, investigators in Long Island, New York, have unearthed or located in wooded areas 10 victims believed to be those of a serial killer. Other serial killers include the Craigslist Ripper (also known as Gilgo



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Killer) Joel Rifkin, an unemployed landscaper who confessed to murdering 17 prostitutes, and Robert Shulman, responsible for the deaths of five other prostitutes. Multiple murder is one of the most sensationalized areas of research within the fields of criminology, psychology, and sociology. Getting down to the "real facts" of a case rather than getting caught up in the inevitable media barrage has become a task difficult for even the most stringent, reputable researchers. The problems are many and interrelated. Philip Jenkins (1994), in his book *Using Murder: The Social Construction of Serial Homicide*, provides a scholarly examination of how serial killing has been dealt with by the media, law enforcement personnel, and the public. Indeed, much of what we know, or claim to know, about serial murder is based on misinformation and myth construction. Nearly 20 years later, many of those misperceptions continue, fueled by our interest in forensics and violent crime. One of the primary confounding myths of serial murder is that they are all, by definition, sexual. Schlesinger (2004) in his seminal work, *Sexual Murder*, notes that many seemingly sexual murders are not sexually motivated and that many sexual homicides are not overtly sexual (pp. 2–6). As a result of the sensational nature of this form of murder, the aura surrounding it has assumed a life of its own as it filters throughout both the public and private sectors of society.

## SERIAL MURDER: FACT AND FICTION

In the summer of 1981 in Atlanta, Georgia, Wayne Williams, a young African American male, was arrested for his involvement in multiple homicides of young African American males. He was believed, at that time, to be one of the nation's more prolific serial killers. This case brought increased focus on serial murder and the fact that not all serial killers are white, nor are the victims, and even children could be targets. Technology, specifically hair-fiber evidence, became a critical factor in convicting Williams, and forensic science became prominent in explaining why such evidence ultimately played a key role in linking Williams to the crimes. Over 20 homicides were attributed to Williams, most of them children, although he was actually convicted of murdering just two of his victims. The horror and fascination of this case focused media attention on Atlanta both during the homicides and after Williams's capture. Within the next three years, several more accounts of serial murder appeared in newspapers around the country. The U.S. public had been invaded by a new criminal type: the serial murderer. Lurking in our communities, preying on hapless victims, serial murderers had suddenly emerged from the criminal underground—perhaps a product of the Vietnam War or possibly a by-product of technology and the moral decay of our society. In the past, most citizens simply assumed that serial killers must be insane. No one knew for sure. But as the cases of serial murder increased, as did the body counts, the ever-growing reality of multiple murders began to intrude on public awareness. Something had to be done to stem the tide of homicides with no apparent motive.

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In 1984, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI, 1984a, 1984b; Ninety-Eighth Congress, 1984) appeared before the U.S. Senate to seek funding for the development of a program specifically targeting violent criminals. According to news accounts of the hearing, as many as 5,000 people per year were believed to be killed by serial murderers. Although this was factually not true, the numbers used to describe the victims in all categories of violent crime were, nonetheless, shocking and incredible. The public and public officials alike were horrified, and funding was procured for the program. For the next several years, the incidence of serial murder was considered by the public to be pervasive in our society, though in fact this remained far from the truth. No one knew how many serial killers actually existed at any one time, but it was clear that the number of victims killed by such offenders did not even begin to approach 5,000. Where that inflated figure first originated is still a mystery. Perhaps a piece of information exchanged during an interview between the media and law enforcement personnel had been misinterpreted. What is important is not who started the rumors but that they were so quickly disseminated without ever being verified.

Such forms of disinformation are not new or uncommon. For example, when marijuana came into public view during the 1940s, a film, *Reefer Madness*, was distributed, depicting the powerfully destructive forces of the illegal substance. Clean, upstanding young men and women, on experiencing the effects of just one reefer, were transformed into raving, sex-crazed lunatics. Though amusing to us now, such exaggeration is disturbing in light of the film's original purpose and effects.

Much of the proliferation of disinformation is a result of public pressure to know more about a specific subject. In some respects, a symbiotic relationship has developed among law enforcement personnel, the media, and the public that serves, in fact, to encourage disinformation in regard to certain types of issues. Realizing this, some researchers, such as Philip Jenkins and others, began questioning the actual extent of serial murder. We do not question that serial murder occurs, but to what quantifiable and qualitative extent? This is the role of the social scientist: to objectively examine phenomena to determine their origin, nature, and impact on society.

Members of the community also want to understand the phenomenon of serial murder. Nadia Fezzani, an investigative journalist in Montreal, Canada, herself a victim of violent crime, decided to interview serial killers and publish her findings. Her compelling book, *My Serial Killers* (2011), documents the face-to-face interviews she conducted with these men. The apparent or perceived increase in the modern serial, or multiple, murder has incited interest among social scientists in several areas. Researchers have begun to explore the social, psychological, and biological makeup of the offenders in order to establish accurate profiles. In spite of their efforts, during the 1980s the body of knowledge about serial murders remained small compared to the number of unanswered questions—especially concerning the extent of the phenomenon. In more recent years, law enforcement personnel and academicians have come closer to understanding the dynamics of serial killing and its etiology, or causation.

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The pure sensationalism and horror of serial murder have also spawned a plethora of novels about such murders, and the figure of the cold-blooded and senseless serial killer has been exploited by the media: for example, in television documentaries and prime-time shows—such as those that depicted California's Hillside Strangler, the BTK Strangler case, and the infamous Ted Bundy (*The Deliberate Stranger*)—and in various box-office thrillers. Because of the wide publicity given to serial murderers, a stereotype of this type of killer has formed in the mind of American society. The offender is thought of as a ruthless, bloodthirsty sex monster who lives a Jekyll-and-Hyde existence—probably next door to you. This has never been more clearly depicted than in the acclaimed HBO series *True Detective*, where the sadistic, deranged killer is hiding in plain sight. Increasingly, crime novels and movies have focused on multiple-homicide offenders. Consider the steady proliferation of multiple-homicide films in which serial killing occurs (see Table 1.1).

Although the list in Table 1.1 is not exhaustive, it is representative of each decade. It does not include films involving mass murder (the killing of a number of people all at one time) or horror films depicting vampires and murderous zombies, but only films portraying real people murdering other people. Notice the explosion of serial-murder themes between the early 1990s and 2008. More than half of those never made it to theaters but went straight to home-video release. In the privacy of one's home, viewers are bombarded with graphic killings, mutilations, and sexual torture. Clearly, this cinematic emphasis has added credibility to the notion of high body counts at the hands of ubiquitous serial-killer monsters.

In his 1987 book *The Red Dragon*, Tom Harris gave a fictional account of a serial killer who took great pleasure in annihilating entire families. Harris's work was later made into the movie *Manhunter*, an engrossing drama of psychopathology, blood, and carnage. At that time, Hollywood was only beginning to realize the huge market for multiple-murder movies. Some years later, the next book by Harris and the derivative movie, both titled *Silence of the Lambs*, caught the American imagination. By 2001, movies such as *Copycat, Kiss the Girls*, the Scream trilogy, *Along Came a Spider, Hannibal*, the Saw series, *Hostel*, and *The Bone Collector* continued to exploit the public's fascination with serial murder without yielding much insight about the offender. Filmmakers, unable to

**TABLE 1.1 Increase in Films with Serial Killing, 1920–2015**

| Decade | Number of Serial Murder–Themed Films |
|---|---|
| 1920–1939 | 5 |
| 1940–1959 | 7 |
| 1960–1979 | 32 |
| 1980–1999 | 183 |
| 2000–2015 | 500+ |

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adequately navigate the minds of serial offenders, resorted to technology and special effects to draw in viewers, as seen in the film *The Cell*. Other films, such as *Seven*, a dark, disturbing movie, attempted to offer some understanding of the murdering mind but confused viewers with the concepts of psychopathy, psychosis, and murder. By late 2003, a remake of the classic horror film *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* appeared in theaters just a few weeks before the confession and conviction of the Green River Killer, Gary Leon Ridgway, in the murders of 48 young women (see Profile 1.7). Serial-murder movies are now rivaled by a plethora of television and cable serials such as *CSI, Profiler, Forensic Files, Criminal Minds, Cold Case Files*, and *Dexter*. Viewers can now examine, from the comfort of their homes, theaters, computers, Kindles, and iPods, the minds and crimes of violent predators.

Novelists such as Bret Easton Ellis, with his exploration of psychopathy, narcissism, sadism, and murder in *American Psycho* (later made into a movie by the same name), and Caleb Carr, author of the acclaimed serial-murder thriller *The Alienist*, clearly indicate that writers are familiarizing themselves with the topic of serial murder and have begun to inject some insightful and historical perspectives into their narratives. Authors such as Ryan C. Thomas explore the psychological trauma of being at the mercy of a demented killer in his book and movie (2015) *The Summer I Died*. The fictional accounts of serial killing, however, often fail to surpass the horror described in nonfictional accounts of serial murder by writers such as Ann Rule, a former acquaintance of the serial killer Ted Bundy; Bundy was executed in January 1989. Besides her work on Bundy (*The Stranger Beside Me*, 1980), Rule has written about Jerry Brudos (*Lust Killer*, 1983), Randy Woodfield (*The I-5 Killer*, 1984), and Harvey Carnigan (*The Want-Ad Killer*, 1988).

