Criminology - iii.

# Exactly what IS a serial killer?

Remember, the condition of being a psychopath, and why it’s a reference in criminology. We don’t have to explain what makes the acts of a psychopath ‘wrong’. As social animals, we simply cannot accept entirely self – referential acts as being justifiable.

Serial killers can be defined only by negation;

* Some murderer’s have rational justification for their acts.
* Some can justify a series of murders rationally to others.
* A mass murderer kills several victims in one event.
* A spree killer usually commits suicide as part of the event.

‘Jack the Ripper’ is the archetype; London in the 1880s.

Ted Bundy is said to be an obvious example too. U.S. 1979 – 89.

## The Whitechapel Murders.

Note to self – scan in p84 of Joyce.

Apart from pshycopathy, a frequent explanation of serial killing is ‘anomie’.

The criminal is separate from their society.

Prominent criminologist Siegel in 2012 said that the ‘*....causes of serial murder elude criminologists,...’*  going on with factors that can be identified;

* Mental illness
* Sexual frustration
* Neurological damage
* Childhood abuse
* Neglect
* Smothering maternal relationship
* Anxiety
* Narcissism..............

## The Main Motives:

* Money.
* Pleasure.
* Power.
* Mental illness.
* Mission.

Our problem – if there is no ‘typical’ profile of a serial killer, can criminologists help to prevent such atrocities?

## Criminal profiling.

* Began with an American Thomas Bond in trying to i.d. The Ripper.
* FBI developed it – ‘The Behavioural Science Unit’ 1970s.
* Central idea – build a ‘picture’ of the criminal’s personality from detailed examination.
* Key areas:
1. Antecedent.
2. Modus operandi.
3. Body disposal.
4. Offender’s behaviour after murder.
* The crime scene:
1. Organised – indicates planning.
2. Disorganised – suggests spontaneity.

The criminologist then makes a ‘picture’ of the criminal.

## Can profiling help to prevent atrocious crimes, or, is it dangerous to generalise.?