

**“Killing: A Naturalistic Human Process” in the “Hunt” for the Serial Killer:**

(An Excerpt from Research by Randy Gonzalez, A Book entitled: *Murder Mindset: Cryptic Motivations in the Serialized Killings Of Multi-Murderers*)

Seemingly, and perhaps closer to the humanistic truth, is the inclination for human temperament to desire the killing others. For sport, profit or eradication of competition, humans have a penchant for gaining a proximity to death. As a recreation, tracking the chase of quarry is a significant recreational activity. In the U.S., on federally sanctioned lands, each year, over 200 million animals are hunted and killed. For the vast majority of people, hunting in post-modern times is seldom a necessity of survival. But, the stalking, searching out, pursuing the prey, appears as a means to vent the desire to kill. Most of us don't hunt. Many control their want for the hunt. As in other endeavors, personal projections find alternative resources to sublimate the projection of prurient passions. Connectivity finds relationships in the systematic linkage between causal intentions and subsequent effects. By extension though, what if we propose a correlation between the bonding of the “hunt” of animals to the murder of humans? However, none of this, of course, means a person is cursed by heritage, family origins or other historic precedents. Instead, the subjective notion asserts a continuity of freewill considerations.<sup>1</sup>

As in previously cited works, consider a linkage between evolutionary processes and human interaction with other humans today. Survival has been replaced by recreation. Is there an historic unity between “hunting gathering” ancestry and modern types of alternatives to killing? Communal consensus in coexistence versus exploitation for environmental endurance. In other words, as most of us find other options, some of us don't. A few exploit the targets of opportunity. For which, there is a stream of causal association. And, if the relationship between past and present are somewhat connected. Then, solution to the problem-solving equation of homicide should be tied to forensic implications. Evidentiary considerations that trace intent to the interactions of one person with others. Or, multiple murderers to multiple victims. As investigators, we also “hunt”. The chase is in the serialized acts of killing because of our cryptic motivations in studying the ways of multi-murderers. Our purposes vary along professional lines of inquiry. Fascinations run to different levels of ideation. In an overall schematic, we could emphasize that some of us hunt the hunters. Who, in turn, hunt the hunted and so on. In academic, professional practitioner and allied realms of investigative study, the “vice crimes” have a certain appeal. Included here would be the usual “crimes against persons”. Along with the “usual suspects” behind the scene of the crimes.

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<sup>1</sup> From “Conviction and Practice of Compassionate Living”, in an article entitled, “Hunting: The Sport of Killing”, [http://www.thenazarenway.com/vegetarian/hunting\\_the\\_sport\\_of\\_killing.htm](http://www.thenazarenway.com/vegetarian/hunting_the_sport_of_killing.htm);

For some of us, there's a lurid sense to what we think and do. This brings together, in these associated aspects of criminology, many key players and multiple theories. Even though, at times, we project a conscious pretext of "scientific inquiry". There remains the taint of human nature in the investigative processes. Still though, variations apply. Whether from a case solution standpoint, or the perpetration of the event. Identity of protagonist takes on different dimensions of the human drama. As in DNA, dactyloscopy, and dental records, people define the special character of their latent composition.

In the roles they play, a person's "identity" could have psychic whirls, ridges and deltas of complex information. The likes of which we cannot begin to measure in others. And, only comprehend within ourselves, considering our own motives and intentions. Human mindset is "holographic" in the many layered, intricate and expansive nature of being. It involves "distinctive" archetypes of fantasy brought to reality by thought. Aspects of private temperament in a life form that is highly evolved. Most of which is not showing on the surface. Until extreme points of psychosis in abnormal behavior leave sufficient evidence for final discovery. Nor is it easily discerned from the elements of the crime scene by some magic of "behavioral profiling", or "signature". Murderous thoughts bore psychic "ridges" in thinking processes. A naturally unseen and abstract characteristic of human beings. Upon Francis Galton's release of his classic opus (circa 1852), systems analysis applied to the uniqueness of human body parts. Later, in 1897, Sir Edward Henry went further. This expanded the "science of fingerprinting".<sup>2</sup>

Yet, down deep, more likely, such areas of study reflect our own conceptions of prurience with the dark side of human behavior. Associations that stem from system of interactivity with others as well. And, at the same time, reflect the complexities of internal thinking processes. All of which speak silent voices of secret prejudice. Cognitive bias and subjective validation linger behind the psychic scenes of your neural networks. No investigative process is pure, perfect and without partiality. Meanwhile, back at the squad room. Detectives understand that no two persons are the same. Various degrees of differentiation occur. Especially among investigators in the "hunt" for the predator. As such, humans cannot be replicated into some superficial template of "serial profiling". Nor can they be stereotyped as having some organic brain dysfunction that deterministically begets them to murder. None the less, the urbanized legendary status attaches to mainstreams fascinations with the so called "serial killer". Public consciousness has been intellectually incestuous in associated fallacies of inference. We're so entranced with killers they get top billing in prime time dramas.