## MYTHS OF SERIAL MURDER

The result of such an array of cases of serial murder as well as media focus has given rise to several general myths surrounding the phenomenon. With every myth, just as in every stereotype, there is a measure of truth. The following is a summary of long-held myths surrounding serial killers (Walters, Drislane, Hickey, and Patrick, 2014).

| ***Myth*** | ***Fact*** |
|---|---|
| 1. They are nearly all Caucasian. | Overall, one in five serial killers is black. In recent years, at least 50% are black. |
| 2. They are all male. | Nearly 17% are female. |
| 3. They are insane. | Insanity is a legal term. Very few offenders (2%–4%) are legally insane. |
| 4. They are all lust killers. | Many are, but several cases do not involve sexual assaults, torture, or sexual mutilations. |

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| | |
|---|---|
| 5. Serial killers are prolific. | A few have high body counts, but most kill fewer than eight victims. |
| 6. They kill alone. | About one in four has one or more partners in murder. |
| 7. Victims are beaten, stabbed, strangled, or tortured to death. | Some victims are poisoned or shot. |
| 8. They are all very intelligent. | Most are of average intelligence. |
| 9. They have high mobility in the United States. | Most offenders remain in a local area. |
| 10. They are driven to kill because they were sexually abused as children. | Many kill as a result of rejection and abandonment in childhood. |
| 11. Most serial murderers cannot stop killing. | Some serial killers stopped killing for several years before they killed again or were caught, including Dennis Rader (BTK), Jeffrey Gorton, Jeffrey Dahmer, and Theodore Kaczynski. Such offenders often substitute paraphilic behaviors or other diversions in lieu of killing. |
| 12. Most serial killers want to be caught. | Like anyone, they learn and gain confidence from experience. Many want-to-be serial killers end up in prison after their first murder. Some become very adept at concealing their identities and may feel as if they will never be caught. |
| 13. Serial killers are psychopaths. | Some serial killers are true psychopaths, while others possess psychopathic traits. Several high body count serial killers who have been PCL-R evaluated do not qualify as psychopaths. |
| 14. Serial killers have a prototype. | They vary in race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, age, gender, SES, IQ, and education. |

Throughout the 1990s, dozens of novels and nonfiction accounts of multiple homicides were published for the entertainment and sometimes enlightenment of the general public. Amid this proliferation, female serial killers were given increased attention in true-crime accounts of "black widows" (women who, for various reasons, kill their husbands, then remarry only to carry out the cycle of homicide again and again); nurses who kill their elderly, young, or otherwise helpless patients; mothers who murder their children; females who assist men in serial killing; and a few women who have stalked and murdered men.

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Researchers who have been examining the phenomenon of serial murder to promote greater understanding—and, they hope, develop intervention strategies—have also been busy. Case study analysis of serial murder has begun to provide researchers with insightful information, however tenuous. For example, Elliott Leyton (1986a) in his book *Hunting Humans* provides in-depth examinations of the lives and minds of a few contemporary U.S. serial killers and their relationships with their victims. In *Mass Murder: The Growing Menace* (1985), *Overkill* (1994), and *Extreme Killing* (2014), Jack Levin and James Fox assess some of the dynamics of serial and mass murder. Fox, Levin, and Quinet in *The Will to Kill* (2011) analyze the circumstances in which people kill one another and provide insights to family and school homicides. Ronald Holmes and James DeBurger, in their work *Serial Murder* (2010), formulate typologies based on material gathered from interviews with serial murderers. Holmes's second work, *Profiling Violent Crimes: An Investigative Tool* (2009), has become a useful instrument in the investigation of serial murder. Steve Egger's work *Serial Murder: An Elusive Phenomenon* (1990) and his *The Killers Among Us* (2001) underscore several critical problems encountered by researchers and law enforcement investigators of serial murder. Robert Keppel, former law enforcement officer who has investigated several cases of serial killing, published his observations in *Serial Murder: Future Implications for Police Investigations* (1989). Jenkins (1994) has examined societal forces such as law enforcement, the media, and public interest, which have acted as catalysts in the emergence of the serial-murder phenomenon as a social construct. Also in recent years, a number of documentaries, such as CNN's *Murder by Number*, have critically examined the extent and impact of serial murder. In 1994, British television produced the award-winning documentary *To Kill and Kill Again* (Optomen Television, 1994). As a result of the case of Jeffrey Dahmer and others, serial murder began to be explored not merely as an act, but as a *process*. In 1996, several books examining serial murder, including *Serial Murderers and Their Victims*, first edition, were placed on the compact disc *Mind of a Killer*. This "serial-murder library" allowed researchers, students, and law enforcement personnel to access a vast amount of information, including biographies, photographs, and the investigative tools used to track serial killers. By 2001, other scholarly documentaries, including *Understanding Murder* (the Learning Channel), aired on television and sought to examine the roles of psychology and biology in serial murder: in 2002, Court TV explored the careers of criminal profilers in *The Elite: The New Profilers*; in 2002, WE Channel examined female serial killers in *Black Widows: Explaining Women Who Kill Their Husbands*; and in 2010, CNN revisited the Wayne Williams case in *The Atlanta Child Murders*.

Many other people associated with research on serial murder have also contributed to the body of knowledge on the subject. Dr. Katherine Ramsland, a prolific author and professor of forensic psychology and criminal justice at DeSales University in Pennsylvania, has published scholarly articles and books about serial murder. Two of her books that I highly recommend are *The Human Predator: A Historical Chronicle of Serial Murder and Forensic Investigation* (Berkley, 2005) and *The Mind of a Murderer: Privileged Access to the Demons that*

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*Drive Extreme Violence* (Praeger, 2011). Philip Jenkins, at Pennsylvania State University, has explored the social environments of serial murderers, whereas Candice Skrapec, a forensic psychologist in the Department of Criminology, California State University, Fresno, has gathered data on the psychogenic status of serial offenders. Al Carlisle, a psychologist at the Utah State Prison and Provo Canyon Boys School, has explored dissociative states and other forces that may affect the mind of a serial killer. David Canter and Donna Youngs, at the University of Huddersfield, England, have organized the International Research Centre for Investigative Psychology, an impressive program that, among other things, emphasizes the application of science in geographic profiling of crimes and offenders. D. Kim Rossmo, formerly of the Vancouver Police Department, in his 1995 dissertation made a substantial contribution to the field of forensics through his geographic profiling of serial murderers. Now a senior research professor at the Center for Geospatial Intelligence and Investigation, Texas State University, he is considered to be one of the top geographic profilers in the world. Increasingly, both academicians and law enforcement personnel are becoming involved in the study and exploration of violent serial crime. While all of this research is critical in establishing a knowledge base, Haggerty (2009) notes that focusing on the etiology and biography of offenders is only part of the equation in understanding serial murder. He argues that serial killers are distinctively modern and that thus far "broader social, historical and cultural context have been largely ignored" (p. 168). He outlines six important preconditions for serial murder that have their roots in modernity:

- Mass media and the rise of celebrity status. Be a serial killer and appear in *TIME* magazine, have movies made about you, and gain a following of murder groupies.
- A society populated with strangers.
- A society void of value considerations that encourages extreme rationalization. Depersonalization of others and perceiving relationships as instrumental makes killing others so much easier and pleasurable.
- A cultural framework that through processes of denigration positions specific groups for increased predation, such as the elderly, children, prostitutes, homeless, and homosexuals.
- Opportunity structures that afford serial killers more access to certain victims, such as females who now often work outside their homes, and, of course, prostitutes.
- Society can be engineered, and some serial killers provide a service in ridding society of certain undesirable types of people. (pp. 168–187)

Haggerty has indeed provided a broader platform from which researchers can investigate and study serial murder. These structural and cultural frameworks may have significant utility in explaining multiple homicide and even help us understand how we might detect, investigate, prosecute, and categorize these forms of murder and murderers.

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Law enforcement officials have been dealing with serial murders for many, many years. By the 1990s, however, the nature and sophistication of investigation techniques had changed. Computer technology, especially the development of the Internet, expedited data collection and analysis. During the mid-1980s, the FBI established, at its Behavioral Science Unit in Quantico, Virginia (now referred to as the Investigative Support Unit), the Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (VICAP). VICAP is designed to collect detailed information on homicides throughout the United States. Investigators such as former FBI agents Robert Ressler and John Douglas, both pioneers in the investigation and classification of serial killers, collectively interviewed many notorious serial killers in the United States. Ressler and colleagues published their findings in *Sexual Homicide* (1988), which became a standard reference text for this form of murder. In addition, the U.S. government continues to develop programs such as the National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC) to focus specifically on repetitive offenders, including serial murderers.

