

# The portrayal and the attributes of serial killers and some of the most notorious ones

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**Abstract.** *Serial killers have always been in the centre of interest for the reason why they murder umpteenth victims without self-control, remorse and sense of guilt. They stalk stealthily and have the capacity to continue their massacre for ages via diverse countries and states. In this study I intend to widen my previous study on serial killers with more cases and more background information about the roots of their amok from both psychological aspect and from the aspect of the damage to the frontal lobe, the role of the hypothalamus, the limbic system, and the ventromedial prefrontal cortex as well as the size of the amygdala which enhance the aggressive behaviour and contribute to uncontrolled sadism. I highlight the vital impact of childhood traumas, humiliation, neglect and the principal elements of family history. I comprise some of the most notorious psychopaths and cluster the common traits of these perpetrators. The role of superiority, maintaining power, manipulation, disability in physical characteristics, profit making, sensation seeking, deficiencies in empathy, pathological need to control others and attention seeking are crucial factors as well. According to psychologists, having a grandiose sense of their own self-worth, narcissistic attitude, and addictive personalities may all contribute to murders.*

**Keywords:** serial killer, traits, psychopath, childhood trauma, the most disreputable

*motto:*

*„We are serial killers, your sons, husbands, we are everywhere.” Ted Bundy*

## 1. The attributes in general

There is little more terrifying than those who hunt, stalk and snatch their prey under the cloak of darkness. These hunters search not for animals, but for the touch, taste, and empowerment of human flesh. They are cannibals, necrophiles, and monsters, and they walk among us. They are people living among society, going about their day to day activities until nightfall. They are the fathers, husbands, and some of the church going members of the community.

A serial killer is a person who murders three or more people over a period of more than 30 days, with a “cooling off” period between each murder, and whose motivation for killing is largely based on psychological gratification<sup>1</sup>. The motives for these murders according to the FBI include anger, thrill, attention or financial gain. Macdonald has set up a triad by which he characterized the childhood of serial killers as potential psychopaths. He highlighted bedwetting, arson and torturing of animals as appalling phenomena<sup>2</sup>. They may exhibit varying degrees of mental illness and/or psychopathy, sociopathy, which may contribute to their homicidal behaviour. They were often abused —emotionally, physically and/or sexually

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<sup>1</sup> Douglas et al. Crime classification manual: A standard system for investigating and classifying violent crimes. San Francisco, John Wiley and Sons: 2006 (in.: *Belügyi Szemle 2014/2. Híres Bűnügyek, tanulságos nyomozások, Lehoczki Ágnes: Donászi és Nagy esete a narcizmussal*)

<sup>2</sup> Innes B: *Bűnös elmék*. Skandi – Wald Könyvkiadó, Budapest: 2007.

—by a family member<sup>3</sup> There was deficiency in their rearing: some of them were dressed like girls as being boys, neglected, or had sadistic parents<sup>4</sup>  
Smooth talking, egocentric and grandiose, lack of remorse or guilt, lack of empathy, deceitful and manipulative, shallow emotions, impulsive, poor behaviour controls, need for excitement, lack of responsibility, early behaviour problems and adult antisocial behaviour characterize most of them<sup>5</sup>

## 1.1 The key traits and clustering

According to criminologists, there are five key traits, the most notorious murderers have in common. These range from being egotistical to manipulative and charming. Studies have found a link between damage to the brain's frontal lobe and changes in the amygdala in criminal serial killers. Other psychologists link the behaviour to early childhood abuse or drugs<sup>6</sup>. Serial killers typically have a real affinity with power, even when they've been caught and know the game is up. Intent on exerting some kind of control over the people around them, they often hold back bits of crucial information in a bid to maintain power over the situation, gain attention and assert a warped sense of authority. Power junkie, a manipulator, an egotistical bragger, a superficial charmer, an average Joe can also characterize them. Apparent vulnerability, and the need to please have been used effectively time and time again by serial killers as a way of hiding a sinister personality. Some of the world's best known serial killers have a frightening ability to manipulate those around them, pressing the right buttons in order to present themselves in a false light.

Serial killers are also often able to manipulate a situation in order to pass the blame for their actions, using hot-button issues of the day or medical psychological research to try to explain their actions. Doctor **Harold Shipman**, for example, used his position as a medical expert to manipulate his patients into treatments that ultimately killed them while posing as a caring member of society. Jeffrey Dahmer also referred to carrying out a medical experiment on human beings, while injecting their skulls.

