

Casting Cultural Monsters: Representations of Serial Killers in U.S. and U.K. News Media

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Abstract

Serial murder is deeply imbedded in Western cultures, and serial killers are the subject of widespread coverage in news and entertainment media. Despite ample differences among serial murder cases and serial killers, most mass media portrayals of these cases tend to present two images: the serial killer as monster and the serial killer as celebrity. Media representations reveal much about a culture, and the use of extreme images like monsters and celebrities speak especially loudly. Yet, few researchers have explored cultural meanings embedded in representations of serial killers. Informed by theoretical arguments within cultural sociology and drawing on a qualitative content analysis of news articles published in the United States and the United Kingdom, this study explores news media representations of serial killers and uncovers links to broader cultural meanings. Although there are several similarities in the ways U.S. and U.K. news sources represent serial murder, important differences are evident. In particular, U.K. articles include more monster imagery and U.S. articles include more celebrity imagery. Implications and meanings behind these representations are discussed, especially as they reveal cultural values and beliefs.

Key Words: culture, monsters, news media, serial murder, serial killers

Serial murder is deeply imbedded in Western cultures, and serial killers have become perverse icons as legendary as other monsters known throughout history in cultural myths. Although scholars have explored media representations of serial killers and made clear the serial killer's place in popular culture, few have compared serial killer representations across nations or delved deeply into the connections between culture and these representations. This study contributes to the literature on media representation, culture, serial murder, monsters, and celebrities by exploring the ways in which U.S. and U.K. news sources represent serial murder cases and drawing connections between these portrayals and elements of culture.

Literature Review

Research on serial murder is full of inconsistency and disagreement. Indeed, even the definition of the offence is unclear, with most discrepancies related to

number of victims, distinctiveness of motivational factors, and the specificity of the time span involved. These criteria help distinguish serial murder from single murder and other forms of multiple murder, such as mass murder and spree murder. Without a standardized definition, most serial murder researchers employ a definition long used by the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation¹² and derived from a federal law passed by the U.S. Congress in 1998, called the Protection of Children from Sexual Predator Act, which defines serial murder as ‘a series of three or more killings ... having common characteristics such as to suggest the reasonable possibility that the crimes were committed by the same actor or actors.’³⁴

Most of the research on serial murder focuses on developing explanations or common characteristics of serial killers. Psychological explanations for serial murder dominate the literature.⁵ Yet, more sociological explanations are being offered,⁶ especially as biological explanations largely have fallen out of favor. And some researchers⁷ argue that a combination of sociological, psychological, and biological factors influence the development of a serial killer. Many researchers have attempted to develop lists of characteristics common to serial killers, mostly focusing on sex, race, class, age, intelligence, educational attainment, occupational status, childhood and adulthood interests, and motivations.⁸ However, definitional issues tend to frustrate this task, as the common characteristics vary widely as different definitions of serial murder are employed.⁹

Although most serial murder studies focus on U.S. cases, some scholars have examined serial murder elsewhere, especially in the United Kingdom and other Western societies. Bernard Capp studied serial killers in seventeenth-century England,¹⁰ and Chris Grover and Keith Sothill studied serial murder cases in Great Britain from 1960 to the 1990s.¹¹ In addition, Stephan Harbort and Andreas Mokros studied German serial killers,¹² and Brin Hodgskiss focused on South African serial killers.¹³ Eric W. Hickey reviewed cases of serial murder in 23 countries (including Australia, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary, Iran, Russia, South Africa, and the United States), identifying differences in the ways serial murder is defined and viewed and arguing that ‘cultural differences influence the methods and motives’ of serial killers.¹⁴ Grover and Sothill make a similar cultural argument, linking difference in serial murder within the United States and Britain to Britain’s supposedly harsher ‘engine of patriarchal capitalism’ and ‘more exaggerated form’ of homosexual oppression.¹⁵ Finally, my own previous studies have drawn clear connections between U.S. serial murder and specific elements of U.S. culture, including values of individualism, competition, recognition, and personal achievement.¹⁶

