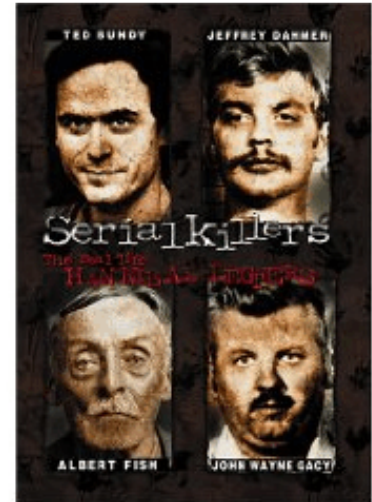


**The University of Western Ontario**  
**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**  
**Sociology 4442 001g: Serial Killers**

Professor: Kim Ashby  
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Class Times: Mondays - 1:30- 4:30pm  
Class Room: 5406 SSC  
Office Hours: Monday 12:00 pm. or by appointment.  
Web Site: <https://owl.uwo.ca>.  
TA:  
TA E-mail:



**Course Description:**

This course will critically examine the social construction of serial murder as a phenomenon that has existed for centuries, but only recently has become a concern of the criminal justice system and the public in general. The goal of the course is to synthesize historical and contemporary analyses of serial murder, assess the impact of the media on public perceptions of serial killing, and to extend our understanding of the etiology of serial murder in contemporary society.

**Prerequisite(s): Sociology 2253A/B and 2266A/B and enrollment in one of the Honours Specializations or Honours Double Majors in Sociology.** Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

**Objectives of the Course:**

This course will undertake to familiarize students with the facts versus the myths of serial murder, to understand serial murder from a sociological framework, to critically analyze media views of serial murder, to evaluate serial killing within a criminological framework, and to contextualize serial murder as a reaction to broader societal fears and concerns.

- Describe and discuss the various components of serial crime, serial criminals and their relationship to each other.
- Discuss theory of serial crime and criminal issues
- Appreciate the psycho-social, cultural, and individual diversity relevant to serial crimes.

## Learning Outcomes:

The successful student will be able to:

- Identify and describe the various components of serial crime.
- Identify, explain and assess the theories of serial crime.
- Explain the psycho-social, cultural and individual diversity relevant to serial crime.
- Analyze in writing, the 'Trauma Control' model, the 'Athens' model, and the Buller-McGinnis model as they apply to a given case study.
- Review the media coverage of a given case and assess the accuracy of the coverage and explain ways in which the media reports fuel or contest myths about serial crimes.
- Synthesize select readings presenting key arguments and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of given perspectives.

**Required text:** (available at the UWO bookstore)

Hickey, Eric W. (2016). Serial Murderers and Their Victims, 7<sup>th</sup> edition: Wadsworth Publishing Company.

**Required readings:** (access Readings on OWL homepage)

## Method of Evaluation

Participation	5%
Reading synopsis	10%
Discussion Leaders	20%
Test (mx choice)	20%
Reaction paper	15%
Research paper	30%

This course has been exempted by the dean's office from University Senate rules requiring assessment of work accounting for 15% of your final grade, prior to the deadline for withdrawal from a course without academic penalty. You will not receive 15% of your grade prior to the deadline to drop the course.

## COURSE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:

With the exception of legitimate medical/personal excuses (documentation required to be submitted) students are expected to attend at least 80% of the class meetings for this course. A passing grade in the course cannot be obtained without meeting this attendance requirement. This class will be a community of learners, so everyone must

be present to learn and to help others learn. Punctual and regular attendance at classes is expected.

### **Participation**

Because this class is run as a seminar, it is essential that students come prepared to participate. Before-class preparation involves carefully reading and considering the assigned readings. Once in class, participation involves questioning and discussing the readings. Your participation grade will be calculated on both the frequency and cogency of your comments. You will find that your grade for this course will be adversely affected if you are absent or habitually unprepared to participate meaningfully in class discussions.

### **Synopsis of Weekly Readings**

Students will write a **one** page synopsis of the weekly articles covered in each lecture's readings. The synopsis of the articles will be turned in at the beginning of the class— it will address a key point, perspective or concept taken by the readings and important to the discussion of serial killers.

