

Homicidal Offenders Chapter 15

Homicidal Offenders

Nature and Extent of Homicidal Violence

- Canadian Criminal Law recognizes four different types of homicide; First-degree murder, second-degree murder, manslaughter, and infanticide.
- Infanticide = 5 years in prison maximum, First and second degree murder, and manslaughter = Maximum imprisonment of 25 years with no chance of parole.
- First degree murder includes all murder that is planned and deliberate. Also includes the murder of a law enforcement officer, or a murder occurring during the commission of another violent offence regardless of whether that murder was planned or deliberate.
- All that is not considered first degree murder is classified as second degree murder .
- Manslaughter is unintentional murder that occurs during the "heat of passion" or because of criminal negligence. Heat of passion = infidelity resulting death. Criminal negligent manslaughter = Drunk driving resulting in death.
- In Canada homicide represents less than 1% of all crimes.
- Canada experience a rise in gang-related homicidal offences from 1990-2010, recently levelling off. 95 gang related homicides were reported in 2010 and 2011.
- In 2011 cutting instruments were used in 35% of homicides being the #1 weapon of choice. 27% of homicides involved guns in 2011. Manitoba had the highest homicide rate in Canada.
- 90% of people accused of homicide were males, majority were relatively young commonly between the ages of 18 and 24. Young males are most likely to be the victims of homicide.
- The majority of homicides are by people the victim knew. Strangers accounted for 15% of homicides. Of the 15% of stranger homicides, 34% were related to drug trafficking.
- The rate of family homicide has been on a steady decline.

Bimodal Classification of Homicide

Bimodal classification is a system that has become very popular and is used to characterize homicidal aggression in a bimodal manner.

Reactive(affective) Aggression: Defined as impulsive, unplanned, immediate, driven by negative emotions and occurring in response to some perceived provocation. More often among relatives.

Instrumental (predatory) Aggression: Defined as proactive rather than reactive, and is a premeditated, calculated behaviour, motivated by some goal. This goal could be to obtain money, power, control, or sadistic gratification. Most often among strangers.

- In a large scale U.S study 85% of homicides were Reactive and 20% were instrumental. In this study the victim offender relationship was divided into 3 categories. Strangers, acquaintances, and family members/intimates.

- 55% involved acquaintances and 80% of those were reactive in nature. Family members accounted for 28% and 93% were reactive in nature. 17% were victims of strangers with 52% of these being reactive. ^

Filicide: When Parents Kill

- The term filicide refers to the killing of children by their biological parents or step-parents. It also includes neonaticide—killing of a baby within 24 hr of birth, and infanticide—killing of a baby within the first year of life.

-Compared to youth, infants are at higher risk of being murdered by their parents. 98% of infanticides were the results of parents.

Mothers who kill

-Stanton and Simpson reviewed the motives of why a mother would kill her own child and concluded there are 3 types of maternal filicides: 1) neonaticide, 2)victims of battering mothers, 3)victims of mothers with mental illnesses.

-Neonaticide typology: typically young, unmarried women with no prior history of mental illness, not suicidal, have concealed pregnancy fearing families reaction.

- Battering mother typology: Have killed their children impulsively in response to behaviour of the child. These mothers have the highest rates of social and family stress including marital stress, and financial problems.

- Mental disorder typology: Tend to be older and married. They are likely to have killed older children or have multiple victims and be diagnosed with psychosis or depression. They are also the group most likely to commit suicide after the murder.

Infanticide and Mental Illness overlap

Three types of mental illnesses have been identified during the postpartum period.

Postpartum blues: Experience by 85% of women, includes crying, irritability and anxiety. Lasting from a few hours and rarely continuing past 12 days.

Postpartum Depression: Experienced by 7%-19% of women. Occurs within first few weeks to several months.

Postpartum Psychosis: The most severe and rare type of mental illness that has been associated with child birth is postpartum psychosis (occurring in 1 or 2 of every 1000 births). Usually involves delusions, hallucinations suicidal thought or homicidal thoughts within the first three months after child birth.

Fathers who Kill

- Familicide: Occurs when a spouse and children are killed, it is almost committed by a man.

- Two typologies of familicide murderers have been coined. Despondent non-hostile killer & the hostile accusatory killer.

- *Despondent non-hostile killer*: is depressed and worried about an impending disaster for himself or his family. He kills his family then kills himself. Past familial violence is not a characteristic of this typology

- *The Hostile accusatory killer*: Expresses hostility towards his wife and often related to alleged infidelities or her intentions to terminate the relationship. Past history of violence is common for this type of killer.