## NUMBERS AND TYPES OF MASS MURDERS AND SERIAL KILLINGS IN THE UNITED STATES

The number of murders in the United States fluctuated about 25,000 per year by the early 1990s. By that time, we had witnessed a 20-year period of murder and manslaughter rates increasing 300%, while police clearance rates for these crimes had declined from 93% in 1962 to 74% in 1982 and to about 65% by 1995 (FBI, 1995). Homicide rates in the United States during this period appeared to be one of the highest of any Westernized nation. In recent years, however, we have seen a remarkable decline in violent crime. The last several years have seen fewer violent and property crimes. By 2013, areas of the United States were reporting 40-year lows in crime rates. The Centers for Disease Control (2001) found that of the 5,285 workplace deaths in 1997, 14% were homicides, far behind the number of deaths caused by mining and agriculture accidents. By 2002, the number of murders in the United States had dropped to just over 14,000, with a 1.1% increase in 2003 (see Table 1.2); almost equal numbers of white and black residents were being victimized, even though blacks constitute only 13% of the U.S. population (see Homicide Facts 2012). By 2007, murders in the United States had slowly continued to rise to over 17,000, but these were still nearly half the murder rates of the early 1990s. Between 1991 and 2012, murder rates dropped by over 50%.

### Homicide Facts 2012*

- An estimated 14,827 persons were murdered nationwide in 2012, a 10.3% decline from 2003.
- 77.7% of murder victims were males, and 22.3% were female.

*National Center for Victims of Crime, 2012.

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**TABLE 1.2 United States Homicide Rates, 1987–2012 (Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter)**

| Year | Number of Murders | Rate per 100,000 Population |
|---|---|---|
| 1987 | 20,096 | 8.3 |
| 1991 | 24,703 | 9.8 |
| 1995 | 21,606 | 8.2 |
| 1999 | 15,522 | 5.7 |
| 2003 | 16,528 | 5.7 |
| 2007 | 16,929 | 5.6 |
| 2010 | 14,748 | 4.8 |
| 2012 | 14,827 | 4.7 |

- 42.7% of female homicides were women who knew their killer (30.2% of females were killed by someone they knew, such as a boyfriend; 12.5% were killed by family members); 35% were murdered by their significant other.
- Homicide offenders were mostly males (89.6%); 53.4% of these offenders were black, 44.3% were white, and 2.3% were "other."
- 46.3% of homicide victims were white; 51.1% were black. For 3.7% of victims, race was classified as "other" or "unknown."
- In homicides where the type of weapon was specified, 69.4% of the offenses were committed with firearms; most (71.9%) being handguns.
- The U.S. homicide rate is lower than most nondeveloped nations, such as the Congo (30.8 per 100,000), Cote d'Ivoire (56.9 per 100,000), Jamaica (52.1 per 100,000), and El Salvador (66 per 100,000), but considerably higher than many other developed nations, such as Germany (0.8 per 100,000), the United Kingdom and Australia (1.2 per 100,000), Italy (1 per 100,000), China (1.1 per 100,000), Japan (0.5 per 100,000), Iraq (2 per 100,000), and Afghanistan (2.4 per 100,000). Of 200 surveyed nations, the United States ranks at approximately 100 in homicides.*
- Homicides in which there was one victim and one offender accounted for 47.1% of all homicides.
- In the United States, 43.6% of all homicides were reported in the South, 21.1% in the Midwest, and 21% in the West. The Northeast had the fewest homicides (14.2%).

*For a more in-depth analysis of U.S. and global homicide rates, see Walters and Hickey (2014).

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The lower rate in U.S. violent crime, especially murder, is explained by several contributing factors. First, the U.S. economy, bolstered by new advances in technology, had been in a strong growth period for several years. Although an economic slowdown occurred after 2001 and was affected by the September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and subsequent war with Iraq, the unemployment rate remained relatively low. Second, the victim's movement acted as a catalyst for many new legal reforms. For example, Mike Reynolds, the father of Kimberly Reynolds, who was gunned down while leaving a restaurant in Fresno, California, became the father of three-strikes laws, along with many other laws requiring harsher punishments for repeat offenders. Some states, such as New York, have seen a dramatic increase in the number of police officers on duty. Some argue that violent offenders eventually "age out" because they become too old to commit violent crimes. For whatever reasons, most likely a combination of factors, crime dropped dramatically and steadily until 2000.

Though murder rates have been declining in general, it is clear from the data that certain types of homicides are occurring more frequently. While the majority of murders result from domestic and community conflicts, many murders are perpetrated by strangers. Because of a marked increase in stranger-to-stranger homicides, in some cities, such as Los Angeles, as many as 60% of all murders go without being prosecuted each year. The number of serial murders is believed by some experts, including your author, to account for some of these unsolved cases.

## Mass Murder

Serial murders, however, are not the only type of killings attracting considerable public attention. Mass murders, in which several victims are killed within a few moments or hours, seem to be occurring with greater frequency. In this context, the term *mass murder* does not refer to institutional mass murder as ordered by dictators or ethnic cleansing of groups of people as seen in Europe and Africa but rather the individually motivated and carried-out mass murders in the workplace or in private residences. The current frequency of mass murder in the United States has increased from approximately one case per month to approximately one case every 10 days (author's files). Part of the increase can be attributed to how we define mass murder. Although mass murders were once considered to involve public displays of violence (school attacks, for instance), we now must include domestic mass murders (the killing of some or all of one's family members and/or acquaintances). According to the FBI, killing four or more persons at one time is considered to be a mass murder. Over half of all attempted and/or completed mass murders in the United States involve domestic homicides. Other cases of mass murder involve offenders walking into schools, shopping malls, restaurants, or government offices and randomly shooting bystanders—as in April 1990, when a man released only the day before from a psychiatric institution walked into a crowded shopping mall in Atlanta, Georgia, and began shooting everyone in his path.

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## PROFILES IN MODERN MASS MURDER IN THE UNITED STATES

- Jared L. Loughner, a 22-year-old pot-smoking army and college reject, was considered by the police to be angry and mentally unstable when he entered a shopping center in Tucson, Arizona, in 2011 and shot 20 people, killing 6. His primary target was congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, who was critically wounded.
- Dr. Amy Bishop, a Harvard-trained neurobiologist, shot six faculty members in a department meeting at the University of Alabama in 2010, killing three of them. She had been denied tenure (see Profile 1.1).
- Dr. Nidal M. Hasan, a psychiatrist and major in the military, shot over 40 military personnel, killing 13, at Fort Hood, Texas, in 2009. He had become a radicalized Muslim who viewed the United States as an aggressor nation (see Profile 1.2).
- Omar Thornton shot and killed eight coworkers and then himself at a beer distribution company in Manchester, Connecticut, in 2010. He had just been fired for stealing beer from the company.

In other cases, a troubled parent or sibling has annihilated entire families. In recent years, there have also been several instances of assailants walking into elementary or secondary schools, or sometimes just standing by the playground, and randomly shooting children (see Profile 1.3).

As mentioned, another type of mass murder includes the killing of family members. Based on the number of victims in each case, some domestic mass murders are viewed as *mini-mass murders* because relatively few victims (three to four) are killed. Consider the perpetrators under *Profiles in Modern Mass Murder in the United States*. There is not a *distinctive* profile of such killers. Some are mentally ill while others are just angry. Many are males but some are females. Some kill because they subscribe to political or religious ideologies at variance with the community in which they reside. Some are white, others black. Some are Asian, Hispanic, or African American while many are Caucasian. Some are very well educated and in a professional career while others have a high school education and a blue-collar job. Some do not work. Some kill at school or on college campuses, others where they work or live. Some kill their families while others kill coworkers or strangers. Some kill both relatives and strangers. Many use guns, but some use knives, fire, or bombs.

When combining all mass murders, mini-mass murders, and attempted mass murders, the incidence of such murders remains very high. Although the reality is that the United States is experiencing relatively low homicide rates (the actual number of murders per 100,000 population), public perception, fueled by infrequent yet horrific mass murders such as Columbine, Virginia Tech, Fort Hood, Texas, and Tucson, Arizona, leads citizens to feel that murder is more common than ever (see Profile 1.4).

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**PROFILE 1.1 Dr. Amy Bishop, 2010**

Although women are far less likely than men to commit mass murder, especially in the public sector, they can be just as deadly as men. Dr. Amy Bishop, 46, wife and mother of four children, had a long history of violent outbursts, but most people did not want to be involved or were not in a position to make the connections that linked her violent behavior. Those who did know her were able to witness some of her mood swings. So often her brilliance was diluted by her sudden bouts of rage when she felt ignored or treated unfairly. When she was 21, following a dispute at her parent's home, Bishop loaded her father's shotgun and shot and killed her 18-year-old brother, Seth. She claimed it was an accident. Bishop had come downstairs with the loaded shotgun, saying that she wanted to see how it worked and was now trying to unload it. Told not to point the weapon at Seth, she did so anyway and shot him. She fled with the shotgun in hand to a car dealership, and when confronted by police refused to surrender the weapon. An officer had to disarm her. The family supported their daughter, saying that the shooting was accidental; the ensuing investigation ultimately agreed. Twenty-six years later, following her assault on university colleagues, the investigation into her brother's death was reopened, and Bishop was also charged with his murder.