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<sup>2</sup> Jetmore, L.F., "Dactyloscopy – The Science of Fingerprints", an article in Law Officer Magazine, April 2008,

Because of that, it may be extraordinarily difficult to consider alternative problem-solving processes. However, both the crime lab and the district attorney await the proof of solid evidence to convict the killers. Not the speculative fringes of a magical mystery tour. But, valid credibility in the evidentiary applications. A thumb print, foot print or even dental impressions leave behind parts that belong to a system of interactivity. People live, breath and procreate within the context of social triangulations. Each point of contact leaves traces. Investigators view the scene for an association of such materials. Components that fit pieces of a whole in the totality of three dimensional configurations. The detective sets the scope, sequence and sensitivity of the inquiry. He or she establishes the overall tenor of the investigative practices carried out on scene. Detection is in the details. As well as, the dogged determination to discern each subsequent discovery. In the course of maintaining the progression, the investigator reduces as much bias, pre-conception and prejudice as possible.

In order to arrive at a baseline for productive study, initial operational concerns focus on primary actions. That is the gathering of critical information. Development of data encompasses a range of options. Timely collection of that information supports preliminary hypothesis formation. Later, as data elements transform the direction of inquiry, theoretical constructs can be re-evaluated. And, updated based on the evidence at hand. The investigative continuum is greatly enhanced by the “initial scene protocols”. First impressions serve the basis for early treatment of multiple issues. Incident security is essential. Containment of the context of the killing includes sufficient perimeters by which data is assembled, artifacts gathered and forensic implication assessed.<sup>3</sup>

Even though we could suggest the influential aspects of natural tendencies toward killing another person. People still maintain the flexibility of their own decision making. Our problem as investigators are social perceptions based on inconclusive data. Speculation swims in a murky pool of confusing ideologies regarding human nature. When we mix a pseudo-science with a natural science such as psychology and biology (i.e. the stretch of DNA studies to prove criminality). Our inclination is to allege proof beyond a “reasonable doubt” about something that hides behind the illusion of reality. Escaping criminal responsibility seems to be the objective of some of our more inventive judicial processes. A few case law successes have claimed the connection between gene-influenced propensities and homicidal aggressiveness. As before, a few would make a similar linkage regarding the hunting of animals for sport and hunting humans for problem-solving. The application of pseudo-scientific interpretations to future consequences appears something out of science fiction.

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<sup>3</sup> Eliopulous, L. N., Death Investigator's Handbook, (Boulder, CO: Paladin Press, 1993), pages 1-4;

On a regular basis, efforts appear to be rising to prove a correlation between ruthless aggressive behavior and genetic temperaments. There's certainly a contingent of "believers", for whatever agenda. Who'd like to excuse all human behaviors contrary to accepted communal norms. As usual, studies suggest speculations. Cautious arguments of uncertainty. Human research finds difficulty in static absolutism. Yet, speculative researchers, skillful policy makers, and clever attorneys can argue convincingly before collectives of not so clever observers. This includes juries. What we see on the horizon is a never ending attempt to use theoretical "alchemy" to proselytize some kind of "genetic determinism".

This becomes unusual extrapolation of those theories related to murderous behaviors as naturalistic human processes. In the long run, this transition in "scientific" thinking might be an omen for more dangerous criminological assertions. Several in the field of criminology would debate the probability of objectifying human beings into something less than human. This leads to a further denigration of human beings that requires early interdiction with people who have a "predisposition for violence". But, wait. An inclination to homicidal behavior does not mean you act on the particular proclivity. Nor, does it take "psychic profiling" to figure this out.<sup>4</sup>

Along the same lines of inquiry, conjecture does not easily "profile" precise measurements as to how extensive "serial killing" pervades U.S. society. You could assert that if killing is inborn and inherent in each person. Then, more killings should be anticipated. However, murder rates fluctuate. In fact, the entire data base of crime statistics indicates significant variations over time and population growth. Homicide data illustrate both increases and decreases. But, such reported information never reaches a point of "epidemic" or "catastrophic" disasters as sensationalized by the news media. Most of the crime index, in the U.S., shows a fairly law abiding citizenry. This means, if we're naturally inclined to "hunt".

Should that be true. And, this is only a point of speculation. Then, we've learned to control the urge. Find other ways to vent the lust to compete for people, places and property. Most of the time, from this perspective, people are projecting a pretext of pro-social activities. Instead of anti-social actions. In a sterile sense, we should be gratified that more killings don't happen. And, maybe each of us should be ecstatic that we're not being "hunted" individually. Then again, perhaps we are. But, the "hunting party" is focused on something else. By comparison, the alleged "serial killer" numbers suffer miniscule comparison alongside more conventional means of killing. At the same strain, scientific evidence eludes us when it comes to the scope, extent and nature of the so called "serial killer".