Other experts have found out some common traits of serial killers. These traits help the police identify their possible suspects. These typical serial killer characteristics are as follows: They are found to be intelligent and have above average intelligence. Most of the serial killers are found to have families and steady jobs. Some have trouble keeping a job and generally carry out menial jobs. These killers are often from divorced families where the father has left the mother. They are bought up by their mothers who have domineering personalities. They often come from families with a criminal, psychiatric or alcoholic background. These children are often abused emotionally, sexually and physically, especially by a close family member or

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<sup>3</sup> Kováts D: Az egyéni agressziótól a terrorizmusig In: *Csernyikné Póth Ágnes, Fogarasi Mihály (szerk.) Kriminálpszichológia*. Budapest: Rejtjel Kiadó, 2006.

<sup>4</sup> Douglas. J.E. *Mindhunter: Inside the FBI's Elite Serial Crime Unit*. Kindle Edition:1998.

<sup>5</sup> Rosewood J: *The Big Book of Serial Killers: 150 Serial Killer Files of the World's Worst Murderers (An Encyclopedia of Serial Killers)* 2017.

<sup>6</sup> Kováts D: Szenvédélybetegségek és a háttérben álló pszichológiai hatások In: *Csernyikné Póth Ágnes, Fogarasi Mihály (szerk.) Kriminálpszichológia*. 287 p. Budapest: Rejtjel Kiadó, 2006.

acquaintance<sup>7</sup>. There is a high rate of suicide attempts among the serial killers. These serial killers have found to be interested in voyeurism, sadomasochism, and fetishism since an early age. It has been found that 60% of the serial killers wet their beds even after they reached the age of 12. Many have been fascinated and involved with torturing animals or setting fires. Most of them were bullied as children and some were involved in cases of petty crimes like theft, vandalism, etc.

As you can see, the psychological characteristics of a serial killer are based on any form of sexual or emotional abuse in childhood. These serial killers try to enact and replay their victimization and behave as the aggressor. Sometimes, the physical characteristic of the serial killer causes him to murder. Any form of disability or physical characteristics like bow legs, stammering, short stature, etc. that causes them to be bullied in childhood. This makes them vengeful and they seek revenge from people, they suppose are better looking or better able than they are. One can never say what makes a serial killer a killer. But, these traits help narrow down possible suspects.

Other researchers theorise that damage to the frontal lobe, the hypothalamus and the limbic system can cause extreme aggression, loss of control, and poor judgment<sup>8</sup>. Henry Lee Lucas, a serial killer was found to have extreme brain damage in these regions. The brain study at the University of Wisconsin, Madison also noticed a drop in connectivity between the amygdala and the ventromedial prefrontal cortex (vmPFC). These regions process negative stimuli into negative emotions and responses.

When connectivity is low, people have lower levels of empathy and aren't easily ashamed by their actions.

Some serial killers have been diagnosed by psychologists as psychopaths, suffering from an antisocial personality disorder (ASPD)<sup>9</sup>. This makes them unlikely to conform to social norms, irritable and aggressive and lack of remorse. Brain scans of rapist and serial killer Brian Dugan showed a lack of activity in the regions associated with empathy and remorse. Others have been diagnosed as psychotic.

Serial killers are typically classified in two ways - one based on motive, the other on organisational and social patterns. The motive method is called Holmes typology, for Ronald M. and Stephen T. Holmes, authors of textbooks on serial murder and violent crime. The FBI explained that not every serial killer falls into a single type, and these classifications don't explain what leads someone to become a serial killer. However, according to Holmes typology, serial killers can be *act-focused*, and kill quickly, or *process-focused*, and kill slowly. For act-focused killers, killing is about the act itself. *Visionary murders* in this group hear voices or has visions that direct him to do so, while *Missionary murders* believe they are

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<sup>7</sup> Farkas J. Psychological Assessment of Children by Forensic Experts. In: *Homoki-Nagy Mária - Hajdú József (eds.) Ünnepi kötet dr. Zakar András c. egyetemi tanár 70. születésnapjára*. Szeged: Szegedi Tudományegyetem Állam- és Jogtudományi Kar, 2017.a. pp. 55-64.