### **Discussion Leaders and Reaction Papers**

Two students will undertake to lead the weekly discussions for 2 hours to 2.5 hours. The leader(s) will be expected to give a presentation that will highlight key issues, raise concerns and challenge theoretical positions.

A reaction paper is due for class periods between January 16<sup>th</sup> and April 3<sup>rd</sup>. The paper must be 8-10 pages in length, double-spaced, and typewritten. The paper is worth 15%.

The paper will be graded on the quality of your writing, your ability to show clarity of ideas, and evidence of solid reading comprehension. Lack of proofreading, and grammatical and punctuation errors will result in a reduced grade.

Students can sign-up (a maximum of 2 students) for a set of readings, including Hickey, and must submit a paper on the lecture day as indicated in the reading schedule. Remember, writing a reaction paper is an individual, not collaborative effort. Reaction papers are due at the beginning of class on dates indicated. No late papers or papers submitted elsewhere will ordinarily be accepted.

### **Research Paper**

This formal paper must be 20 pages in length, double-spaced, and typed in 12-point font, with one-inch margins on all sides. Research papers are due by 1:30pm. on Monday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>. They may not be faxed or sent as an e-mail attachment. Late submissions will result in a **5%** reduction per day, past the due date, and will not be accepted after Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup>. Please note that late penalties will not be waived unless relevant medical or other appropriate documentation is provided.

This paper will be divided into 2 sections.

First, each student is to select a serial killer who has been caught, prosecuted and convicted. This section of the term paper will analyze in detail the 'causes' of the serial killer's actions from Eric Hickey's model presented in the required text or the Lonnie Athens model presented in class, and can incorporate the Buller –McGinnis model as explained in the given article. Other relevant theories are to be incorporated into the analysis.

In the second part of the paper, the case will be reviewed in terms of the accuracy and completeness of the media coverage, and address ways in which the media reports fuel or contest myths about serial killers.

Source materials (articles, books) to be used for this term paper can be selected from reputable presses and peer reviewed academic journals; although, there is rarely scholarly articles on specific serial killers. For media information about the case of the serial killer that you selected, please identify in your references.

### **How to Contact Me**

Please feel free to come by during my office hours to discuss any questions you have regarding the course or simply to chat about some issue raised in class. If you e-mail me, I will reply to you within 24-48 hours if you use your UWO account. However, I do not read e-mails on the weekends.

### **Plagiarism**

Students must write their papers and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

### **Plagiarism Checking**

All research papers will be uploaded to the assignment page on the class web site before 1:30pm on Monday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016. These papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)).

### **Policy on Laptops in Class**

The use of laptops is not permitted in class unless such use has been authorized by Professor Luton.

## **Missed Exams and Late Assignments**

Make-up exams will be granted with approved documentation only. If you have a conflict with one of the exam dates, it is your responsibility to discuss it with the Academic Counseling office at least one week before the regularly scheduled exam and provide documentation of the conflict. If approved, you will be allowed to schedule a make-up exam. If you miss an exam date or the due date for an assignment due to illness or for any other unforeseen reason, you must provide notification of and documentation for the reasons for your circumstances to your Academic Counselor within 48 hours. If your problem is medical in nature, you should be seen by your doctor on the date of the exam or on the date the assignment is due. If your Academic Counselor agrees that your reasons are legitimate and are supported by your medical doctor's documentation, you will be allowed to write a makeup exam or hand in your assignment at a later date.

## **Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness**

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at

[www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation:

[http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical\\_accommodation.html](http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html)

## **Accessibility Options:**

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website:

[www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated\\_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html)

## **Scholastic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site:

[www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

## **Mental Health**

Students who are in **emotional/mental distress** should refer to Mental Health@Western ([http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html)) for a complete list of options how to obtain help.

# Course Outline

## Jan. 9: Introduction to the Course

Questions to be addressed:

- What do you know?
- Why are you interested?
- What fuels our interest?
- What will be the class focus?

Film: Dexter; Serial Killers

## Jan. 16: Historical & Cultural Understandings

Questions to be addressed:

- What is the historical and cultural understanding?
- What are the 'elective affinities' between serial killing and modernity?
- What is the relationship between murder, ritualism and cults?
- How has the media influenced the public's notion of evil?

