## Criminology vii - Female killers.

* No clear examples of lone female ‘serial killers’, according to the standard definition. ‘repeat killer driven by sex.’
* Possibility - women are not capable of that categorisation.
* Examples like Rose West might suggest that even sexually motivated female murderers need a predatory male counterpart.
* Current British example, Joanna Dehenny, is a repeat killer [if she’s guilty?], but the motivation as revealed so far is not sexual.

N.B. the particular criminological difficulty in attempting to profile female repeat killers! There are very few instances, each seems to have massive psychological variables. The flaw involved is called ‘the specific to general flaw’. Making too much of a single or a few examples.

Perhaps the most important feature that is usually visible in female abuser studies is that they themselves have been victims. However, at present, Dehenny seems to be an exception.

The paradigm is the American, Aileen Wuoronos. key points;

* Born in Mitchigan in 1956; exectued in Florida in 2002,
* Once married, latterly had a stable same sex partnership.
* Convicted of 6 counts of 1st degree murder. Killed 7 over 10 years. Caught in 1991.
* She said that all her victims had raper her, or attempted too. She was supporting her partnership by working as a prostitute. Her plea was that all the murders were self defence.
* One of two siblings born to a teenaged mother who divorced their father when she was 17.
* Wuornos never met her father. He was a shizophrenic, suicidal paedophile.
* The siblings were abondoned by their mother when Aileen was 4, legally adopted by grandparents.
* Aged 9, AW engaged in sexual activites in return for chocolate and cigarettes – including with her brother.
* It is said the the grandfather was alcoholic and sexually abused AW. She was raped when 13 by a family friend. Became pregnant. The child was adopted.
* Aged 15, AW was forced to leave home, she su[pported hersel f by prostitution.
* 1974 – arrested for druken driving and firing a pistol from the vehicle.
* 1976 – met & married a 69 year old in Florida. She extracted cash from her husband by beating him with his walking stick leading to a restraining order.........anulled marriage.
* In & out of prison having benefitted from a $10,000 pay out on her brother’s death, she arrived a a gay bar in Daytona in 1986. Partner named Tyria Moore.
* AW was ultimately condemned for the first murder, of a conviicted rapist, Richard Mallory.
* Of one murder no charge was made because the body was not found.
* All the other victims had been shot several times with a small caliber weapon
* The variety of victims is surprising. Includes ex USAF major who had been a Child Abuse investigator and Police Chief and a freelance rodeo rider.
* AW & TM crashed the miising victim’s car, Jan 91. Also, belongings werwe pawned. AW had been fingerprinted and so was arrested.
* TM was apprehended and exchanged immunity in return for extracting a confession from AW.
* TM was ‘coached’ by police in obtaining the confesion by phone in claiming that it would shield herself. AW confessed to the murders.
* N.B. under Florida legislation, previous patterns are alowed to be used as evidence – and were.
* AW’s conviction accompanied by psychiatric tests. Found to be ‘anti-social with borderline personality disorders’.
* Subsequently confessed to each murder.
* It was revealed that the rodeo rider was also a convicted rapist with ‘sociopathic trends’, but even so a retrial was denied.
* AW recanted the self defecne claim in order to preciptate death
* She gave interviews to Nick Broomfield.
* There is a film ‘The Monster’.
* There is a British parallel film – ‘Kissing Butterflies’.

Wilson & Seaman ‘*The serial Killers’* , a book about the psychology of violence,

‘*...her grandfather.......a heavy drinking, foul mouthed disciplinarian, turned her into a rebel who hated authority. Lee herself was highly dominant with a quick temper..........discovering that sex gave her power over boys.......’* and more in similar vein.

1. Given the genetic connection to her grandfather and the similarities in behaviour, it can be argued that ‘localisation of brain structure’ has been inherited. Adding also the known behaviour of ; her father, mother and grandmother.
2. Or, given the level of abnormal influence on her childhood, the ‘id’ component of her personality obtained dominance.
3. Or, given the level of abnormal influence on her childhood, her subsequent behaviour was ‘learned’. [John Watson]
4. Or.............you’ll just have to study the subject more! But some points are;
* Rare though it is for such abuse, it is more common than repeat killing is.
* Whatever theory is adopted, it ought to be possible to substantiate it by comparison.
* Neo-conservative thinking was evident in the convicion and sentencing.

Think/write topic; ‘can we anticipate the structure and function of the background to female repeat killers?’