Bishop had fits of rage throughout her life. In 2002, she was charged with assault after screaming at and hitting a woman in the head at a local IHOP restaurant because the woman had taken the last available booster seat and Bishop wanted to use it for one of her children. In 1994, she was questioned in a mail bomb incident directed at a doctor at Harvard University (where Bishop had earned her doctorate and worked sporadically in postdoctoral research). Eventually, the investigation closed without charges against anyone. Bishop's neighbors reported that she did not handle criticism from others well at all. Another person noted that she had embellished her resume to indicate that she had worked at Harvard two years longer than she had. Her students feared her at times, as she would move from empathy to anger in a moment. Her volatility caused several of her graduate students to leave her labs permanently. She was outraged when not placed as first author on a scientific article for publication, even though she had no right to that position. She yelled at other people's children and could be extremely unfriendly.

Bishop joined the University of Alabama as an assistant professor in the biology department. Her husband found work as a computer engineer at a start-up company. She and her husband had developed a special method of cell preservation that could change the way biomedical research is done. In 2009, she appeared on the cover of *The Huntsville R&D Report*. All seemed to be going well until Bishop was turned down for tenure due to a weak research and publication record. She appealed the decision but was encouraged by her chair and others to start looking for work elsewhere. The family was under increasing financial stress, so Amy hired an attorney. She also started practicing with a firearm. In November 2009, her appeal was denied. On February 12, 2010, Bishop attended a departmental faculty meeting. After sitting quietly for about 30 minutes, she pulled out a handgun and shot six faculty members, killing three of them.

School mass murders, as a result of copycats, access to weapons, global media attention, and increased socialization to violence, have become a prominent societal concern. There have been several major school attempted or completed mass murders in the United States in recent years (see Chapter 4).

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**PROFILE 1.2 Nidal M. Hasan, the Fort Hood Shooter, 2009**

On November 5, 2009, Major Nidal Malik Hasan, 39, an American-born Muslim of Palestinian descent and a U.S. Army psychiatrist, entered Fort Hood, the largest army base in the United States, near Killeen, Texas, and shot 45 military personnel at a medical clinic. Thirteen of those victims died from their wounds. Hasan was shot by a female civilian army police officer and is now paralyzed from the chest down. He currently awaits a court martial, where he will face either life in prison with no possibility of parole or receive the death penalty. Hasan has been used as an example of persons sympathetic to radical Islam who have been radicalized to carry out acts of terror on American soil. In fact, he may not have developed ties to any specific terrorist group, but acted as a lone wolf. Hasan was feeling a great deal of stress because he did not want to be deployed and be in a war zone involving other Muslims. Was Hasan experiencing cognitive dissonance in trying to deal with this conflict of interest between his sworn duty to the United States and his dedication to his faith? Or was he perhaps disgruntled with the poor job performance review he received after working at Walter Reed Army Medical Center for six years? The investigation continues.

## MASS MURDERER CLASSIFICATIONS

Several mass murderer typologies developed by Holmes and Holmes (2000) at the University of Louisville are presented here, including three typologies from other authors. Their thorough classification of mass murderers identifies behavioral and psychological characteristics of these offenders:

1. **Family Slayer or Annihilator**—a person who kills his family and commits suicide.
2. **Murderer for Profit**—a person who kills in order to profit materially. Murderers for profit may kill their family or other groups of people, such as coworkers or friends. In 2000, Joseph Kibwetere, leader of the Ugandan cult Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments of God, murdered over 700 followers to avoid having to return money and possessions they had entrusted to him.
3. **Murderer for Sex**—a person with the primary goal of sexually torturing, raping, and murdering his or her victims; a comparatively rare typology. Richard Speck forced his way into a nurses' residence and raped and tortured eight nurses to death (Levin and Fox, 1985).
4. **Pseudo-Commando**—a person with an obsession for guns and a fantasy for murder. James Huberty walked into a McDonald's restaurant, shot 21 people to death and wounded another 19 (Dietz, 1986).
5. **Set-and-Run Killer**—a person who plans an escape route following the killings. An example is the bombing of the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where 168 people, including 19 children, perished. Other set-and-run killers may use poisons or set fires.

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**PROFILE 1.3 Marcus Wesson, 2003**

Wesson, 57, a quirky man with dreadlocks, was a cult leader of his own family who controlled how, when, and where they would live their lives. He told them that he saw himself as God and that they had better see him in that light as well. When he walked to a store, his wives walked several paces behind. He held contempt for women and used them to satisfy his wants and needs. His daughters and nieces bore him children as he moved his "family" to various locations in California. At one point, Wesson kept his family sequestered in a large tent for 12 years in the Santa Cruz Mountains. They finally settled in Fresno, where the family lived quietly and the sexual abuse was kept secret. One of his wives, Elizabeth, married Wesson when she was 8 years old, was pregnant by 14, and by 26 had given birth 11 times. The children were "homeschooled" and seldom seen by the general public. Wesson kept nine coffins in his small home as a reminder of what could happen to them.

Two nieces who fled his control decided to go back for the children he had fathered by them. He had warned his family for many years to be prepared for the devil in a blue uniform and wearing a badge. The end was near, and now that day had come. When Wesson saw police and his two nieces standing outside his home, he said that he would cooperate and give them the children. Instead, he gathered all his children/wives together in their suicide pact. The eldest was 25, followed by a 17-year-old. The remaining seven were all under the age of nine. Wesson shot each one in the temple and tossed the bodies in a pile in a bedroom. Of course Wesson, being the coward he was, did not kill himself, but instead surrendered to police and blamed the killings on his 25-year-old daughter/wife who also had been shot and killed. Some of his own sons later defended Wesson, stating that their father was a wonderful man who loved his children and would never harm any of them. Other accounts offered more insight: Wesson abused his family emotionally, physically, and sexually and manipulated them using fear for his own gain. Years later, and with more clarity on how they had all been victimized by Wesson, some of the surviving children and Elizabeth related how he was a master manipulator and at times extremely violent. Being with him was like being in prison, where punishments for even minor infractions of his rules could lead to 30 days of physical abuse. The violence and threat of violence was only one of his forms of control. He held prayer sessions and Bible studies that lasted hours. He wrote his own version of the Bible to meet his vision. When the boys were old enough to work, they turned all they earned over to Wesson. The sexual abuse for the girls started at about age seven or eight.

Marcus Wesson now resides on death row in San Quentin State Prison.

6. **Psychotic Killer**—a person suffering from acute or chronic psychosis who is considered to be legally insane.
7. **Disgruntled Employee**—a person who seeks revenge for real or imagined wrongs at the hands of coworkers or employers. During the 1990s, several incidents of postal workers killing coworkers and supervisors spawned the phrase *going postal*.
8. **Disciple-Type Killer**—a person who commits murder at the behest of a charismatic leader such as Charles Manson.
9. **Ideological Mass Murderer**—a person, especially a cult leader, who is able to persuade others to kill themselves or each other, as in the cases of Jim

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**PROFILE 1.4 Andrew Kehoe, America's Mass Murderer of Children: The Bath School Disaster, 1927**

Born in 1872 and raised by a stepmother following the early death of his mother, Andrew Kehoe bore much resentment about his mother being replaced. Working at the oil stove one day, the stepmother accidentally set fire to herself. Kehoe, 14, threw a bucket of water on the fire, which caused it to spread even further. As a result, his stepmother died from her burns. This event may have been a harbinger for his mass murder.

Kehoe married in 1912 and bought a farm in the Bath Township, Michigan. He was known to be a controlling man with a quick temper against those who disagreed with him. A member of the local school board, Kehoe was angered by a property tax levied to fund a new school building. This tax, he believed, was a financial hardship as his wife, Nellie, was suffering from tuberculosis that required extensive medical care. In truth, Kehoe had an extensive collection of farm machinery and tools that could have been sold to cover his mortgage, but he was not about to compromise. Ultimately, the financial strains caused Kehoe's farm to go into foreclosure.