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<sup>4</sup> Saletan, W., "Human Nature: The DNA Defense", Slate Magazine (On-Line), Human Nature: Science, Technology, and Life, April 24, 2008, <http://www.slate.com/blogs/blogs/humannature/archive>;

Usual, normal or ordinary behaviors tend to reflect some persuasive elements of innate behavioral expectations. Most of us, including “serial killers” exhibit conventional modes of interaction. In a conventional sense, they’re like us. Instinctively though, we might conclude that “hunting” motivations are likely to replicate across the scheme of certain personalities. Yet, we don’t really know the extent of such murderous inclinations.<sup>5</sup>

In the mean time, back at the crime scene, we’re trying to assess the “what” in the equation of human systematic connectivity. All is linked in some way. The beginning of the definitive process starts with the containment of the crime scene. And, as such, remains the hallmark of getting detailed information. Plus, putting the puzzle parts in a pieced unity in one framework. Almost at the same time, crimes scenes get muddied by competing interests. This happens intellectually, politically and physically. All too often, investigators and even some television shows, cite the nebulous refrain of “murder for no apparent reason”. That’s deceptively simplistic. Creates an illusion that is some how spellbinding. Resonates the tone of mystery. Gives us a surreal feel for “hunting monsters”. For the public at large, it adds to the myth and magic of the supernatural. Again, out of the hat tricks mix the natural with the supernatural and fool the factual evidentiary criteria. Makes for great science fiction though. On the other hand, the X-Files of law enforcement capture the imagination. Meanwhile, the truth struggle for want of facts not fiction. By contrast, when it comes to people, there’s always a reason for everything we do. A motive for the intent of the “madness” we all have. You may not know it. But, you can bet the criminal does. As opposed to a “motiveless” killing, we should theorize flexibility in our investigative ideation. Move toward the idea that, for the time being, we don’t know the motive. Later, we’ll test our theory. Subsequently, make changes and discover the motive’s intent. In continuation, confusion over the extent of the “serial killer” types of murders colludes with official fallibility. One can examine various data and conclude definitional divergence with myriad discrepancies. For consideration, in one study of homicides during the 1980’s. about 2,000 murders contended to be “motiveless” and committed by stranger killers. The conclusion was drawn that about 120 to 180 could be the work of alleged “serial killers”. Or, in other words, less than 2% of the total homicides in the aforementioned study. So, such data disagrees with official federal data on the subject of the number of murders committed by multi-murderers.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Hinch, R., Hepburn, C., “Researching Serial Murder: Methodological and Definitional Problems”, An Anatomy of Serial Murder, Part II: Serial Murder, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Guelph, [www.sociology.org](http://www.sociology.org), pages 31-32;

<sup>6</sup> Hinch, R., Hepburn, C., “Researching Serial Murder: Methodological and Definitional Problems”, An Anatomy of Serial Murder, Part II: Serial Murder, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of Guelph, [www.sociology.org](http://www.sociology.org), pages 34;

None the less, for some in the field, flawed theoretical processes taint the study of murder cases. This is applicable to the obsession we have for the “serial killer”. Such is fascinating, a minority viewpoint, focused on a small percentage of homicidal perpetrators. Resurrected in a fantasia of investigative inquiry. Of which a majority strives to believe. Criminal justice systems have become infused with the craze to sensationalize the saga of multi-murderers. As a result, we’ve experienced academically and organizationally an inflation theories concerning the actual societal problem. The embarrassment goes even further. Urban legends prevail. Our abduction by fantasy is both entertaining and scary. Whether homicide is nature or nurture, all of this and more, is beside the point for the moment. In place, ought to be an appeal to reason supported by logic. Regardless, credible and competent police personnel are inundated and subjected to “assistance” by psychics, non-practitioner profilers, and wannabe “experts” from every walk of life. In the sphere of academia, students entering criminal justice studies are mesmerized by becoming “forensic profilers”. Instead of that, others aspire to become “real-life” television counterparts of “crime scene investigators”. Better yet, some want to skip police training, experiential learning and practical education. They’d like to laterally enter the police agency as new detectives. In the real world of police work though, the art and skill of the practitioner is essential.

However, in today’s society, any extraordinary conception of solving the nature of criminality is likely to find an audience. To support such ideas, we reinforce these legends by various mediums of “info-tainment”. Make excessive use of metaphor, rhetorical hyperbole and varied components of obfuscation. Absent the evidence, the proof falters. Motive becomes guesswork. Most of us avoid the application of critical thinking skills, tempered by a skeptic’s viewpoint. When we do this, we’re allowing ourselves acquiescence to accept hasty generalizations based on fallacies of inference. Pop culture, post-modern revisionism, mass media entertainment and congressional funding, to name a few sources. Offer the background for easy thinking processes. So that, we don’t have to ponder complex points too poignantly. These aspects of superficial social intercourse suggest the “smoking guns” in favor of cognitive bias. They advocate for vested interests in “proving” the vast existence of a multi-murderer sub-culture. On the contrary, the investigator should keep watch over personal partiality. Especially in crimes against persons, such as murder. That is, a profound sense of skepticism. As suggested by one scientific researcher, “extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence”. To this end, the investigator labors to ensure the mature conception of skeptical inquiry. One that continually gathers the facts to evaluate evidence.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> PBS interview with Carl Sagan, “Interview with Carl Sagan: Author, Astronomer”, NOVA, WGBH, 1996, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/aliens/carlsagan.html>;