

# SEXUAL MURDERERS

A Comparative Analysis and  
New Perspectives

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# CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures</i>	vii
<i>List of Tables</i>	ix
<i>About the Editors</i>	xiii
<i>List of Contributors</i>	xv
<i>Preface</i>	xvii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xix
Introduction	
Sexual Murderers: Myth and Reality	1
<i>Maurice Cusson</i>	
PART I THE MONTREAL STUDY	7
1 Sexual Murder: Definitions, Epidemiology and Theories	9
<i>Jean Proulx, Maurice Cusson and Éric Beaugard</i>	
2 Sexual Murderers and Sexual Aggressors: Developmental Paths and Criminal History	29
<i>Alexandre Nicole and Jean Proulx</i>	
3 Sexual Murderers and Sexual Aggressors: Psychopathological Considerations	51
<i>Jean Proulx and Nadège Sauvétre</i>	
4 Sexual Murderers and Sexual Aggressors: Intention and Situation	71
<i>Sabine Chéné and Maurice Cusson</i>	
5 The Factors Distinguishing Sexual Murderers from Sexual Aggressors: A Multivariate Analysis	87
<i>Alexandre Nicole and Jean Proulx</i>	

6	Serial Killers and Sexual Murderers <i>Élisabeth Campos and Maurice Cusson</i>	99
7	Sadistic Sexual Offenders <i>Jean Proulx, Etienne Blais and Éric Beaugregard</i>	107
8	Angry or Sadistic: Two Types of Sexual Murderers <i>Éric Beaugregard, Jean Proulx and Michel St-Yves</i>	123
9	The Motivation and Criminal Career of Sexual Murderers <i>Maurice Cusson and Jean Proulx</i>	143
	PART II THE BIRMINGHAM STUDY	157
10	A Comparison of Rapists and Sexual Murderers on Demographic and Selected Psychometric Measures <i>Caroline J. Oliver, Anthony R. Beech, Dawn Fisher and Richard Beckett</i>	159
11	Identification of Motivations for Sexual Murder <i>Dawn Fisher and Anthony R. Beech</i>	175
	PART III PRACTICAL ISSUES	191
12	The Role of Profiling in the Investigation of Sexual Homicide <i>Éric Beaugregard</i>	193
13	Psychotherapeutic and Psychodynamic Issues with Sexual Murderers <i>Monique Tardif, Benoît Dassylva and Alexandre Nicole</i>	213
	Conclusion <i>Jean Proulx</i>	229
	References	233
	Index	249

# INTRODUCTION

## SEXUAL MURDERERS: MYTH AND REALITY

*Maurice Cusson*

Why is it that sexual murder elicits such a striking mixture of revulsion and fascination from us? Perhaps it is because the sexual murderer, although a figure of evil, bridges the gap between the two antithetical realities of unbridled violence and sexual pleasure. Krafft-Ebing believed that this association can be traced back to the Marquis de Sade, that regular guest of French asylums and prisons from 1763 until his death in 1814. Sadism – for that is the name we know it by today – appeared to Kraft-Ebing to be the key, the direct link between violence and sexual pleasure.

Since then, the shadow of de Sade has hovered in the background of every study of sexual murder. Sexual murder is the culmination of an attack prepared with the express purpose of seeking pleasure, even orgasm, in the subjugation, rape and suffering of a carefully selected woman. Indeed, it is precisely because they obtain pleasure in the suffering and humiliation of women that sexual murderers torture and kill their victims. Most authors believe that this aberrant motivation originates in long-nurtured fantasies in which cruelty and sexual pleasure are intermingled. Once a sadist has experienced the pleasure of sexual murder, he develops an obsession for it and sets out on murderous hunts over and over again. Hardly surprising, therefore, that of all sexual murderers, it is the serial killer who predominates in literature – both professional and fictional. It goes without saying

## 2 INTRODUCTION

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that such monsters are clearly distinct from the run-of-the-mill lot of habitual thieves, violent criminals and, even, rapists. They are in a category of their own: obsessed by their fantasies, serial sexual murderers have only scorn for the petty crimes of robbery and assault.

When we began the research that forms the basis of most of the chapters of this book, we did not have the temerity to question the apparently implacable logic of the classic model of sexual murder. We did, however, know that the empirical foundation of this conceptual edifice was fragile, and that every relevant study had generalized from either a few cases or from small and unrepresentative samples, and furthermore that statistically valid conclusions were few and far between, and controversial in any event. To elucidate the phenomenon of sexual murder, it seemed to us, the logical next step was to rigorously verify the scientific validity of this apparently coherent and valid model. We therefore constructed a representative sample of sexual murderers, and systematically investigated the criminological, sexological, psychological and social characteristics of its members. Specifically, we approached every inmate incarcerated in Quebec in 1998 and 1999 for the sexual murder of a woman. Of the 57 inmates approached, 40 agreed to respond to our questions and submit to our tests. This sample is clearly different, in terms of both size and systematic recruitment, from other samples reported in the literature. It is in no way simply a collection of 'good cases' or 'monsters'.