Approximately one year prior to the school attack, Kehoe began purchasing over a ton of pyrotol, an incendiary explosive used for excavation. He also purchased boxes of dynamite in small enough quantities so as not to draw attention and conducted practice explosions on his farm. Because Kehoe was a school board member and a handyman, he had full access to the school and spent many hours installing his explosives. Kehoe not only had a plan to blow up the school but also planned to kill anyone who came to the rescue after the explosion. He filled his car with metal tools, nails, piping, and other pieces of metal and packed the trunk with dynamite. He also placed pyrotol firebombs throughout his farm. A day or two prior to the school attack, Kehoe killed his wife by blunt-force trauma to her head. On May 18, 1927, Kehoe detonated the firebombs at his home, destroying his farm animals and his wife's body. The large fire drew many volunteer firefighters from the area. An hour later, at 9:45 A.M., the school bombs were detonated in the north wing of the building, killing 38 elementary school children and two teachers. Another injured child died a few months later. About one hour later, Kehoe arrived amid the chaos and rescue efforts. Summoning the school superintendent to his car, Kehoe detonated his vehicle, killing himself, the superintendent, an eight-year-old boy, the postmaster, and his father-in-law. Investigators later found another 500 pounds of bombs hidden in the school's south wing. Final death toll: 45.

Kehoe had left a note on his fence that read: Criminals are made, not born.

Jones (Jonestown Massacre), Herff Applewhite (Heaven's Gate), and David Koresh (Waco Massacre).

10. **Institutional Mass Murderer**—a person who commits mass murder as a crime of obedience when ordered to by his or her leader. This often is manifested in the form of genocide, "ethnic cleansing," and religious bigotry as occurred in the Kosovo region, the Stalin farm collectivization, Armenian and Nazi Holocausts, and the Crusades (Hickey, 2000).

Although researchers have barely begun to collect data on such crimes, certain commonalities emerged from their findings: Offenders are primarily white,

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male, and encompass a wide age range. Invariably, handguns, semiautomatic guns, and rifles are the weapons used to kill suddenly and swiftly. But when we control for gender, race, ethnicity, victim preference, mode of killing, and other variables, we also see that there are nearly as many exceptions as there are those who "fit" the general stereotype.

Although victims are often intentionally selected by the killer (for example, a former boss, an ex-wife, or a friend), other persons who happen to be in the area also become collateral prey. Some offenders, simply frustrated by perceived injustices and inequities, lash out at groups of victims who bear no relationship to them. Table 1.3 gives a brief listing of modern-day mass murderers.

Unlike serial killers, the mass murderer appears to give little thought or concern to his or her inevitable capture or death. Some are killed by police during the attack, whereas others kill themselves once they have completed the massacre. In some cases, offenders surrender to police and offer no resistance. With the exception of those who murder their families, most appear to commit their crimes in public places. In cases in which families are murdered, the killer, if he does not commit suicide, usually leaves ample evidence to lead to his or her arrest.

**TABLE 1.3 A Sampling of Modern Mass Murderers***

| Year | State | Offender | Death Toll |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1927 | Michigan | Andrew Kehoe | Bombed a school—37 children, 8 adults dead |
| 1949 | New Jersey | Howard B. Unruh | Shot neighbors—13 dead |
| 1955 | Colorado | Jack G. Graham | Bombed a plane with his mother on it—44 dead |
| 1966 | Illinois | Richard F. Speck | Stabbed/strangled nurses—8 dead |
| 1966 | Texas | Charles Whitman | Shot students and bystanders—16 dead |
| 1966 | Arizona | Robert B. Smith | Shot women in beauty salon—5 dead |
| 1974 | Louisiana | Mark Essex | Shot police officers—9 dead |
| 1975 | Ohio | James Ruppert | Shot family members—11 dead |
| 1976 | California | Edward Allaway | Shot coworkers—7 dead |
| 1977 | New York | Fred W. Cowan | Shot coworkers—6 dead |
| 1982 | California | Humberto de la Torre | Revenge arson against uncle—killed 25 in hotel blaze |
| 1982 | Pennsylvania | George Banks | Shot family and acquaintances—13 dead |
| 1984 | California | James O. Huberty | Shot patrons at McDonald's—21 dead |
| 1986 | Oklahoma | Patrick Sherrill | Shot coworkers—14 dead |
| 1987 | Florida | William B. Cruse | Shot persons at a mall—6 dead |
| 1987 | Arkansas | Ronald G. Simmons | Shot family—16 dead |

(*continued*)

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**TABLE 1.3 Continued**

| Year | State | Offender | Death Toll |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1988 | California | Richard Farley | Shot workers in a computer company—9 dead |
| 1988 | Minnesota | David Brown | Axed family—4 dead |
| 1988 | North Carolina | Michael C. Hayes | Shot neighbors—4 dead |
| 1989 | California | Patrick Purdy | Shot several children in school yard—5 dead |
| 1990 | Florida | James E. Pough | Shot 13 in an auto loan company—8 dead |
| 1990 | New York | Julio Gonzalez | Set fire to a nightclub—87 dead |
| 1991 | Michigan | Thomas McIlvane | Shot 9 at post office—4 dead |
| 1991 | Arizona | Johnathan Doody | Shot and killed 6 Thai monks, a nun, and two helpers at the Wat Promkunaram Buddhist Temple |
| 1991 | Iowa | Gang Lu | Shot 6 people at the University of Iowa—5 dead |
| 1991 | Texas | George Hennard | Shot 45 people in Luby's restaurant—23 dead |
| 1992 | California | Eric Houston | Shot 14 at high school—4 dead |
| 1993 | Texas | David Koresh | Fire/shooting, murder/suicide pact—101 dead |
| 1993 | California | Gian L. Ferri | Shot 14 at a law firm—8 dead |
| 1993 | New York | Colin Ferguson | Shot 25 in commuter train—6 dead |
| 1995 | New York | Michael Vernon | Shot 8 in a store—5 dead |
| 1995 | Oklahoma | Timothy McVeigh, Terry Nichols | Bombed federal building in Oklahoma City—168 dead, including children in day-care center |
| 1996 | California | Joshua Jenkins | 15-year-old allegedly beat/stabbed family—5 dead |
| 1997 | South Carolina | Arthur Wise | Shot several workers in a parts plant—4 dead |
| 1997 | California | Arturo Torres | Shot and killed 4: ex-boss and 3 others—killed by police |
| 1998 | Arkansas | Mitchell Johnson, Andrew Golden | 13-year-old and 11-year-old shot students—5 dead |
| 1998 | Connecticut | Matthew Beck | Shot 3 supervisors and president of Connecticut Lottery Corp., then killed himself—4 dead |
| 1998 | Oregon | Kip Kinkel | At 15, shot 28 students—2 dead—after killing his parents |

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**TABLE 1.3 Continued**

| Year | State | Offender | Death Toll |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1999 | Georgia | Mark Barton | Shot 22 at stock trading companies—9 dead—after beating his wife and two children to death |
| 1999 | Hawaii | Bryan Uyesugi | Shot and killed 7 coworkers at Xerox office |
| 1999 | Colorado | Eric Harris, Dylan Klebold | Two seniors at Columbine High School shot and killed 12 students and 1 teacher and then committed suicide |
| 1999 | Texas | Larry G. Ashbrook | Shot and killed 7 at a Fort Worth Christian rock concert; wounded 7 others before killing himself |
| 2000 | Florida | Dexter Levingston | Mildly retarded man kills 4 relatives and a 12-year-old girl by shooting and stabbing them with machete and screwdriver |
| 2000 | Kansas | Reginald and Jonathan Carr | Assaulted, raped, and shot, execution style, 5 young adults |
| 2000 | Pennsylvania | Richard Baumhammers | A former immigration lawyer, who hated nonwhites, shot and killed 5 men in Pittsburgh: 1 Jew, 2 Asians, 1 African American, and 1 man of Indian descent |
| 2000 | Massachusetts | Michael McDermott | Shot and killed 7 coworkers in Wakefield, thinking they were Nazis |
| 2001 | Texas | Andrea Yates | Drowned her 5 children, one at a time |
| 2003 | Illinois | Salvadore Tapia | Shot former coworkers at an auto parts factory—6 dead |
| 2003 | Mississippi | Douglas Williams | Shot and killed 7 at a Lockheed plant before killing himself. Racially motivated. |
| 2004 | California | Marcus Wesson | Charged with shooting and killing his 9 children |
| 2004 | Florida | Troy Victorino and 3 teens | Charged with beating 6 adults to death while they slept |
| 2005 | Minnesota | Jeffrey Weise | Student at Red Lake High School shot and killed his grandfather, grandfather's girlfriend, 5 students, 1 teacher, and 1 security guard—9 dead. Killer committed suicide. |
| 2005 | Wisconsin | Terry Ratzman | Churchgoer shot 11 people at a church service in a hotel—7 dead. Killer committed suicide. |
| 2006 | Pennsylvania | Charles Roberts | Milk truck driver shot 6 Amish girls in a schoolroom—5 dead. Killer committed suicide. |

(*continued*)