Finally, several scholars have examined the widespread media coverage of serial murder cases and intense public interest,¹⁷ and others have remarked on the ubiquitous presence of serial murder in Western entertainment media and popular culture.¹⁸ Steven Egger and Peter Vronsky argue that popular portrayals of serial

killers found in Western media are generally of two types: either the hideous, depraved, monster or the handsome, charming guy-next-door.¹⁹ In a study of serial killers represented in U.S. films, Su C. Epstein found that the killers were frequently portrayed as monsters, many with special powers or superhuman qualities, evil or demonic qualities, or explicitly linked to mythic monsters like the vampire.²⁰ Vronsky argues that the monster image was widespread in Western media after Jack the Ripper's murders in 1888 in London but that portrayals of serial killers in U.S. media began to shift in the 1970s to the latter image.²¹ Vronsky identifies this shift as beginning with media reports of U.S. serial killer Ted Bundy, whom he called the 'new postmodern serial killer role model.'²² James Alan Fox and authors agree that the 'human monster' image once common in media representations of serial killers has given way to a 'more modern image (that) describes these killers as unusually handsome and charming.'²³

Serial murder researchers have made valuable contributions to knowledge about the phenomenon, though more research is needed, particularly in the latter area of this review. No studies were found that assess Vronsky's claims about the shifting media portrayals of serial killers, nor whether his arguments apply to non-U.S. media. Further, no studies were found that thoroughly explore cultural meanings embedded in representations of serial killers as either monsters or celebrities.

Theoretical Framework

Mass media are imbedded in the culture in which they operate – indeed, they are one of the primary transmitters of cultural messages – and, thus, are an excellent site for cultural analysis. This study seeks to uncover cultural messages in U.S. and U.K. news media representations of serial killers, with a particular focus on the presence of monster and celebrity imagery in these representations.

Culture incorporates a range of vehicles humans use to experience and express meaning, including the nonmaterial (language, ideas, beliefs, values, norms, and practices) and the material (what is produced within a culture). Culture is meaningful, in that it offers a means for people to perceive, think about, and make sense of their world.²⁴ The establishment of culture creates a framework for us to make sense of our world and provides a link to others so we can share our experiences in ways that are understandable.²⁵ Thus, studies of culture examine the symbolic-expressive dimension of social life as a distinct aspect of social reality.

A chief aim of cultural analysis, according to Robert Wuthnow and authors, is 'to identify empirical regularities or patterns in this dimension of reality' and identify features of those patterns that make them meaningful.²⁶ Because cultural elements often are not directly observable, we can accomplish this by examining a culture's 'recorded culture,' which includes any cultural record (e.g., newspapers, magazines,

advertisements, films, government documents, diaries, and letters) that offers insight into the lived culture of a particular group.²⁷

Mass media represent an important aspect of recorded culture. Western media, in particular, have an enormous reach and profound influence on people's perceptions of their world, social groups, and even themselves.²⁸ Douglas Kellner argues that mass media create a 'common culture for the majority of individuals in many parts of the world today' that 'helps shape the prevalent view of the world and deepest values.'²⁹ News media, in particular, help people apply meanings to social reality.³⁰

As previously noted, serial murder researchers have found that serial killers are most often represented in mass media in particular ways: generally as either monsters or celebrities. Media portrayals can reveal much about a culture. In particular, monsters may reveal cultural insecurities and fears, and celebrities may reveal cultural values and ideal standards. Several scholars have made important contributions in these areas.

Monsters in various forms have held a place in every culture throughout history,³¹ and they have figured prominently into Western film and literature for centuries.³² These monsters take many forms, from demons, ghouls, and evil spirits; to vampires, werewolves, witches, and zombies; to mythic creatures such as Big Foot, the Abominable Snowman, the Mummy, Godzilla, and the Loch Ness Monster. But, despite differences in form and period of popularity, the representations of various 'cultural monsters' have remained relatively consistent, including elements of insanity or possession, depravity, and wickedness. These monsters frequently take human form but are depicted with animalistic characteristics – emotionally void, predatory, and savage. They live on through cultural stories (fiction and nonfiction) and reinforce cultural values, beliefs, and norms.³³ More than that, stories about monsters are linked to social, political, and economic factors.³⁴ For example, David J. Skal connected the rising popularity of monster films to historic recessions, wars, and social unrest.³⁵ And Marina Levina and Diem-My T. Bui examine how monstrosity is used in the rapidly changing Western world to manage cultural, social, political, economic change, particularly rising fears and tensions including terror threats and new forms of warfare, global economic crises, the rapid spread of new communication technologies, immigration, and climate change.³⁶

