FEMALE SERIAL KILLERS
Types of female serial killers?

- Kelleher & Kelleher – 9 categories and two forms of actions
  - Note: there are some female serial killers that do not fit neatly into typology
Q: Types of female serial killers?

- **Acting in Partnership/Disorganized**
  - Tend to be *younger, aggressive, vicious* in their attack
  - Disorganized
  - Unable to carefully plan
  - Usually attack victims in diverse locations
  - Tend to use guns, knives or torture

- **Categories:**
  - Team Killer, Question of Sanity, Unexplained, Unsolved
Acting in Partnership

• Team Killers (TC)
  – Defined as a woman who systematically murders others or participates in the systematic murder of others in conjunction with another person.
  – Represent 1/3 of all female serial killers
  – Average victim count = 9-15 people
  – 3 types of TC
Acting in Partnership

- Team Killers (TC)
  - Male/Female teams
    - Most common
    - Crimes often sexual in nature
    - Female member typically 20 in age
    - Career = 1-2 years
    - Females often influenced by dominant or charismatic partner; not the leader
Rosemary Pauline “Rose” West was the wife to Fred West. The couple were convicted of torturing and killing at least 10 young women from 1973 to 1978. Before that, Rose West murdered the daughter of Fred’s first wife, and buried the body in her previous home in Gloucester. Most of the bodies were buried under their house in Cromwell Street, Gloucester – where the murders took place.

Rosemary West and Fred West were convicted in 1973 of sexual assault when one of their victims managed to escape. Their pattern was to pick up girls from bus stops, and take them home to imprison them for several days before killing them.
Myra Hyndley and Ian Brady (The Moors Murders) together kidnapped and sexually abused and killed five children aged from 10 to 17, burying them on The Moors around Greater Manchester, England around 1965. Between 1963 and 1965, Myra Hindley and Ian Brady carried out the murders and sexual assaults of five children aged from 10 to 17, burying them on The Moors around Greater Manchester, England. The fourth victim’s body has never been found, with the third only found in 1987, twenty years after the pair’s trials.
Acting in Partnership

• **Question of Sanity (QS)**
  
  – Few in number
  
  – The insanity defense strategy in a serial killing case is rarely successful

  • Instances of most success:
    
    – *Angel of Death* offenders (especially if the psychological disorder is Munchausen syndrome by proxy)
    
    – *The Family Annihilator* (female who kills her children under severe post-partum depression or psychoses)
Acting in Partnership

• **Unexplained (UN)**
  – This female kills for reasons that are totally inexplicable or for unclear motives even to themselves.

![Christine Falling](image)

**Christine Falling**

• Murdered 5 children and 1 man
• Suffocation
• Motive = never explained
Acting in Partnership

• Unsolved (US)
  – There are several patterns of unsolved killings that may be attributed to a woman (or women) female serial killers that have never been solved.
  – Possible that the perpetrator was apprehended and imprisoned for other felonies, died, or stopped murdering because of age, illness, infirmity, or complex psychological factors.
Q: Types of female serial killers?

- **Acting Alone/Organized**
  - Mature, careful, deliberate, socially adept and highly organized
  - Attack victims in their home or place of work
  - Tend to favor difficult to discover weapons (poison, lethal injection, suffocation)

- **Categories:**
  - Black Widow, Angel of Death, Sexual Predator, Revenge, Profit or Crime
Black Widow (BW)

- Victims = relatives, close family (grandchildren, children, partners, husbands), romantic relationships, or close friends.
- Motives: monetary gain (most often life insurance)
- Career = 10 – 15 years
-Victims = 6-8 people
- Preferred Method = poison
- **The male equivalent is somewhat rarer, and called the Blackbeard or Bluebeard.**
Black Widow: Diana Lumbrera

- Active killer, 1977 to 1990 (14 years)
- Systematically suffocated 6 of her own children and a cousin
- Method: Strangulation and suffocation
- Motive: Profit from life insurance policies
- Sentenced to life in prison
Angel of Death (AD)

• Victims: the sick and elderly
• Methods: hard to trace
  – Chemical (lethal injection of potassium) or suffocation
• General profile:
  – Usually begins around age 21
  – Operates in a localized setting where death is a regular occurrence (ie, nursing home, hospital).
• Career: 8 victims over a 1-2 year period, although if the offender is mobile, the number of victims may be 16 or more.
  – Their short careers are usually due to a tendency to brag about their actions.
Angel of Death: Beverly Allitt

• Munchausen's Syndrome by Proxy
• Victims:
  – Killed 4 children (poisoning)
  – Attacked 9 others
• Sentenced to 13 life sentences
• Motives have never fully been explained
Angel of Death: Terri Rachals

- Active from 1985 to 1986
- Nurse, attacked victims between the ages of 3 and 89
- Method: Injections of potassium chloride
- Motive: ego, control
- Acquitted of murder; sentenced to 17 years in prison for aggravated assault
Angel of Death: Genene Jones

• Former pediatric nurse
• Killed between 11 and 46 infants and children
• Method: injections of digoxin, herapin and succinylcholine to induce medical crises
• Sentenced to 99 years in prison but will receive automatic parole in 2017 due to overcrowding
Revenge (RC)

• Driven by a deeper, more overwhelming anger, bordering upon the pathological
• Usually begin their criminal careers 22
• Victims = family members or symbolic representations
• Consistent victimology
  – 3-4 victims over an average period of 2 years or less
Revenge killer: Martha Wise

- The “Borgia of America”
- Murdered three members of her own family: mother, aunt, uncle
- Method: Poison (arsenic)
- Motive: Revenge for her family’s opposition to her marriage
- Sentenced to life in prison
Murder for Profit (MP)

• A woman who systemically murders individuals in the course of other criminal activities, or for profit, but who is not a member of a team of killers.

• Profile:
  – Most intelligent, resourceful, careful
  – Career usually begins around age 25 or 30, lasts for 10 years
  – 10-25 victims (greed drives rage)

• Criteria:
  – 1. Must clearly murder for profit
  – 2. Must target individuals who are not members of immediate family
  – 3. Must be willing to undertake crimes alone and not been brought in by a partner
Murder for Profit:  Madame Popova

• Active from 1879 to 1909
• Confessed to the murder of over 300 men
• Method: Poison
• Motive: Popova ran a business that would “liberate” married women from their cruel husbands, for a modest fee
• Arrested in 1909 and executed by firing squad
Sexual Predator (SP)

- VERY rare (only 1 in US history)
- Usually in their 30’s or middle-aged
- Geographically mobile
- Suffer from a fantasy-driven compulsion to kill
- Usually have at least 6 victims before being caught
Sexual predator:  Aileen Wuornos

- 33-year-old prostitute
- Killed 7 men in Florida
- Method: shooting
- Confessed to six murders, but claimed self-defense in all
- Sentenced to death
- Executed in 2002