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**TABLE 1.3 Continued**

| Year | State | Offender | Death Toll |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2006 | Indiana | James Stewart, Desmond Turner | Shot 4 adults and 3 children—7 dead |
| 2006 | Washington | Kyle Huff | Shot 8 people at a rave party—6 dead. Killer committed suicide |
| 2007 | Virginia | Seung-Hui Cho | Student at Virginia Tech shot 57 people—32 dead. Killer committed suicide |
| 2007 | Nebraska | Robert Hawkins | Shot and killed nine people in an Omaha department store and wounded 4 before killing himself |
| 2007 | Utah | Sulejman Talovic | Shot and killed 5 victims in Salt Lake City |
| 2008 | Ohio | Michael Davis | Set fire to a house, killing 2 women and 4 children—6 dead |
| 2008 | Missouri | Charles L. Thornton | Shot and killed 6 at a City Hall meeting when he was denied a construction contract. Two wounded |
| 2008 | Kentucky | Wesley Higdon | Killed 5 coworkers before killing himself |
| 2008 | Illinois | Steven Kazmierczak | Shot and killed 6 in a lecture hall at Northern Illinois University. Twenty one were wounded |
| 2009 | California | Ervin Lupoe | Shot his wife, 5 children, and himself |
| 2009 | Ohio | Devon Crawford | Shot his wife, sister-in-law, 3 young children, and himself |
| 2009 | Alabama | Michael McLendon | Shot 5 family members and 5 others before killing himself |
| 2009 | North Carolina | Robert Stewart | Shot and killed 8: an employee and 7 patients in a nursing home |
| 2009 | California | Devan Kalathat | Shot and killed his 2 children and 3 relatives before killing himself |
| 2009 | New York | Jiverly Wong | Killed 13 at an immigration center before committing suicide |
| 2009 | Washington | James Harrison | Killed his 5 children before killing himself |
| 2009 | Texas | Nidal M. Hasan | Shot and killed 13 military personnel at Fort Hood, TX, and wounded 30 others |
| 2010 | Connecticut | Omar Thornton | Shot dead 8 coworkers before killing himself |
| 2011 | Michigan | Rodrick Dantzler | Killed 7 including his daughter and ex-girlfriend before killing himself |
| 2011 | New York | Maksim Gelman | Killed 4 in a stabbing rampage and attempted to kill others |

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**TABLE 1.3 Continued**

| Year | State | Offender | Death Toll |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2011 | Arizona | Jared L. Loughner | Shot 6 to death in a store, including a young girl, and wounded several others |
| 2011 | Arizona | Carey H. Dyess | Shot 5 to death, including the attorney representing his fifth wife in divorce settlement. He then shot himself |
| 2011 | Indiana | David E. Ison | Shot and killed 4 members of a family and a neighbor |
| 2011 | Ohio | Michael Hance | Shot and killed 7 victims: his girlfriend, her relatives, and some neighbors |
| 2011 | California | Scott E. Dekraai | Shot and killed 8 people in Salon Meritage, Seal Beach. Domestic dispute |
| 2011 | Nevada | Eduardo Sencion | Shot and killed 5 people at an IHOP restaurant in Carson City. Seven others were wounded |
| 2012 | Georgia | Jeong Soo Paek | At the Su Jung Beauty Health Sauna, shot and killed 4—his two sisters and their spouses—and then killed himself |
| 2012 | California | One L. Goh | Expelled student shot and killed 7 nursing students at Oikos University in Oakland |
| 2012 | Washington | Ian Lee Stawicki | Shot and killed 4 patrons in a Seattle coffee shop and another in a downtown parking lot before shooting himself |
| 2012 | Colorado | James Holmes | Wearing a Batman mask, former University of Colorado doctoral student shot and killed 12 in an Aurora movie theater, wounding 58 |
| 2012 | Connecticut | Adam Lanza | After killing his mother, he entered Sandy Hook Elementary school and shot and killed 26 victims—20 children, 6 teachers—before taking his own life |
| 2012 | Wisconsin | Wade M. Page | White Supremacist shoots and kills 6 at Sikh Temple, wounding 4 others |
| 2012 | Minnesota | Andrew Engeldinger | Former employee shoots and kills 6 workers and himself at Accent Signage Systems in Minneapolis |
| 2012 | California | Hector Celeya | Shot and killed 4: his daughter, mother, and two brothers before being killed by police on Tule Indian Reservation. 2 wounded |
| 2013 | Washington, D.C. | Aaron Alexis | Navy subcontractor shot and killed 12 in the Navy Yard, wounding another 8 victims |

(*continued*)

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**TABLE 1.3 Continued**

| Year | State | Offender | Death Toll |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2013 | New York | Kurt R. Myers | Shot and killed 4 victims in two businesses in separate towns, wounding two others before being killed by police |
| 2013 | California | Christopher Dorner | A Navy reservist and former police officer, he traveled around Los Angeles shooting and killing 4 victims and wounding 3 others |
| 2013 | California | John Zawahri | Shot and killed two family members and then went to Santa Monica City college and killed 3 more, wounding 4 others before being killed by police. Plan was to kill "hundreds" |
| 2013 | Washington | Dennis Clark | Shot and killed 4 victims at apartment complex, including his girlfriend, before he was killed by police |
| 2013 | New Mexico | Nehemiah Griego | 15-year-old kills 5 family members, including both parents and 3 siblings, citing anger issues to police |
| 2013 | Illinois | Rick O. Smith | Killed 5 members of a family in a public housing unit in Manchester. Shooter also died |
| 2014 | Texas | Timothy R. Jones | Killed his 5 children ages 1–8 |

*Four or more deceased victims to be considered by FBI as a mass murder.
SOURCE: Author's files, 2014.

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

Knoll (2012), in examining the commonalities of mass murder, notes the importance of analyzing the actual communications of mass murderers as windows to their social and psychological worlds that could influence diagnostic considerations and determine a killer's overall level of psychological distress. Language, argues Knoll, could offer clues about an offender's prior experience,

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culture, and primary motivations. Consider the words of Charles Whitman, who, after killing his wife and mother, shot 46 people from the Bell Tower at the University of Texas, killing 16:

> *I do not quite understand what it is that compels me to type this letter. Perhaps it is to leave some vague reason for the actions I have recently performed. I do not really understand myself these days. I am supposed to be an average reasonable and intelligent young man. However, lately (I cannot recall when it started) I have been a victim of many unusual and irrational thoughts.* ~ ***Charles Whitman***

It would appear that not all mass murderers are motivated by similar circumstances, yet the final outcome is the same. Feelings of rejection, failure, and loss of autonomy create frustrations that inevitably overwhelm them, and they experience a need to strike back. And for many killers, the best way to lash out against a cold, forbidding society is to destroy its children. Gunning down children in a schoolyard not only provides the needed sense of power and control but is also a way of wreaking vengeance where it hurts the community the most.

White (2000), in her study of mass murderers, found that most offenders who kill in the workplace do not attempt suicide and do not force authorities to kill them or try to evade arrest. In contrast, domestic mass murderers usually commit suicide or are killed by police. The single most salient factor in such rampage mass murders is mental disorder and/or mental illness. Some mass murderers, so deeply depressed, become schizophrenic or psychotic. Others suffer from severe anxiety and personality disorders. These are not rational people at the time of the murders, even when their behaviors are calculated and decisive. Many of them are not legally insane but suffer from severe psychological dysfunctioning as a result of both chronic and acute stress (see Profile 1.5).

The social impact of mass murders tends to be restricted to the communities in which they occurred. Increased security at schools, office buildings, and shopping malls is the usual response, including improved social services to better identify potentially dangerous individuals. However, the track record in predicting criminal behavior thus far has been dismal. Recognizing potential mass murderers is usually a matter of hindsight; we are quick to attach motivating factors and personality defects to offenders once they have vented themselves on their victims. The fact remains, however, that mass murders, in relation to other crimes—even other forms of homicide—are relatively rare, and they appear to occur as randomly as serial killings do.

## Bifurcation in Mass Murder

Within cases of mass murder, there are some important distinctions worth noting. One of these is *bifurcation*. Most mass murders usually occur at or around one

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**PROFILE 1.5 Mark Barton, Portrait of a Mass Murderer, 1999**

He was a stock day trader at the All-Tech Investment Group in Atlanta, Georgia. On July 29, 1999, Mark Barton, 44, armed himself with over 200 rounds of ammunition, a Glock 9mm, and a Colt .45 and went to Momentum Securities, a brokerage firm. After some small talk, he shot and killed four people. He then calmly drove over to All-Tech and killed five more people. As he left, he was overheard saying, "I hope this won't ruin your trading day." Barton would later shoot himself in the head as police cornered him in Atlanta. He was angry over the loss of $100,000 in day trading in recent weeks. The money he invested had been collected from a life insurance policy that he had taken out on his first wife, Debra, in 1993. Only a month after the policy was in force, Debra and her mother, Eloise Spivey, were found chopped to death with a hatchet. Police believed that Barton was the killer but lacked evidence to arrest him. Barton was eventually given $450,000 of the life insurance money; by then, he had already found his new wife, Leigh Ann, a woman with whom he was having an affair while still married to Debra. His new life, however, was far from peaceful. Barton, once suspected of molesting his daughter Mychelle as a small child, underwent a court-ordered evaluation. The psychologist noted during testing that Barton was capable of committing homicide. More insightful words would be hard to find. In one of his final notes he wrote, "I don't plan to live very much longer, just long enough to kill as many of the people that greedily sought my destruction."