<sup>8</sup> Kováts D: Elmebetegségek és személyiségzavarok a bűncselekmények hátterében - Igazságügyi pszichiátria In: *Csernyikné Póth Ágnes, Fogarasi Mihály (szerk.) Kriminálpszichológia*. Budapest: Rejtjel Kiadó, 2006.

<sup>9</sup> Kováts D: Elmebetegségek és személyiségzavarok a bűncselekmények hátterében - Igazságügyi pszichiátria In: *Csernyikné Póth Ágnes, Fogarasi Mihály (szerk.) Kriminálpszichológia*. Budapest: Rejtjel Kiadó, 2006.

meant to get rid of a particular group of people. Alternatively, process-focused serial killers get enjoyment from torture and the death of their victims. *Lust killers* derive sexual pleasure from killing, *Thrill killers* get a 'thrill' from it and *Gain killers* murder because they believe they will profit in some way. *Power killers* wish to be in charge of life and death. Psychologists divide serial killers up into categories. There are killers who are "act-focused" — these people typically kill because they feel like they're on some kind of crusade, for example, "to rid the world of prostitutes." Killers who are "process-focused" are the more sadistic variety. They enjoy watching people suffer, so they usually torture their victims before killing them. Power killers can be said to have a sort of god complex. They kill slowly because the ability to decide how and when their victims will die makes them feel empowered. Most killers who sexually assault their victims aren't motivated by lust, they're motivated by the feeling of power they get from the act.

The FBI explained: "*Psychopathy* is a personality disorder manifested in people who use a mixture of charm, manipulation, intimidation, and occasionally violence to control others, in order to satisfy their own selfish needs. "*Psychotic*: By comparison, psychosis is when a person loses sense of reality<sup>10</sup>. The conditions share certain traits, but typically psychopaths are manipulative and know right from wrong, while psychotics suffer from delusions. Bodysnatcher **Ed Gein** believed he needed the parts of the woman he killed in order to become a woman himself. Nicholas Salvador, 25, was put on trial for beheading a woman he believed was 'Hitler back from the dead'. He was suffering from *paranoid schizophrenia* at the time. Although not a serial killer, this highlights the differences in the types of killers. However, all of these findings fail to reveal why other people with similar brain abnormalities or personality traits aren't serial killers. Furthermore, the cause of this brain damage is also not known or confirmed. As the FBI concluded: 'The relationship between psychopathy and serial killers is particularly interesting.' All psychopaths do not become serial murderers. Rather, serial murderers may possess some or many of the traits consistent with psychopathy. 'Psychopaths who commit serial murder do not value human life and are extremely callous in their interactions with their victims. 'This is particularly evident in sexually motivated serial killers who repeatedly target, stalk, assault, and kill without a sense of remorse. However, psychopathy alone does not explain the motivations of a serial killer.'

Considering psychopathy or antisocial personality a psychopath is born that way — the impulse control and emotional centers of his or her brain are underdeveloped. By contrast, antisocial personalities are learned, and usually develop during an abusive or neglected childhood. Now, this does not mean serial killers are insane, which is why the "not-guilty by reason of insanity" defence rarely works for a serial killer. Serial killers know very well the difference between right and wrong, they just don't care. Also called "sociopaths," people with antisocial personality disorder "show no regard for right and wrong" and often possess

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<sup>10</sup> Kováts D: Az egyéni agressziótól a terrorizmusig In: *Csernyikné Póth Ágnes, Fogarasi Mihály (szerk.) Kriminálpszichológia*. Budapest: Rejtjel Kiadó, 2006

other qualities that are common to serial murderers, such as a lack of remorse, callous or manipulative behaviour, and impulsivity. But it's also important to note that sociopaths are not all killers — in fact the vast majority of them are not.