Science often proceeds on the basis of comparison, and criminology is no different: criminals are compared to noncriminals, yesterday's patterns to today's. Consistent with this approach, we investigated the distinctive characteristics of the sexual murderers in our sample, through comparison of this group to sexual aggressors in a similarly constructed sample. To this end, every inmate incarcerated in federal penitentiaries in Quebec between 1995 and 2000 for the sexual assault of a woman was asked to participate in the study and respond to the same questions posed to sexual murderers. In all, 101 agreed. We also compared the sexual murderers in our sample to a sample of American serial murderers, and compared sadistic and nonsadistic offenders in our sample.

As the comparisons progressed, we had no choice but to face the obvious: our results raised serious questions about the dominant theory of sexual murder. The first surprises were that only a minority of sexual murderers were sadistic, and that sadism was much less important in the dynamics of murder than we had first thought. Another unexpected finding was the widespread similarity of sexual murderers and sexual aggressors: with very few exceptions, the two groups had similar criminal histories and personality disorders. This last similarity led us to a further discovery: the criminal histories of incarcerated sexual murderers and incarcerated career criminals were strangely similar. In both cases, the most common crimes were crimes against property and nonsexual assault.

The final surprise was a big one: among all the sexual murderers incarcerated in Quebec, there was only one serial killer of women (who refused to participate in our study). The conclusion was inescapable: unless one is to believe that Quebec police officers are incapable of catching serial murderers, this type of criminal is extremely rare in Quebec. Serial murderers are, it is true, more numerous in the United States, but the population there is some 45 times greater than that of Quebec. And even in the United States, they are hardly legion: Ressler interviewed only 36 in the entire American prison system. The illusion of numbers is only the product of media and literary frenzies.

In addition, a comparison of the single-victim sexual murderers in our sample and Ressler's serial killers revealed that the American serial killers were clearly more disturbed. It would thus be an error to equate sexual murderers and serial killers.

In summary then, sexual murderers are not as sadistic as we had thought, and are in fact little different than the sexual aggressors and broad-spectrum habitual criminals so familiar to criminologists. Can they then truly be called sexual murderers in the strictest sense of the term, i.e. members of a distinct category of criminals with a specific personality, history and criminal career? This answer is far from clear. What *is* clear, is that they had committed a sexual murder. And so we must ask: why? The reader will find the answer revealed bit by bit in the following pages. Without giving everything away, however, we would like to outline a few ideas that run through all our analyses, and which are more fully developed in the following chapters.

Among the sexual murderers in our sample, some exhibited a particularly strong intention for murder; in these, the primary intention – driven by rage, vengeance or sadism – was to kill. On the other hand, some murders started out as sexual assaults, with the death of the victim resulting from the murderer's excessive violence in the face of resistance to sexual relations, or the need to silence the only person capable of identifying him.

Sexual murder may be understood as the outcome of three factors: the murderer's personal history; the murderer's state of mind at the moment of the crime; and the specific circumstances of the attack. Most of the murderers in our sample (more than 60%) had substantial criminal records, typified by thefts of all kinds (the most common type of crime), nonsexual violent crimes and drug-related crimes. But virtually similar criminal records were also found among the sexual aggressors. Most sexual murders were thus preceded by a succession of varied, and in most cases nonsexual, crimes. This suggests that the general criminal proclivity invoked by criminologists to explain recidivism is also a factor in sexual murder. It can be further hypothesized that the commission of a crime as serious as murder requires a profound contempt for human life, and indeed for all rules, that is reinforced by a long history of unpunished transgressions.

## 4 INTRODUCTION

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If sexual murderers and sexual aggressors are so similar, why does the first group kill? Our results point to a nexus of developmental, intentional and situational factors. The sexual murderer is a man possessed by anger, if not rage, who drinks to excess, and who has a weapon close to hand. Which is to say that sexual aggressors who progress to murder are unhindered by inhibitions and scruples, in part because of alcohol consumption and their criminal background, and are so overcome with rage that they formulate a plan to kill or attack with ultimately fatal force.