Youth who Kill

- In 2011 46 youths between age 12-17 were accused of homicide in Canada, which represents a decline compared to previous years.
- 57% of youths had an accomplice, compared to 31% of adult homicide offenders.
- Youth who kill are more likely to target people they know either intimately(gf) or criminally(dealer).
- A typology classification system was developed by Cornell and Benedek(1987), the types were labelled, psychotic, conflict or crime subgroup.
- Psychotic youth murderers represented 7%, 42% represented the conflict subgroup and 51% represented the crime subgroup.

Spousal Killers

- **Femicide**: is the general term applied to the killing of women.
- *Uxoricide*: More specific term denoting the killing of a wife by her husband. More common than mariticide.
- **Androicide**: Refers to the killing of men.
- *Mariticide*: The term denoting the killing of a husband by his wife.
- The following factors increased the risk for homicide: the offender having access to a gun, previous threats having been made with a weapon, estrangement, and the victim having left for another partner.
- When a man is killed by a woman the perpetrator is often the man's wife.
- Whereas most men kill their wives due to anger or jealousy, research suggests that wives often kill their husbands out of fear for themselves or fear for their children.

Multiple Murderers

- People who commit multiple murders are generally categorized into one of three types: Serial murderers, mass murderers, and spree murderers.

-Serial Murderers: The killing of a minimum of 3 people over time. The time interval between the murders varies and has been called a cooling off period. Subsequent murders occur at different times, having no apparent connection to the initial murder, and are usually committed in different locations.

Characteristics of a Serial Killer

- Most serial killers are male.
- Most serial murderers operate on their own.
- Most serial murderers in the United states are caucasian.
- Victims of serial murderers are usually young females who are not related to the murderer.

Female Serial Murderers

- Most female serial murderers are either “black widows” those who kill for financial gain, or “angels of death” nurses who kill their patients.

Typologies of Serial Murderers

- One typology that focuses on crimes and offenders is the organized-disorganized model proposed by the FBI.
- Holmes and holmes proposed another typology which described four major types of serial murderers: Visionary, mission oriented, hedonistic, power/control oriented. These typologies have been criticized for the overlap among categorization and the lack of empirical testing.

Visionary serial killer: A murderer who kills in response to voices or visions telling them to kill.

Mission-Oriented Serial killer: A murderer who targets individuals from a group that he or she considers to be undesirable. Ex: homeless people, prostitutes etc.

Hedonistic Serial Killer: A murderer who is motivated by self gratification. This killer is divided into three subtypes. Lust, thrill and comfort. Lust= sexual gratification. Thrill= gets excited from hurting others. Comfort= financial gain

Mass Murderers

- **Mass murder:** Defined as the killing of four or more victims at a single location during one event with no cooling off period. Mass murderers are not all motivated by the same reason, but the outcome is always the same.

-Often times they are depressed, angry, frustrated individuals who believe they have not succeeded in life. Often Socially isolated lacking interpersonal skills.

-Mass murderers often plan to commit suicide or get killed by law enforcement officers while in the act.

Theories of Homicidal Aggression

- Three theories that have been particularly influential in the field of forensic Psychology include; social learning theory, evolutionary theory, general aggression model.

-*Social Learning theory:* This theory maintains that aggressive behaviour is learned the same way non aggressive behaviour is learned; through a process of reinforcement. The likelihood of engaging in aggressive behaviour is thought to increase as a function of how rewarding aggressive behaviour has been in an individuals past. Social learning theorists place a great deal of emphasis on rewards that are not experienced directly, but vicariously as a result of observing others. Major sources of influence include; family, friends and mass media. Research has confirmed that observing aggressive behaviour being reinforced in each context can increase the likelihood that the observer will model that aggressive behaviour.

- *Evolutionary theory:* The focus of this theory is on how crime can be thought of as adaptive behaviour, developed as a means for people to survive (and pass on genes). From an evolutionary perspective, homicide as one approach to best competitors who were competing for limited resources, and modern human have simply inherited this strategy from their successful ancestors

- *General Aggression Model (GAM):* The general aggression model is a theory of human aggression in that it integrates a number of domain-specific theories to explain the emergence of all types of aggression. The first component of this model is called INPUTS and refers biological, environmental, psychological and social factors that influence aggression. INPUTS are categorized into person factors (traits, attitudes, genetic predisposition) and situation factors (incentives, provocation, frustration). Accord

Saturday, April 2, 2016

to this model inputs influence behaviour via the internal state they create within an individual. Input variable influence cognitions. These internal states in turn influence behavioural outcomes through a variety of appraisal and decision making process. Some of the outcomes of the decision making processes are impulsive where others are controlled and premeditated in nature.

Treatment of Homicidal Offenders

- Many treatment programs are designed to target some or all of the following factors: anger/emotional management, self regulation/control, problem solving skills, interpersonal skills and social attitudes.

- Research has indicated that the treatment programs that they examined were effective to some extent though the effect wasn't very large

-On the other hand treatment programs the provided empathy training were associated with an effect size of 0.05 in which reoffending increased.