Reading assignments: Serial Murderers and Their Victims: Ch. 2  
The History of Violence: Mega Cases of Serial Murder:  
Fleming. (Sakai Readings)  
Modern Serial Killers: Haggerty. (Readings)

Luton lecture on 'media'

## Jan. 23: Who Are Serial Murderers?

Questions to be addressed:

- What are the myths and facts surrounding serial killers?
- How are serial killers defined?
- What is the distinction between serial murder and spree and mass killing?
- What types of 'Bifurcation' are there and why might it happen?
- What is the most accepted typology?
- What are the differences between types of serial killers?
- What are the issues in a typology?
- What are the research issues?

Reading assignments: Serial Murderers and Their Victims: Ch. 1  
Researching Serial Murder: Hinch (Readings)  
An Empirical Test of Holmes & Holmes Serial Murder  
Typology: Canter et al. (Readings)

## **Jan. 30: The Psychogenetics of Serial Killers**

Questions to be addressed:

- What are the diagnostic possibilities established by the psychiatric community?
- What does it mean to say someone is insane?
- Are serial murderers insane?
- How is the notion of evil related to aggression?
- Are the developmental profiles of violent offenders different?
- What are the various insanity defenses?
- What defense is used in Canada?
- How are female psychopaths different than male psychopaths?
- What is an important 'tool' of a psychopath's?
- What is the difference between 'catathymic' and 'compulsive' murders?

Reading assignments: Serial Murderers and Their Victims: Ch.3  
Bad Boys, Bad Men: Chs. 3 & 9 (on Reserve)  
Sexually Motivated Serial Killers & the Psychology of Aggression and Evil: Knight  
Murderous Minds on Trial: pgs. 315-321 (on Reserve)

Film: "Are You Good or Evil"

## **Feb. 6: Motivations for Killing: Factors Associated With Serial Murder**

Questions to be addressed:

- Are there natural born killers?
- Are killers made from their family environment?
- Can we blame our mothers for every behavioral and personality flaw we have as adults? What about fathers?
- What are the components of the Myers and Kirby typologies?
- What is the MacDonald Triad?
- What is "soul murder" and how does it relate to adult offending?
- What is the Trauma-Control model?
- What are the commonalities of serial killers according to the Buller-McGinnis model?

Reading assignments: Serial Murderers and Their Victims: Ch. 4  
Applying Social Learning Theory to Childhood & Adolescent Firesetting: Singer et. al. (Readings)  
From Animal Cruelty to Serial Murder: Wright et. al. (Readings)  
Serial Killers with Military Experience: Castle et. al. (Readings)  
Buller-McGinnis Model of Serial Homicidal Behaviour: Weatheby et al.

**Feb. 13: Motivations for Killing: More Factors Associated With Serial Murder**

Questions to be addressed:

Are killers made from the social, economic, political, and cultural environment in which they live?

Reading assignments: The Incidence of Child Abuse in Serial Killers: Mitchell et. al. (Readings)  
Fractured Identity Syndrome: Holmes et. al. (Readings)  
Violentization Theory; L. Athens essay (Readings)  
A New Paradigm for Understanding Violence: O'Donnell (Readings)  
Male Serial Homicide; Influence of Cultural and Structural Variables: DeFronzo et al. (Readings)

**Feb. 20: No classes – Reading Week**

**Feb. 27: Serial Murder Typologies: Sexual Predators**

Questions to be addressed:

Are all serial murderers alike?  
If not, what makes one serial murderer different from others?  
How are female sex predators different?  
What is a 'lust killer'?  
What are paraphilia?  
What is at the core of fantasy?  
How can deviant sexual acts be part of a killing process but not the actual reasons for killing?  
Is it anger, power and control or sexual pleasure that motivates serial sexual killers?  
What are the components of the Integrated Theory that explain sexual murderers?

Reading assignments: Serial Murderers and Their Victims: Ch. 5  
Serial & Mass Murder: Skrapec article: p. 155 (E-book)  
What Propels Sexual Murderers: Chan et.al.  
The Motivation Behind Serial Sexual Homicide: Myers et al.  
Defining Serial Murder: A Call for a Return to Original Lustmord: Skrapec (Readings)

Film: Dahmer, Gacy,



**Mar. 6: Serial Murder Typologies: Male Serialists**

Questions to be addressed:

- What are the new trends in serial killing?
- Explain the lack of awareness of black serial killers?
- What is a 'lot lizard'?
- What are the different types of stalking?
- Why does the media ignore some victims?
- How might victims facilitate their demise by male offenders?