And the sadists? Here we found a portrait similar to that reported by our predecessors – but only partially. As far as sexual preferences are concerned, we found essentially the classic clinical portrait. Once well ensconced in their reveries, the sadists in our sample – regardless of whether they had committed a murder or a sexual assault – wallow in fantasies of domination and violence. Phallometric evaluation revealed their preference for humiliating and violent scenarios. In particular, they like violent pornography. They are more likely than nonsadists to prepare their crime, and to choose their victims carefully. During the commission of the murder or sexual assault, they give full rein to their perverse nature, humiliating their victims and indulging in wanton violence much more often than nonsadists, and going as far as torture and mutilation.

Where our observations part company with the dominant model is on the question of the similarity of sadists and ordinary recidivists. The dominant model sees these two groups as quite distinct, the sadists being seen as exceptions by virtue of the fact that they lack criminal records. But this was not true in our sample: sadists had committed as many thefts and nonsexual violent crimes as nonsadists. This suggests that sadistic killing takes more than the mere contemplation of fantasies of humiliation and torture: it also takes fertile criminal soil.

Similarly, our results with regard to the role of anger and sexual motivation in sadistic sexual murder forced us to question the classic model. The sadists in our sample did not act in cold blood, and were motivated by more than the mere quest for orgasm. Even more so than the nonsadists, they hated women and were driven by rage, which rendered their attacks even more violent than they would have been had they been motivated by sexual desire alone. The personal histories of the sadists, riddled with hate and resentment, are consistent with this interpretation. Very early in their lives, future sadistic criminals are the object of humiliation, which leads them to social isolation and to take refuge in an imaginary world in which they keep their wounds green. Coupled with an aversion to women, this resentment nourishes an obsessive desire for vengeance.

For several reasons, we believe that rage is a factor in most sexual murders, although it may operate in two different ways. In nonsadistic murderers, rage is impulsive, an explosive reaction to frustration (for example, a woman's rebuffing of the murderer's advances). On the other hand, in sadistic murderers, it appears that hate long nurtured in solitude

leads to a premeditated attack. Filled as they are with resentment, and accustomed to associating violence and pleasure, sadists are predictably drawn to murder. And in fact this is what we found: sexual murders were twice as common among sadists as among nonsadists. In the latter group, sexual assault is the predominant crime, and is three times more prevalent than murder.

This book is composed of 13 chapters. Chapters 1 to 9 present the results of the *Montreal Study of Sexual Murderers*. Chapter 1 outlines our view of sexual murder, summarizes current knowledge on its frequency and critically reviews the principal explanatory theories. Chapter 2 adopts a developmental perspective. It presents our results concerning the childhood and adolescence of sexual murderers, compares them to those of sexual aggressors and examines the criminal careers of both groups. Chapter 3 examines the personality characteristics of sexual murderers and sexual aggressors, as measured by psychological tests, in order to identify any psychopathologies specific to sexual murderers. In Chapter 4, the focus is on the sexual murder as an event. What were the murderer's intentions at the time of the crime? What happened afterwards? Why did an attack which could have ended in sexual assault only in fact end in the death of a woman? Chapter 5 presents the results of a multivariate analysis in which all the variables presented in Chapters 2–4 that appear to contribute to the discrimination of sexual murderers from sexual aggressors were studied simultaneously. This statistical procedure revealed the existence of several factors which are related to the lethality of the sexual assault. This analysis is followed in Chapter 6 by a comparison of our sample of sexual murderers and the FBI sample of serial sexual murderers analysed by Ressler. Chapter 7 discusses sexual sadism. After a detailed examination of the literature, we compare the sadistic sexual aggressors in our sample to the nonsadistic sexual criminals (in this case, the samples of sexual murderers and sexual aggressors were merged). This comparison gave rise to a novel portrait of sadistic criminals. This analysis is further developed in Chapter 8, which is concerned with the distinction between the angry and sadistic types of sexual murderers: the first acts primarily out of anger and in a disorganized manner, while the second acts in a premeditated manner, and the suffering of his victim is the core component of his crime. In Chapter 9, the results of qualitative analyses are presented. Case studies are relied on heavily in our attempt to answer two questions: What motivates sexual murderers to commit their crimes? What was the criminal career of our subjects before they committed their last and worst crime? Chapters 10 and 11 present the results of the *Birmingham Study of Sexual Murderers*. Chapter 10 presents a comparison of sexual aggressors of women (rapists) and sexual murderers of women, whereas Chapter 11 contains an analysis of sexual murderers' motivations. Chapters 12 and 13 discuss *Practical Issues* related to sexual murderers. Chapter 12 discusses criminal profiling, a popular but controversial technique, while Chapter 13 formulates recommendations for treatment of sexual murderers.