## 1.2.The core classification

Serial killers can be clustered in diverse groups, one of which is the **organized one**, whose characteristic features are the following:

- Single, white males are the perpetrators
- Employment difficulties
- Unstable family history
- Often abandoned by their fathers and raised by their mothers
- Criminal, psychiatric and alcoholic histories
- Abuse histories
- High rates of suicide attempts
- Interested in voyeurism, fetishism and sadomasochistic pornography
- Have a history of inappropriate bed wetting
- Fascinated with fires
- Sadistic activity/torturing small animals
- Above average intelligence
- Methodological
- Lure victims, sometimes by pretext, inspire confidence, adapt well
- Maintain control over the crime scene
- Follow their crimes in the media
- Usually socially adequate, sometimes having a spouse and children
- They commit thoroughly elaborated crime
- Vanish the incriminating evidence
- When being captured, the acquaintances characterize them, as being peaceful
- Exert not to be caught, mislead the authorities, and incriminate someone else (fake suicide note)
- Not always act in the heat of the moment
- React appropriately in unexpected situation
- Improves his method of perpetration
- Keeps some of the personal properties of the victim as a trophy, in order to recall the phases of the commitment
- They love to prolong the pain and suffering of their victims
- They will imagine killing their victims and get pleasure out of it
- They are actually premeditated crimes
- Organized killers take all precautions before killing their victim
- They are so confident that they are ready to be interviewed by the police without fear.

The traits of the **disorganized** ones are as follows:

- Low IQ
- Impulsive
- Murder when the opportunity arises
- Rarely dispose of the body, usually leaving the body where they found it.

- Introverted, lack of friends, withdrawn, lonely, little interest in hobbies and social interactions
- Lack of premeditation
- Do not specialize in a certain victim type
- Pounce on the victim, without any warning
- After the death of the victim, they make rituals (maiming, cannibalism, necrophilia)
- They are in motion all the time, therefore they easily avoid being captured
- Seem weird and odd to acquaintances
- Not aware of the consequences of the murder, sometimes, they have murky memories about the victims
- Sexually perverted
- Feel anxiety during the crime
- Make mistakes during the perpetration
- Deform the corpses
- They often live alone and have poor or moderate social skills.
- These people often have problems dating or never date.
- Unorganized serial killers are generally high school drop-outs and have really poor hygiene<sup>11</sup>.

In some cases the organized features turn into disorganized ones, as the number of the murders increases. In the beginning, they act cautiously, yet, as soon as their compulsive behaviour overcomes them, they become careless and impulsive.

Criminal investigator Stephen J. Giannangelo calls the "calm, purposeful behavior" of a serial killer "predatory aggression," comparing it to the aggressive behavior of carnivores. Predatory animals kill to satisfy a need, so there isn't any rage behind the action. In other words, a serial killer kills because he thinks he needs to, while other killers may kill because they are provoked<sup>12</sup>. A person who has a "predatory aggressive personality" believes other people are inferior, which makes it easy for him to justify hurting or preying on others. Serial killers don't have normal human empathy, but they're very good at pretending like they do. Serial killers are manipulative, but they're also very good at making sure you don't know you're being manipulated.

People who commit serial crimes, especially serial rape and murder, often do it because they're trying to feel something. This is called "sensation seeking" behaviour. There may be a genetic component to it. A 1997 study that looked at the behavior patterns of twins raised in separate households found that both sensation-seeking behavior and impulsivity were not matters of nurture, but of nature. In other words, it's a quality that many serial killers are born with.

Children who are shamed or humiliated or are punished disproportionately can develop a propensity for cruelty as a direct result of that abuse<sup>13</sup>. Neglect, too, is a big factor because when children don't experience empathy from a parent or caregiver, they sometimes don't

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<sup>11</sup> Ürmösné S.G: Technical English for Officers. Dialóg Campus Kiadó, Budapest: 2018.

<sup>12</sup> Giannangelo S.J: Real-Life Monsters: A Psychological Examination of the Serial Murderer. 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Farkas J: A kötődés szerepe és jelentősége a személyiségfejlődésben. Határrendészeti Tanulmányok 14. (3.) pp. 97-117. 2017:b

develop the ability to empathize with others. Kids who come from unstable homes — moving frequently, being shuttled between foster homes, etc. — may feel like they have no control over their lives, and as a double whammy also don't have time to develop real relationships with their peers. So not only do they have control issues, they also have deficiencies in empathy simply because they have so few friendships with which to learn and develop the sense of empathy that all normal human beings possess. Lack of empathy combined with a pathological need to control others is a deadly combination.

Serial killers almost always lack remorse. Most of the time, though, lack of remorse is directly related to a killer's lack of empathy. If you're unable to empathize with someone who is afraid or in pain, you aren't going to feel much (if any) remorse about ending that person's life. Serial killers in particular are often described as emotionally vacant and incapable of forming meaningful personal relationships.