Just prior to the mass murder in Atlanta, Barton murdered his second wife, Leigh Ann, 27; his son, Matthew, 12; and daughter, Mychelle, 8. Barton would later write on his suicide note that his sweetheart (Mychelle) and buddy (Matthew) died "with little pain." Each of the children died from hammer blows to the head while they slept and were then placed underwater in the bathtub to be sure they were dead. He wrapped sheets and towels around each of the three bodies to allow only their faces to show and placed a teddy bear on Mychelle and a video game on Matthew.

distinct location, such as a school, an office building, or a private residence. In some mass killings, an offender begins his or her murders in one location and then moves to another building or address to continue the killing (see Profile 1.4). These bifurcated attacks, although not common, continue to occur periodically.

*Public-to-public* events that are deemed mass murders are extremely rare, such as Seung-Hui Cho, the Virginia Tech mass murderer who began his killings in one campus location, waited a period of time, then went to another location and killed many more students and faculty (see Profile 1.6). In 2011, another mass murderer in Norway, Anders Breivik, bombed government buildings in downtown Oslo, killing seven. Two hours later and many miles away on Utoya Island, he shot and killed another 69 victims. The same year in Carson City, Nevada, a 32-year-old Mexican immigrant walked up to a man sitting on a motorcycle outside an IHOP restaurant and shot him with a rifle. He then

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entered the restaurant and shot several national guardsmen, killing two of them. Upon exiting the IHOP, the gunman walked into the parking lot and took aim at various nearby stores and began shooting at them before finally killing himself.

*Private-to-public* mass murders, however, are much more likely to occur when mass murder events are bifurcated. These events usually involve an individual who kills family members and/or friends at a private residence, after which they proceed to enter a public place, such as a business or school, and kill more victims. Several offenders killed their spouse, parent(s), and/or children before traveling to public locations to continue the killings. Michael McLendon shot his mother and her four dogs before going to other private and public locations to continue his killings.

Bifurcation of mass murder events may help in understanding the mind-sets of such killers. Indeed, mental illness is commonly found in mass murderers, yet there are some who are not suffering from severe cognitive distortions, hallucinations, hearing voices, and paranoia. Others exhibit a spectrum of personality disorders, such as James Huberty, who told his wife one day that he was "going to hunt humans" and then proceeded to shoot 35 victims, killing 21, at a McDonald's restaurant. Charles Whitman carefully planned his mass murder by first killing his wife and mother, then climbed the bell tower at the University of Texas, Austin, and shot 46 people, killing 16. In some cases, the offender bifurcates the events because he does not want to leave his family members to endure the aftermath of his murders. Others kill their family members because they are the primary targets and then proceed to other public or private locations to kill more. Usually these events involve rifles or handguns.

### A Sampling of Bifurcated Mass Murders in the United States 1927–2014

1927 Andrew Kehoe—45 dead, 58 wounded

1950 Ernest Ingenito—9 dead, 1 wounded

1966 Charles Whitman—16 dead, 32 wounded

1971 Douglas Dean—5 dead

1987 Ronald G. Simmons—16 dead, 4 wounded

1989 John M. Taylor—4 dead, 1 wounded

1991 Andrew Brooks Jr.—6 dead, 2 wounded

1991 Joseph M. Harris—4 dead

1998 Kip Kinkle—4 dead, 22 wounded

1999 Mark O. Barton—9 dead, 13 wounded

1999 Lawrence Hensley—4 dead, 1 wounded

2005 Jeffrey Weise—10 dead, 5 wounded

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**PROFILE 1.6 Virginia Tech Massacre, 2007**

"You forced me into a corner," said Seung-Hui Cho. "You had a hundred billion chances and ways to have avoided today.... But you decided to spill my blood. You forced me into a corner and gave me only one option. The decision was yours. Now you have blood on your hands that will never wash off."

On April 16, 2007, 23-year-old Seung-Hui Cho left his dormitory on the Virginia Tech campus armed with a 9mm pistol and a .22-caliber handgun. He entered a coeducational residence hall that housed 895 people and shot to death a 19-year-old female freshman and a 22-year-old male resident assistant. About two hours later, Cho entered an engineering classroom building about a half mile from the initial shootings. He locked the front doors from the inside and made his way to the second floor. Cho killed another 30 people in four different classrooms before turning the gun on himself. At least 15 other people were wounded in the shootings. Another 60 students were injured as they ran or leapt to safety from the windows of their classrooms.

Cho's underlying psychological diagnosis at the time of the shootings remains a matter of speculation. In the ensuing investigation, police found a suicide note in Cho's dorm room that included comments about "rich kids," "debauchery," and "deceitful charlatans." On April 18, 2007, NBC News received a package from Cho time-stamped between the first and second shooting episodes. It contained an 1,800-word manifesto, photos, and 27 digitally recorded videos in which Cho likened himself to Jesus Christ and expressed his hatred of the wealthy. Various sources concluded that because of Cho's inability to handle stress and the "frightening prospect" of being "turned out into the world of work, finances, responsibilities, and a family," Cho chose to engage in a fantasy where "he would be remembered as the savior of the oppressed, the downtrodden, the poor, and the rejected."

Looking over his life, one can see a long history of psychological problems. Cho, a South Korean who had moved to the United States at age eight, was a senior English major at Virginia Tech. At the age of three, he was described as shy, frail, and wary of physical contact. In the eighth grade, Cho was diagnosed with depression as

2006 Jennifer San Marco—7 dead

2009 Michael McLendon—11 dead

2010 Christopher Speight—8 dead

2011 Rodrick S. Dantzler—7 dead, 2 wounded

2011 Eduardo Sencion—5 dead, 7 wounded

2012 Ian Lee Stawicki—6 dead

2012 Adam Lanza—29 dead

2013 Kurt R. Myers—4 dead, 2 wounded

2013 Christopher Dorner—4 dead, 3 wounded

2013 John Zawahri—5 dead, 4 wounded

2014 Ivan Lopez—4 dead, 16 wounded

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well as selective mutism, a social anxiety disorder that inhibited him from speaking. Cho's family sought therapy for him, and he received help periodically throughout middle school and high school. High school officials worked with his parents and mental health counselors to support Cho throughout his sophomore and junior years. However, he eventually chose to discontinue therapy.

When he applied to Virginia Tech, school officials did not report his speech and anxiety-related problems or special education status because of federal privacy laws that prohibit such disclosure unless a student requests special accommodation. However, his psychological problems continued.

During the fall semester of 2005, one of Cho's professors expressed concern over his "sinister" writings. He was asked by the professor to either change his writing style or leave his poetry class. Cho responded, "You can't make me." The co-director of the Creative Writing program removed him from the class and tutored him one on one. He was again asked to attend counseling, but refused.

In November and December of 2005, Cho was investigated by the university for stalking and harassing two female students. After the investigation, he was ordered to have no contact with them. After this order, Cho sent a suicidal instant text message to a roommate. His message was reported to campus authorities and he was taken by campus police to a local community services center, where he received a voluntary counseling evaluation. He was determined to be "mentally ill and in need of hospitalization." This evaluation, declaring him "an imminent danger to self or others," was sent to court. Cho was taken to a psychiatric hospital and evaluated by a psychologist. The psychologist concluded that Cho "presents an imminent danger to himself as a result of mental illness." The court ordered that Cho receive follow-up outpatient treatment, but reports indicate he did not seek out services. In February, Cho began purchasing weapons and ammunition and began videotaping his manifesto. In a few weeks Cho carried out the largest school massacre in the history of the United States.

SOURCE: *New York Times, MSNBC, CNN, ABC News, Roanoke Times*.

## Differences Among Mass, Serial, and Spree Murderers

In both mass-and serial-murder cases, victims die as the offender momentarily gains control of his or her life by controlling others. But the differences between these two types of offenders far outweigh the similarities. First, mass murderers are generally apprehended or killed by police, commit suicide, or turn themselves in to authorities. Serial killers, by contrast, usually make special efforts to elude detection. Indeed, they may continue to kill for weeks, months, and often years before they are found and stopped—if they are found at all. In the case of the California Zodiac Killer, the homicides appeared to have stopped, but an offender was never apprehended for those crimes. Perhaps the offender was incarcerated for only one murder and never linked to the others, or perhaps he or she was imprisoned for other crimes. Or the Zodiac Killer may have just decided to stop killing or to move to a new location and

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kill under a new modus operandi, or method of committing the crime. The killer may even have become immobilized because of an accident or an illness or may have died without his or her story ever being told. Speculation exists that the Zodiac Killer has stalked victims in the New York City area. The Zodiac case is only one example of unsolved serial murders, many of which will never be solved.