Just as cultural monsters suggest what members of a culture abhor, celebrities indicate what members of a culture celebrate, and media play an integral role in the creation of celebrity.³⁷ In an experiment, Siegwart Lindenberg and authors found that normative messages presented by currently popular celebrities successfully activated the target norm and related norms in participants, but the norms were not activated when the messages were presented by celebrities whose success was seen as waning.³⁸ Celebrities not only help reinforce cultural norms, but they become symbols of them. Celebrities in the Western world epitomize cultural values and norms: actors and musicians symbolize beauty, wealth, fame, recognition, and

success; professional athletes symbolize competition, teamwork, and individualism; and famous entrepreneurs (perhaps especially famous in the United States) symbolize intelligence, perseverance, and achievement. They are featured in news and entertainment mass media, have numerous fans, and sell merchandise with their image or endorsement.

In uncovering cultural messages in U.S. and U.K. news media representations of serial killers, this study is guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: How are serial murder cases represented in U.S. and U.K. print news media?

RQ2: How is monster imagery used in representations of serial killers in U.S. and U.K. news media articles? Is there a difference in the use of this imagery between U.S. and U.K. sources?

RQ3: How is celebrity imagery used in representations of serial killers in U.S. and U.K. news media articles? Is there a difference in the use of this imagery between U.S. and U.K. sources?

RQ4: What cultural meanings are embedded in U.S. and U.K. news media representations of serial murder cases?

Method

To answer these research questions, I conducted a qualitative content analysis of news media articles about serial murder cases that were published in U.S. and U.K. sources within the last 10 years. The United States and United Kingdom were selected to allow for a preliminary cultural comparison of messages from nations that are somewhat similar economically and socially. This timeframe helps compose a sample that is large enough for a complete analysis, yet small enough to allow for a focus on recent representations and an in-depth examination of the cultural messages therein.

To compose a sample of articles for analysis, I started with a broad search in the LexisNexis news database, which includes a large number of major international news sources (i.e., newspapers, news magazines, and news websites). Searching the database for the keyword 'serial killer' produced 995 articles published between October 1984 and May 2014. Eliminating duplicate articles reduced that number to 968; selecting a timeframe of just the last 10 years (May 2004 to May 2014) resulted in 458 articles; and excluding non-U.S. and non-U.K. news sources resulted in 234 articles (59 published in U.S. sources and 175 in U.K. sources). Within this sampling frame, those articles that were not news reports or not explicitly about real-world serial murder cases³⁹ were eliminated, resulting in a final sample of 80 articles⁴⁰ (24 published in U.S. sources and 56 in U.K. sources), representing seven U.S. news sources and 24 U.K. news sources.

The qualitative content analysis approach is frequently used in the analysis of media content and comprises a search for underlying themes or meanings in the

content under study.⁴¹ The researcher begins with broad research questions and loose categories or themes, which guide several readings of the content. Throughout the process, the researcher attempts ‘to pin down key themes and, thereby, to draw a picture of the presuppositions and meanings that constitute the cultural world of which the textural material is a specimen.’⁴²

Findings

In line with the qualitative content analysis approach and guided by the study’s research questions, I first tried to get a sense of the overall focus of each U.S. and U.K. news article selected for analysis. Next, I looked for and examined uses of monster imagery and celebrity imagery. Finally, I looked for links between the representations of serial murder cases and larger cultural meanings embedded in the articles.

Overall Representations

First, it is important to note that there are many more articles fitting this study’s selection criteria published in U.K. news sources (56 articles) compared to U.S. news sources (24 articles). One apparent difference in the coverage that may explain this discrepancy is that the U.K. articles more often cover non-U.K. serial murder cases, whereas the U.S. articles rarely include non-U.S. cases. The 24 U.S. articles include eight U.S. cases and two Mexican cases (one that occurred in a U.S.-Mexico border city). The U.K. articles, on the other hand, cover cases from a wide geographic area: The 56 U.K. articles include 14 U.K. cases, six U.S. cases, two Canadian cases, one Irish case, one French case, one Spanish case, one Iranian case, one Indian case, and one Russian case.