Reading assignments: Serial Murderers and Their Victims: Ch. 7  
Critical Characteristics of Male Serial Murderers: Arndt et. al.  
(Readings)  
African Americans and Serial Killing in the Media: Walsh  
(Readings)  
Traveling Serial Murderers: McClellan  
Re-Conceptualizing "Cooling-Off periods" in Serial Homicide:  
Osborne et. al. (Readings)

**Mar. 13: Serial Murder Typologies: Female Serial Killers**

Questions to be addressed:

- Who are they?
- What is the public's view of female serial murder?
- Why do we focus on the psychopathology of female offenders?
- How are they different from male serial killers?
- What is the relationship between the women's liberation movement and the increase in serious crimes by women?

Reading assignments: Serial Murderers and Their Victims: Ch. 9  
Female Serial Murderers: Gurian  
Feminist Perspectives on Serial Murder: Cluff et. al. (Readings)  
Serial Murder & the Case of Aileen Wuornos: Arrigo et. al.  
(Readings)  
The Role of Psychopathy & Sexuality in a Female Serial Killer:  
Myers et al.

**Mar. 20: Serial Murder Typologies: Healthcare & Team Killers**

Questions to be addressed:

- What factors trigger an investigation into a health-care setting?
- Who are team killers?
- Who are the masterminds in a killer team?
- Who are the victims?
- What is an 'angel of death'?
- How might doctors justify the violation of the ethical directive, "Do no harm"?
- What are the differences between male and female healthcare killers?
- How is the pathology of the team-offender relationship symbiotic?
- Do you agree with the FBI's conclusion that females who take part in team killings are a result of "straightforward male coercion"?

Reading assignments: Serial Murderers and Their Victims: Ch. 6 & 8  
Serial Murder by Healthcare Professionals: Yorker et al.

**Guest:** Karen Arney, OPP Behavioral Sciences

**Friday, Mar. 24: Multiple-choice Test** - Hickey: Ch: 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9 (Up to 90 mins.) Time & place TBA

**Mar. 27: Tracking and Apprehending the Serial Killer**

Questions to be addressed:

- How is serial murder defined or viewed differently in other countries?
- Why are serial murderers so difficult to apprehend?
- How are profiles constructed to aid in apprehension?
- What are the different types of Investigative profiling?
- How are murder scenes analyzed and investigated to aid in constructing the profile of the murderer?
- What factors aid in the apprehension of serial killers?
- What are the root stressors in Serial murder?
- What are the different developmental characteristics of South African serial killers compared to North American killers?
- What factor(s) might explain this difference?

Reading assignments: Serial Murderers and Their Victims: Ch. 11 & 12 (to p.426)  
Serial Murder: Patterns in Unsolved Cases: Mott (Readings)  
Serial and Mass Murder: Rossmo article: p. 133 (E-book)

Lessons From Serial Murder in South Africa: Hodgskiss  
The Utilization of Forensic Science & Criminal Profiling for  
Capturing Serial Killers: White et al.

**Apr. 3: Issues of Incarceration, Treatment, and Rehabilitation...And What About the Victims?**

Questions to be addressed:

- Why prostitutes are considered the 'less-dead'?
- What is the connection of prostitutes to victim facilitation?
- Can the formation of a serial murderer be prevented?
- Are serial killers able to be rehabilitated?
- What is the serial killer's impact on society?
- What is "gaming," and how does it affect an interviewer's ability to collect authentic information?
- What are the critical factors in conducting interviews with psychopaths?
- What is Dr. Skrapec's challenge of traditional methods of inquiry into the motivations for serial murder?

Reading assignments: Serial Murderers and their Victims: Ch. 10 & pg. 426 -446  
Phenomenology & Serial Murder: Asking Different Questions:  
Skrapec (Readings)  
Prostitutes As Victims of Serial Homicide: Quinet

**Guest:** Elaine Doe - Victim/Survivor of "Mad Slasher": The "Less-Dead"

Paper: Uploaded to Turnitin.com and physical copy handed into class at 1:30pm.