Second, although both types of killers evoke fear and anxiety in the community, the reaction to a mass murder will be much more focused and locally limited than that to serial killing. People generally perceive the mass killer as one suffering from mental illnesses. This immediately creates a "they versus us" dichotomy in which "they" are different from "us" because of mental problems. We can somehow accept the fact that a few people go "crazy" sometimes and start shooting others. However, it is more disconcerting to learn that some of the "nicest" people one meets lead Jekyll-and-Hyde lives: a student by day, a killer of coeds by night; a caring, attentive nurse who secretly murders sick children, the handicapped, or the elderly; a building contractor and politician who enjoys sexually torturing and killing young men and burying them under his home. When we discover that people exist who are not considered to be insane or crazy but who enjoy killing others for "recreation," this indeed gives new meaning to the word "stranger." Although the mass murderer is viewed as a deranged soul, a product of a stressful environment who is just going to "explode" now and then (but of course somewhere else), the serial murderer is seen as much more sinister and is more capable of producing fear.

The third difference is that the mass murderer kills groups of people at once, usually within a few minutes or hours, whereas the serial killer individualizes his or her murders. The serial killer continues to hurt and murder victims, whereas the mass murderer makes his or her "final statement" in or about life through the medium of abrupt and final violence. We rarely, if ever, hear of a mass murderer who has the opportunity to enact a second mass murder or to become a serial killer. Similarly, we rarely, if ever, hear of a serial killer who also enacts a mass murder.

The mass murderer and the serial killer are quantitatively and qualitatively different, and disagreement continues about their characteristics just as it does about the types of mass and serial offenders that appear to have emerged in recent years. White (2000) thoroughly examined the differences between mass and serial murderers and summarized the differences, as shown in Table 1.4. An important change from White's findings is that the current number of murders required in a case to be classified as serial murder is two (FBI, 2008).

Researchers also distinguished *spree* murders from mass and serial murders as being three or more victims killed by a single perpetrator within a period of hours or days in different locations. They often act in a frenzy, make little effort to avoid detection, and kill in several sequences. Offenders may kill more than one victim in one location and travel to another location. There appears to be no cooling-off period, even though the murders occur at different places (Greswell and Hollin, 1994). These murders, sometimes called *cluster killings*,

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**TABLE 1.4 Differences Between Mass and Serial Murderers**

| | Mass | Serial |
|---|---|---|
| Murder is means of control over life | ✓ | ✓ |
| Usually arrested or killed at crime scene | ✓ | |
| Often commits suicide after the crime | ✓ | |
| Eludes arrest and detection | | ✓ |
| Likely to travel and seek out victims | | ✓ |
| Evokes long-term media/public attention | | ✓ |
| Kills individuals | | ✓ |
| Kills several in short period of time | ✓ | |
| Murders viewed as single incident | ✓ | |
| Minimum number of victims agreed on by researchers | 4 | 4 |
| Murderer is usually white male | ✓ | ✓ |
| Motivated primarily by material gain or revenge | ✓ | |
| Victims usually female | | ✓ |
| Firearms are the common choice of weapon | ✓ | |
| Kills in spontaneous rage | ✓ | |

SOURCE: Data from White, 2000.

tend to last a few days, weeks, or even months. In 1997, Andrew Cunanan, a 27-year-old from San Diego, California, went on a four-state killing spree that culminated in the murder of fashion designer Gianni Versace in Florida. Cunanan feared that he might be infected with the AIDS virus and vowed revenge on whomever was responsible. Some of the five men he murdered were gay and some were not. Upon killing them with guns, knives, and blunt objects, Cunanan would steal cars and money from his victims. He continued to kill as he journeyed southeastward toward his final murder and suicide. The problem with the concept of spree murder is that investigators and researchers cannot agree on how to adequately define *cooling off*. As of 2008, experts have collectively agreed that the concept of spree murder be eliminated and that such offenders be included with other cases of serial murder (FBI, 2008).

Perhaps the most critical stumbling block that stands in the way of understanding serial murder today is the disagreement among researchers and law enforcement personnel about how to define the phenomenon.

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## DEFINING HOMICIDE, MURDER, AND SERIAL MURDER

The reader should be clear about how we categorize various types of murders based upon familial relationships and group identification as well as how we define the taking of a person's life. Many murders are committed within families by other family members, while other murders are committed on a global scale.

- *Neonaticide:* killing of a newborn within the first 24 hours of his or her life.
- *Infanticide:* killing of an infant child who is less than one year of age.
- *Siblicide:* typical in survival behavior of animal groups, the term is also used to refer to the killing of an individual by a sibling or siblings or facilitated by the parent(s).
- *Fratricide:* killing of one's brother or sister. Often used in terms of military fratricide or the act of killing a relative(s) or countrymen. Used also to describe the killing of one's own military forces, such as "friendly fire" incidents.
- *Prolicide:* killing one's own children, including infanticide and killing of a fetus in utero. Commonly referred to as *filicide*, which usually refers to the killing of a minor, including a stepchild.
- *Parricide:* killing of a parent(s) or other relative. *Patricide* refers to the killing of one's father, while *matricide* is the killing of one's mother.
- *Genocide:* extermination of a specific racial, ethnic, religious, or national group of people.

Each state in the United States has very specific criteria for defining murder. *Justifiable homicide* is sometimes referred to as "no-fault" homicide, and usually involves the killing of someone under necessity or duty. These killings lack criminal intent. This can include various forms of defense of family, self, or others. *Voluntary manslaughter* involves the killing of another person(s) in the heat of passion, in the commission of another felony, or in self-defense. *Involuntary manslaughter* is sometimes referred to as negligent homicide and involves the killing of another person(s) while committing a nonfelony offense, such as reckless driving (also referred to as vehicular manslaughter). A person who chooses not to maintain the brakes on his car, which results in a car crash that takes the life of one or more persons, is usually determined to be guilty of negligent manslaughter. Of course, there may be exceptions depending upon circumstances and the state in which the offense occurred.

In California, to receive a death sentence an offender must be "death eligible," which means that the person must have committed a homicide, specifically murder. All homicides are not illegal, however. In some cases, such as self-defense or when the state holds an execution, the killings are viewed as homicides and are not considered illegal killings. The issuer of the death certificate of a man executed in California noted the cause of death as being a homicide, for example. Indeed, a *murder* requires an illegal taking of another's life specifically

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formed around intent. Such determinations are made based upon provocation, cooling-off periods, and what a reasonable person would be expected to do under the circumstances leading to the killing.

From a judicial point of view, the most serious of murders are those that are *capital* cases involving *premeditated murder*, or the willful, intentional killing of another person(s). Such cases may qualify a person, if convicted, for a death sentence. Juodis, Starzomski, Porter, and Woodworth (2014), in their study of incarcerated murderers, note that domestic homicides exhibit dynamics that vary in contrast to nondomestic homicides. Domestic homicides are more likely to contain expressive drives to cause harm to the victim(s) out of proprietary revenge. These are not sudden, spur-of-the-moment killings: nearly 83% reported elements of planning. In cases where the domestic homicides involved psychopathic offenders, they were less likely to act suicidal and more likely to premeditate the killing in dispassionate, excessively violent methods.

Most persons convicted of *first-degree* murder find their way into lengthy prison terms rather than a death sentence. First-degree murder usually includes *felony murder*, or murder committed while in the course of committing another felony, such as killing someone while robbing a bank. Other forms of first-degree murder may involve poisoning, lying in wait, torture, use of explosives, and in some states, such as California, using armor-piercing bullets or doing a "drive-by" killing.

Usually for a sentence of death, the offender must have willfully, deliberately, and with premeditation murdered another with *special circumstances*. These special or aggravating circumstances in first-degree murder may include a prior murder by the offender; multiple murders; killing of a peace officer, witness, prosecutor, or judge; lying in wait; torture with intent to kill; murder due to race, ethnicity, religion, or nationality; felony murder; and use of poison. Even when an offender does receive a death sentence, the likelihood of actually being executed is minimal. In California, the average length of time for an appeals process to be completed is over 16 years. Most of the condemned in California die of natural causes, commit suicide, or are murdered by fellow inmates.

Serial murder, one of those special circumstance categories, draws a lot of media attention. In February 1989, the Associated Press released a story about a serial killer who preyed on prostitutes in the same area of Los Angeles that harbored the Southside Slayer.* He was believed to have killed at least 12 women, all with a small handgun. The news story referred to the victims as "strawberries"—young women who sold sex for drugs. Farther north, the Green River Task Force in Seattle, Washington, continued to investigate a series of murders of at least 48 young women over a 21-year span (see Profile 1.7). When the corpses of boys and young men began appearing along the banks of the Chattahoochee River in Atlanta, Georgia, during the early 1980s, police became convinced a serial killer was at work in the area.

*Identity unknown; killed 12–20 victims between September 1983 and May 1987. Offender believed to be black and to have enjoyed mutilating his young female victims.

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