In general, the U.K. articles are longer than the U.S. articles and provide much more detail about the cases. For example, U.S. articles rarely include such in-depth description as what is found in this U.K. article: ‘The 31-year-old killer smiled, laughed, and looked disinterested throughout most of her sentencing hearing ... As she was led from the dock, she remained passive and composed’ (Article 25).

U.K. articles also tend to be more sensational in their reporting. For example, two of the U.K. articles focus on alleged warning signs of serial killers,⁴³ while no U.S. articles discuss this subject. One suggests that early animal abuse is a red flag (Article 55), and another reporting on a single-murder case describes the killer as ‘a violent, porn-obsessed “sexual deviant” and “potential serial killer”’ (Article 29). Similarly, two U.K. articles provide unsubstantiated warnings to alleged potential victims, including Irish prostitutes (Article 65) and binge drinkers (Article 60), which seems likely to incite public fear.

The U.K. articles also more often use sensationally worded headlines compared to the U.S. articles. The following U.K. headlines have no comparable matches in the U.S. articles: ‘Chilling Echo of Serial Killer Evil’ (Article 80): ‘If You See This

Man, Run!’ (Article 63); ‘Psycho Expert: Sicko’s Mind Exposed’ (Article 28); ‘I Feared Evil Killer Joanna Dennehy Wanted to Murder Me and My Kids: Monster’s Chilling Threat to Family’ (Article 27); ‘Smirking Female Serial Killer Will Spend Rest of Life in Jail’ (Article 25); and ‘Jaws the Ripper’ (Article 52). The U.K. articles also more often than the U.S. articles contain unattributed descriptions like ‘the sickening New York ripper killings’ (Article 43); ‘to make his sick child fantasies a reality’ (Article 41); ‘brutally murdered’ (Article 44); and ‘a jury decided he was drug-crazed, cold-blooded murderer’ (Article 79).

While the primary focus throughout U.S. articles tends to be the killers (e.g., who they are, what they are like, and why they kill), the U.K. articles devote much more attention to victims (e.g., who they are, what they are like, and who their families are). In U.S. articles, victims are mostly invisible: included as numbers in body counts, rarely identified by name, without details provided about their lives. One exception was a U.S. article (Article 18) that describes hardships faced by families of serial killer victims, though the victims themselves still are in the background. Another U.S. article (Article 20) describes the hardships faced by families of serial killers, with victims entirely absent. In contrast, U.K. articles almost always include victims’ names and ages and generally provide more details about their lives than killers’ lives.

Uses of Monster Imagery

Monster imagery is evident in both U.S. and U.K. articles. The actual word ‘monster’ is used at similar rates: It appears in a headline two times in U.S. articles and once in U.K. articles, and it appears in the text of four U.S. articles (about 17 percent of articles) and 10 U.K. articles (about 18 percent of articles). Yet, other types of monster imagery are more common.

One form of monster imagery used in both sets of articles is language that suggests an all-encompassing threat on an entire geographic area, reminiscent of film monsters King Kong or Godzilla. U.S. article examples include: ‘Two Serial Killers, Acting Independently, Terrorize Phoenix’ (Article 17) and ‘the cities were terrorized’ (Article 13). U.K. article examples include: ‘The City Paralysed by Fear as Serial Killers Stalk its Streets’ (Article 77); ‘Ireland’s reign of terror came to an end’ (Article 36); and ‘The murders have spread fear in the state’ (Article 50).

Another form of monster imagery frequently employed in both sets of articles, though clearly more often in the U.K. articles, is descriptions of the killers that evoke a sense of savagery or animalistic qualities. Both sets of articles frequently use terms such as ‘deranged,’ ‘sadistic,’ ‘evil,’ ‘psycho’ or ‘psychopathic,’ ‘maniac,’ and ‘predator,’ but the U.K. articles also use language that seems to evoke a stronger animalistic image, like ‘beast,’ ‘brute,’ and ‘bloodthirsty,’ that do not appear in U.S. articles. Other phrases used in both sets of articles suggest the threat of a dangerous