Psychopathic killers in particular tend to have a grandiose sense of their own self-worth, so investigators can use praise to get them talking. Interviewers might praise them for their intelligence or for their skill at outwitting investigators. Children are inherently narcissistic and must be taught the rules of social behavior, but when children grow up physically but remain in a state of immaturity, they can become extremely dangerous people.

Serial killers, on the other hand, might also have addictive personalities, but when those addictive personalities are combined with qualities like narcissism, emotional emptiness, and an inability to feel remorse, it's not hard to guess what that might lead to. **Ted Bundy** displayed these characteristics when stalking and killing his victims, and was known to have turned to drugs and alcohol in prison once he no longer had the ability to engage in murder. Other killers, like **Israel Keyes**, have also been described as "addicted to murder".

## **2. Some of the most notorious ones from diachronic aspect**

**Gilles de Rais**, born in 1404, is the "predecessor" to the modern serial killers. Rais was a military captain, which was led by St. Joan of Arc, who shortly after began his killing spree. He was accused of 80 to 200 cases of torture, rape, and murder. Although some historians believe that his crime had risen till 600 cases (as most of the bodies were either buried or burned with all their belongings). These victims used to range from 6 to 18, including both sexes. However, Rais generally used to prefer boys, but would settle for young girls if circumstances called for it. Rais would lure young boys who had blonde hair and blue eyes to his residence. There, his victims were raped, tortured, and mutilated. One of Rais' servants, Henriette, would aid him as his accomplice in collecting the young boys and witnessing the massacre as well. Rais would often take a bath in his victims' blood and other times watch and take pleasure as Henriette tortured them.

**Vlad Drakul (Tepes):** (1431-1476) In his childhood, he used to be a political refugee at the Turkish sultan, where he kept tab many ways of torture. During his subsequent reign of 1456, the nightmare began. He impaled, stripped skin off, cooked, baked, burnt, hung, beheaded and

disembowled men, buried them alive, or nailed them up. He reigned with special cruelty and psychopath elements. People were so much afraid of him, that even golden mugs were placed on squares, and no one dared to steal them. He invited peasants for a feast in a stable where he locked them and set it on fire.

**Erzsébet Báthori** (1560-1614) was so vain, that she broke all the mirrors in her castle, and obsessively wanted to preserve her youth and rosy skin, in the medieval ages. When her younger noble lover left her, she punched her servant so hard, that her blood splashed on her, and then she noticed the „blessing” effect of the blood on her skin. From that point, the amok started, and she began to torture several virgins, and hung them on the ceiling, so that they would bleed to death. She was bathing in their blood, and drank from it, to rejuvenate herself. No one knows, whether she was locked in her castle for political reasons (her wealth and high treason) or as a punishment for her massacre.

**Jack the ripper a.k.a Whitechapel Murder** (1888) slit the throat of the prostitutes of East-End, and he removed their inner organs with the preciseness of a surgeon. The name came into being because the victims had organs missing and judging by procedure the killer seemed to have surgical experience. Jack the Ripper who was later believed to be a single person killed female prostitutes in the slums of London between 1888-91. His last murder was committed in his house, where he removed all the inner organs of his victim, and put them around the dead body, while the music was on. He has never been caught, and everybody was suspicious at that time: he was said to be a policeman, crazy doctor, Russian secret agent, lunatic midwife, even, the oldest grandson of Queen Victoria. In 2014, with the help of DNA sample, a 23 year old Polish immigrant barber, was said to have committed the atrocities, according to DNA analysis, extracted from a silk shawl, as a forensic evidence, allegedly found in the crime scene. Dr. Louhelainen managed to extract 7 incomplete fragments of DNA, and tried to match their sequences with the DNA from the living descendants. He insists on his revelation, while others are still sceptical about the result<sup>14</sup>.