animal. Both sets of articles use phrases like ‘a serial killer on the loose’ or ‘a serial killer at large,’ and refer to law enforcement as ‘hunting’ serial killers. Other similar wording also is used, with a slight difference among U.S. and U.K. articles. The U.S. articles more often use the word ‘stalk,’ as in the examples: ‘the area stalked by the killers’ (Article 17), and ‘the police believe he stalks his victims, springing on them just after sunset ...’ (Article 17). And the U.K. articles more often use the words ‘prey’ and ‘prowl,’ as in the examples: ‘he turned down country roads to prowl for young victims’ (Article 41), and ‘He is thought to have used his days off to prey on lone women as they returned home at night’ (Article 35). Further, the phrase ‘caged for life’ is used in one U.K. article (Article 60) to describe a convicted serial killer’s life sentence, which has a clear animal connotation. In addition, several U.K. articles directly compare serial killers to animals, specifically great white sharks (Articles 51, 52, and 53) and bumblebees (Article 58).

Uses of Celebrity Imagery

A few U.S. articles directly reference the celebrity status of serial killers. One headline mentions ‘people’s fascination with these cases’ (Article 18). Other articles quote serial killer experts on the subject: ‘We’ve taken the most reprehensible members of society and given them star status’ (Article 7), and ‘We make celebrities out of serial killers. They’re glamorized and romanticized’ (Article 18). No U.K. articles directly refer to public fascination with serial murder, though one quotes a U.S. serial murder expert discussing ‘a fascination with serial killers in America’ (Article 77). However, two U.K. articles allude to potential fame for U.K. serial killers. One describes an English serial killer’s motivation: ‘(He) wanted his 15 minutes of fame’ (Article 79). The other quotes the mother of a different English serial killer: ‘All of a sudden he is like a star. Everybody is talking about him and he’s on the news’ (Article 66).

Both sets of articles mention records set by the killers, which indicate recognition of a perverse kind of achievement. U.S. articles mention ‘the worst serial killer in New Jersey history’ (Article 18), and ‘the worst serial killer in the city’s history’ (Article 22). U.K. articles, which discuss these perverse records much more frequently, mention a wide range of serial killer records: ‘Britain’s worst serial killer’ (Article 61); ‘Britain’s worst woman serial killer’ (Article 27); ‘Britain’s worst serial child murderer’ (Article 41); ‘Britain’s worst criminals’ (Article 31); ‘the list of Scotland’s notorious serial killers’ (Article 49); ‘one of America’s most prolific killers’ (Article 76); ‘Canada’s most prolific serial killer’ (Article 62); ‘Iran’s first female serial killer’ (Article 54); and ‘one of France’s most notorious serial killers’ (Article 30).

Unlike U.K. articles, U.S. articles also frequently demonstrate the fame of serial killers more indirectly. One article mentions that the sister of a serial killer victim appeared on the television show ‘Good Morning America,’ indicating the high-

profile nature of the case (Article 6). Another article, which focuses on the families of serial killer victims and the fame they receive because of their association with the killers, discusses the countless people driving by their homes and approaching them in public, as well as a general feeling of lost identity: ‘We’re no longer the Shanagher family. We’re that family whose father was killed by Charles Cullen’ (Article 18).

Several U.S. articles include references to other forms of celebrated achievement, like exceptional abilities and expertise, which do not appear in the U.K. articles. Some portray serial killers as exceptionally cunning: ‘Two serial killers who have evaded capture despite an intensive police investigation in Phoenix and its suburbs’ (Article 14), and ‘two serial killers who ... have frustrated scores of detectives and frightened thousands of residents across a wide swath of central Phoenix and its suburbs’ (Article 17). Another article references an unidentified serial killer’s apparent ‘forensic sophistication and criminal sophistication’ (Article 5). And two articles include U.S. serial killer Joel Rifkin’s thoughts on an ongoing investigation, treating him as an expert on the topic: ‘Rifkin has offered his own opinions lately about who he thinks the killer is, in prison interviews with reporters’ (Article 5), and ‘With the air of a veteran schooling an amateur, Rifkin said ...’ (Article 8).

Cultural Links

Cultural meanings – especially in the form of values and beliefs – are evident in these news media representations, which also indicate collective beliefs and anxieties that exist in the United States and the United Kingdom.

Both sets of articles reference a belief that serial murder is primarily a U.S. phenomenon. U.K. articles include the previously mentioned quote ‘There is a fascination with serial killers in America’ (Article 77), as well as ‘The mythology of serial killers in New York is rich’ (Article 46). One U.S. article and one U.K. article both quote U.S. serial killer Joel Rifkin as saying: ‘America breeds serial killers. You don’t see any in Europe’ (Articles 8 and 46). A U.S. article about a Mexican serial murder case suggests that serial murder is tied to U.S. values of individualism and aggression: ‘Such killers are seen as peculiarly American, a perversity born from a society many Mexicans believe long ago abandoned family ties, one that breeds hostile loners’ (Article 19). The same article discusses links to Mexican culture: ‘Mexico City’s apparently homegrown serial killer rattles the cultural myth here that older people are protected within the cocoon of loving extended families.’ One U.K. article (Article 32) makes a similar argument about the danger of individualism in its claims about Scottish culture supposedly preventing serial murder. A Scottish-born criminologist explains in the article:

Scotland is a very face-to-face culture. It doesn't take long for you to find out about people. ... I think Scottish culture prevents serial killing developing here, as people in this country would notice things that were out of the ordinary.

Other scholars have linked monster imagery and celebrity imagery to social, political, and economic factors, and these links are evident in the articles under analysis. For example, serial murder cases are linked to insecurities about immigration and urbanization in Mexico (Article 19); gang activity, drug abuse, police corruption, and changing gender roles in Mexico (Article 23); social stratification and social capital in the United States (Article 22); medical safety in U.S. hospitals (Article 11); prostitution and the financial crisis in Ireland (Article 65); binge drinking in Britain (Article 60); and the quality of mental health services in Britain (Article 56).

These links also can be tied to cultural meaning, as they represent collective sentiments and help establish shared meaning about the social world. For example, one U.S. article (Article 22) discusses a serial murder case that took years to discover, largely because the victims were prostitutes, and points to cultural meanings associated with social status and occupational prestige in the United States. One woman who works as a prostitute is quoted as saying: 'If it was in the better neighbourhoods, you could be sure somebody would be asking questions. But it was here, so nobody cared.' Another U.S. article (Article 11) redefines problems in U.S. hospitals and nursing homes as a problem with serial killers. The article's headline proclaims 'Hospital Serial Killers are Big Threat,' yet the 2,100 patients worldwide it claims were murdered by doctors and nurses from 1970 to 2006 pales in comparison to the 98,000 deaths per year in the United States alone that the article attributes to medical mistakes. Given these numbers, it would seem the real problem is medical mistakes, not serial killers, in hospitals. But, because most U.S. Americans believe that the U.S. healthcare system operates for the good and safety of patients, recognizing issues with the system would require an uncomfortable reconsideration of those beliefs.

Something similar appears in U.K. articles. In Article 60, cultural beliefs related to the dangers of binge drinking and the irresponsibility of young people seem to be behind the unsubstantiated claim that serial killers will soon target young people who overindulge in alcohol. In Article 56, the development of a British serial killer is used to frame problems with the mental health care system in Britain. And Article 65 uses a discussion of the potential murder of prostitutes to indicate a larger collective concern about financial resources in Ireland: 'If a serial killer did strike in Ireland, the investigation may well be hampered because of a lack of cash.'

Conclusions

The findings from this study indicate similarities and differences in the ways in which serial murder is represented in U.S. and U.K. news sources. They also suggest a link between culture elements and the ways in which serial murder cases and serial killers are represented in news articles in the United States and the United Kingdom. Serial killers are represented as monsters – albeit different kinds of monsters – in both sets of articles. U.K. representations cast serial killers as more traditional monsters: savage, nameless animals that prowl neighbourhoods and prey on innocent victims. This portrayal, along with a greater focus on victims in the news stories, suggests a low value for these killers. In contrast, U.S. representations cast serial killers as fantastic monsters: advanced predators with exceptional abilities and expertise that make them deserving of a mythic, or celebrity, status. This portrayal, along with an almost exclusive focus on killers in the news stories, suggests a high value for these killers. It appears that a U.S. emphasis on individualism may influence news coverage in its focus on individual killers and their abilities, while a U.K. emphasis on the group may influence news coverage in its focus on victims and more negative treatment of the killers.

Like all cultural monsters, serial killers remind us of our cultural standards and symbolize our fears and insecurities. More research is needed to explore the effects of media representations of serial killers, particularly in three areas: (1) how these representations lead to the creation or perpetuation of shared cultural meaning; (2) how these representations influence the ways in which social problems are addressed; and (3) how these representations influence the development and treatment of serial killers around the world.