**Jesse Pomeroy** (1859-1932) was the youngest serial killer in American history. A great number of boys were arrested on suspicion of killing the son of Mrs. Paine, of Chelsea, a suburb of Boston, little Tracy Hayden, Johnny Balch, Harry Austin, George Pratt and other children, but were discharged subsequently. Finally suspicion fell upon a boy named Jesse Pomeroy, a twelve-year-old youth who lived with his widowed mother, a poor dressmaker, on Broadway Street, South Boston. He was positively identified by several of the children he had tortured, and as it was proven beyond all doubt that he was the much-sought youths he was sentenced to serve the remainder of his minority at the West Borough Reform School. According to the custom, if the boys confined at this school were exemplary in their behaviour and the authorities felt confident that the good conduct would continue after their release, they were often released on probation, providing they had a good home to go to. Unfortunately this was done in Pomeroy's case on February 6, 1874. On April 22, 1874, the body of a four-year-old boy named Horace Mullen was found in a marsh near Dorchester, a

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<sup>14</sup> Ürmösné S G: The traits and the thrill of serial killers. Internal Security. 2015

suburb of Boston<sup>15</sup>. The body was horribly mutilated, the head being nearly severed from the body, upon which there were thirty-one knife wounds. From this point, there was no excuse for Pomeroy, no matter, that previously, mainly adults had been accused of these child murders. An examination was then made, and it was found that Pomeroy was perfectly sane, but was naturally a fiend and derived pleasure from torturing others. Pomeroy's sentence was commuted to life in prison in solitary confinement. He was 16 years and 9 months old. Pomeroy remained incarcerated at the Charlestown State Prison. Pomeroy had made 10 or 12 "determined attempts" to escape, and that handmade tools were frequently found in his possession. A prison warden reported finding rope, steel pens and a drill that Pomeroy had concealed in his cell or on his person. In prison, Pomeroy claimed that he taught himself to read several foreign languages, including Arabic, and one visiting psychiatrist found that he had learned German with "considerable accuracy." He wrote poetry and argued with prison officials over his right to have it published, and he studied law books and spent decades composing legal challenges to his conviction and requests for a pardon<sup>16</sup>.

**John George Haigh the Acid Bath Murderer** (1909-1949) lured his victims into his workshop, where he struck them down by an axe, dismembered them, and vanished the incriminating evidence by acid. He kept on corresponding with the victims' parents, and requested money in the name of the dead person. When he ran out of money, he killed again. His eager helpfulness and some teeth which couldn't be dissolved, revealed him. Sometimes he preserved some properties from his victims, and from curiosity he tasted his victims' blood, and while the acid was dissolving the body parts, he was enjoying his tea in the nearby teahouse. John George Haigh operated during the 1940s. He was convicted for the murders of 6 people, although he claimed to have killed 9. He was a professional conman, who lured wealthy people by charm and deceit, into to a warehouse where he shot them. Later he would dissolve their bodies in sulphuric acid then forge papers to sell their possessions and collect their life savings. He was sentenced to death and hung in 1949.

**Henry Lee Lucas** was born August 23, 1936 to an alcoholic couple. His mother would occasionally work as the neighborhood prostitute to run the house while his father (who had no legs due to a freight train accident) would drown himself in alcohol all day. The Lucas family had 9 children, out of which some were given away to relatives, foster homes, and certain institutions. After his father's death (fatal case of pneumonia), Henry would always be subject to his mother's cruelty and beatings. After striking his mother with a knife, 5 days later he was arrested and boasted about raping his mother's corpse. Henry also had an accomplice, Otis Toole, who participated in over 100 murders with him.

**Aileen Wournos The Monster**, while working as a prostitute, Aileen killed seven men in Florida for their money and confessed to shooting them, claiming all of them had either raped

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<sup>15</sup> Duke T.A:Celebrated Criminal Cases of America. San Francisco:1910

<sup>16</sup> Duke T.A:Celebrated Criminal Cases of America. San Francisco:1910

or attempted to rape her. Her parents separated before her birth, and her father later spent time in mental hospitals for child molestation. When Wuornos was four years old, she and her brother were sent to live with her grandparents. In her early teens she spent time at a home for unwed mothers and then dropped out of school and turned to prostitution. She subsequently was arrested numerous times on charges that included armed robbery, check forgery, and auto theft. She may have killed an eighth motorist in the same period. Arrested in early 1991, she admitted to the killings but claimed that she acted in self-defence after the men assaulted her. She later pleaded guilty to three more of the murders and admitted that she had killed for profit and not in self-defence. She died in 1992 by lethal injection.

**Tsutomu Miyazaki: The Human Dracula** got more names due to his hideous acts. Some of them were The Otaku Murderer, The Little Girl Murderer or Dracula Miyazaki. The reason for this being that he abducted little girls, killed them and indulged in sexual activities with their corpses. On one occasion, he not only drank the victim's blood but ate her hand as well. He also preserved body parts as trophies and sent postcards to the families describing the murder. His father committed suicide and Miyazaki was hung in 2008, aged 45.

**Luis Garavito Le bestia:** the Colombian is probably one of the world's worst serial killers. He confessed to the torture, rape and murder of 147 young boys. But the number is believed to be over 300. He was found guilty on 139 counts, which should amount to 1,853 years in prison. But Columbian law limits it to 30, which is what he was sentenced to in 1999. He may be released earlier for cooperation and good behaviour.

**Alexander Pichushkin:** The Chessboard Killer was also known as the 'Bitsa Park Maniac'. His targets were homeless men whom he lured to his house with vodka. He is believed to have killed 49 people, most of them with repeated hammer blows to their heads and inserted a vodka bottle into the gaping skull wound. He initially said he wanted to complete the number of squares on a chessboard and kill 64 people. Also, it is believed that he was in competition with another Russian serial killer, **Andrei Chikatilo**, who was convicted in 1992 for 53 killings. It was the very same year Alexander started killing.

**Dennis Raider the BTK Murderer,** murdered 10 people in Wichita, Kansas. He even sent letters to police taunting them under his alias name BTK which stood for 'Bind, Torture, Kill'. His technique was to stalk his victims before breaking into their homes, binding their limbs and finally strangling them. He disappeared in 1988, but remerged in around 2005 when he sent a floppy disc to the press which helped in tracing him. Rader confessed to his crimes and is serving 10 consecutive life sentences with the earliest release date possible on February 26, 2180. He sent sixteen written communications to the news media over a thirty-year period, taunting the police and the public. He was married with two children, was a Boy Scout leader, served honorably in the U.S. Air Force, was employed as a local government official, and was president of his church.

**Paul Knowles the Casanova Killer** used his charm into making victims believe him and later killed them. He killed a total of 18 people, although the count might be more. His victims included men, women and children. The man from Florida was eventually killed by an FBI agent in 1974 when he was trying to escape.

**Pedro Rodriguez Filho:** The Brazilian Maniac Pedro was convicted in 2003 for the murder of at least 71 people and was then sentenced to 128 years imprisonment. He was only 14

when he committed his first killing. He wreaked havoc on local drug dealers, in revenge for his girlfriend's killing while he was imprisoned. In prison, he even executed his own father, who was also serving time for murder. Filho went onto kill at least 47 inmates while imprisoned. His continued killings have led to his sentence to be increased to 400 years imprisonment.

There are more of other notorious serial killers in the world such as *Henry Howard Holmes*, *John Wayne Gacy*, *Theodore Robert Bundy*, *the Zodiac killer*, *Ed Gain*, *Andrej Romanovics Chikatilo*, *Pedro Lopez*, *Albert Fish*, *Jeffrey Dahmer*, *Gary Ridgway* etc. who were itemized in my previous study on derail killers<sup>17</sup>

### **3. Conclusion**

As we could see, personality disorders, exhibiting predatory behaviour, being manipulative, possessing sensation-seeking' behaviour, childhood abuse, having a need for control, not showing remorse, trying to fill an emotional void, enjoying having power over others, being vain and narcissistic, having addictive personalities can all contribute to becoming a serial killer. There is a physical, psychological as well as moral barrier that prevents us from turning into animals. However, there are individuals who have trouble controlling these wild urges. Many were bullied as children and some were involved in cases of petty crimes like theft, vandalism. Any form of disability or physical characteristics that cause them to be bullied in childhood could be a stimulating factor. This makes them vengeful and they seek revenge from people, they suppose are better looking or better able than they are.

The FBI says there are between 25 and 50 active serial killers in the United States at any given time. Although they are considered monsters, family history, genes, damage to the frontal lobe, and the size of the amygdala and hormones could be contributing factors to their behaviour. No one is said to be born a monster according to experts. Childhood trauma, upbringing and the environmental circumstances contribute to a great extent to become a serial killer. As a consequence, all of us are responsible for how we treat our companions.

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<sup>17</sup> Ürmösné S. G: The traits and the thrill of serial killers. Internal Security. 2015.

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