¹Notes

Robert S. Mueller, *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin* 74 (Washington, D.C.: Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2005), viewed 15 May 2014, <http://leb.fbi.gov/2005-pdfs/leb-january-2005>.

² In 2008, the FBI updated its definition of serial murder, reducing the requisite number of victims from three to two (Morton and Hilts 2008).

³ This definition of serial murder also requires that at least one of the killings in such a series was committed within the United States. However, this geographic qualifier was included 'primarily for jurisdictional/investigational reasons' (Mueller 2005) and should not be interpreted as part of a general working definition of serial murder.

⁴ Protection of Children from Sexual Predators Act of 1998, Pub. L. no. 105-314, 112 STAT 2987 (1998), 15.

⁵ Christer Claus and Lars Lidberg, 'Serial Murder as a Schahriar Syndrome', *The Journal of Forensic Psychiatry* 10 (1999): 427-435; Wade C. Myers, et al., 'The Motivation behind Serial Sexual Homicide: Is it Sex, Power, and Control, or Anger?' *Journal of Forensic Science* 51 (2006): 900-907; Stanton E. Samenow, *Inside the Criminal Mind* (New York: Crown Publishers, 2004); Stacey L. Shipley and Bruce A. Arrigo, *The Female Homicide Offender: Serial Murder and the Case of Aileen Wuornos* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004); Candice A. Skrapec, 'Phenomenology and Serial Murder', *Homicide Studies* 5 (2001): 46-63.

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⁸ Tammy Castle and Christopher Hensley, 'Serial Killers with Military Experience: Applying Learning Theory to Serial Murder', *International Journal of Offender Therapy & Comparative Criminology* 46 (2002): 453-465; John E. Douglas, et al., *Crime Classification Manual: A Standard System for Investigating and Classifying Violent Crimes* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1997); James Alan Fox and Jack Levin, *Extreme Killing: Understanding Serial and Mass Murder* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005); James Alan Fox, Jack Levin, and Kenna Quinet, *The Will to Kill: Making Sense of Senseless Murder* (Boston: Pearson Education Group Inc., 2005); Eric W. Hickey, *Serial Murderers and Their Victims* (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2006); Ronald M. Holmes, 'Profiles in Terror: The Serial Murderer', *Federal Probation* 44 (1985): 29-34; Holmes and De Burger, *Serial Murder*; Ronald M. Holmes and Stephen T. Holmes, *Profiling Violent Crimes: An Investigative Tool* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002); Robert K. Ressler, Ann W. Burgess, and John E. Douglas, *Sexual Homicide: Patterns and Motives* (New York: The Free Press, 1992); Harold Schechter and David Everitt, *The A-Z Encyclopedia of Serial Killers* (New York: Pocket Books, 1997); Vronsky, *Serial Killers*; J. Warren, R. Hazelwood, and P. E. Dietz, 'The Sexually Sadistic Serial Killer', *Journal of Forensic Science* 41 (1996): 970-974; Wiest, *Creating Cultural Monsters*.

⁹ Wiest, *Creating Cultural Monsters*.

¹⁰ Bernard Capp, 'Serial Killers in 17th-century England', *History Today* 46 (1996): 21-26.

¹¹ Grover and Soothill, 'British Serial Killing'.

¹² Stephan Harbort and Andreas Mokros. 'Serial Murderers in Germany from 1945 to 1995', *Homicide Studies* 5 (2001): 311-334.

¹³ Brin Hodgskiss, 'Lessons from Serial Murder in South Africa', *Journal of Investigative Psychology and Offender Profiling* 1 (2004): 67-94.

¹⁴ Hickey, *Serial Murderers*, 291.

¹⁵ Grover and Soothill, 'British Serial Killing', 13.

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¹⁷ Grover and Soothill, 'British Serial Killing'; David Schmid, *Natural Born Celebrities: Serial Killers in American Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005).

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- ⁴⁰ Articles are referenced in the findings section according to article number, rather than traditional citations, for increased readability. Articles 1-24 are from U.S. sources, and Articles 25-80 are from U.K. sources. See the Appendix for full citations.
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Appendix

The following articles were included in the analysis. They are divided by those published in the United States and those published in the United Kingdom, and listed in chronological order.

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