## Chapter 1

# SEXUAL MURDER: DEFINITIONS, EPIDEMIOLOGY AND THEORIES

*Jean Proulx, Maurice Cusson and Éric Beaugard*

In the popular mind, the archetypal sexual murderer is someone like Ted Bundy, the intelligent, charming and manipulative American psychopath responsible for the death of scores of women. Because of the extensive media coverage of sexual murders, there is a widespread belief that this type of crime is common and that every woman is in fact in danger of becoming one of these monsters' next victims. But is this perception of sexual murderers and their crimes a true reflection of reality?

This chapter will summarize current understanding of sexual murders and sexual murderers. A definition of sexual murder will first be proposed. This will be followed by a presentation of the epidemiological data related to sexual murder, a review of the biological, psychological and sociological theories of sexual murder, and a description of the comparative studies that have identified characteristics specific to sexual murderers. Lastly, the conceptual framework of this book, as well as some methodological issues, will be discussed.

## DEFINITIONS

The first obstacle to characterizing sexual murder is the absence of any legal definition. As Roberts and Grossman (1993) point out, the *Criminal*

*Code of Canada* contains no provision specific to sexual murder. While the *Code* does of course contain sections related to murders committed during sexual crimes, the only charge prescribed by these is first-degree murder, regardless of premeditation. In fact, the sexual nature of a sexual murder is considered relevant only for the purposes of determining sentence. Furthermore, application of the sections concerning murder committed during a sexual crime presupposes that the homicide has actually been identified as a sexual murder – a difficult task in the absence of victim testimony.

When investigators attempt to solve a murder and decide whether it is sexual in nature, they rely on two types of information: testimony, of either the murderer or someone else, and material evidence, of which the crime scene is the key source. Ressler, Burgess and Douglas (1988) consider a murder sexual if at least one of the following is true: (1) the victim is found totally or partially naked; (2) the genitals are exposed; (3) the body is found in a sexually explicit position; (4) an object has been inserted into a body cavity (anus, vagina, mouth); (5) there is evidence of sexual contact; (6) there is evidence of substitutive sexual activity (for example, masturbation and ejaculation at the crime scene) or of sadistic sexual fantasies (for example, genital mutilation). The main obstacle to the exploitation of this type of evidence is the failure of some police officers to recognize it as sexual.

The definition of sexual murder also poses problems of a purely lexical nature. In practice, the terms 'sexual murder', 'serial murder', 'mass murder', and 'sadistic (lust) murder' are often used interchangeably (Langevin, 1991; McKenzie, 1995; Myers, 2002). However, a murder should only be classified as a mass murder if it results in at least three deaths at the same location and time. In contrast, a serial murder comprises a series of events separated from one another by emotional cool-off periods. Mass and serial murders may or may not be sexual, and serial and nonserial sexual murders may or may not be sadistic. These lexical confusions can result in research weaknesses: while some published studies have used samples comprising solely sadistic sexual murderers, others have relied upon heterogeneous samples comprising both sexual and nonsexual serial murderers. Our understanding of the specific features of sexual murder has been hindered by the extreme difficulty of comparing the results of such diverse studies to one another.

A final problem related to the definition of sexual murder has been the failure of some researchers to take into account differences in the sex and age of the victims. In several cases, murders of women, of men and of children have been considered to belong to a single category, despite the fact there is no evidence that these types of sexual murders are part of a homogeneous phenomenon. Because of the absence of any such evidence, on the contrary, it is essential that definitions of sexual murder take into account the age and sex of the victims.

## EPIDEMIOLOGY

In Canada, between 1974 and 1986, there were 305 sexual murders, i.e. approximately 23 murders annually (Roberts & Grossman, 1993). These represented approximately 4% of all murders in this period. In 1999, there were 22 sexual murders, representing 4.1% of all murders (Porter & Woodworth, 2001). The Canadian rate of sexual murder thus appears to have remained stable over the last three decades. The victims have been overwhelmingly female (85%) and younger than 30 years (69%). Virtually all (99%) the sexual murderers have been male, and half have been between 16 and 25 years old (Roberts & Grossman, 1993).

In the United States, the situation appears to be different. Between 1991 and 1995, sexual murders accounted for only 0.9% of all murders (Meloy, 2000). An average of 199.6 sexual murders were committed annually over this period, equivalent to a rate of 0.09 sexual murders per 100,000 people per year. The rate of sexual murder in Canada in 1999 was also 0.09 per 100,000 people. There was thus no difference in the rate of sexual murder in the two countries. However, because the overall murder rate is much higher in the United States than it is in Canada, the percentage of murders represented by sexual murder is much lower than it is in Canada (Cusson, 1999).

Serial sexual murderers account for only a small proportion of all sexual murderers. In the United States, between 1975 and 1999, 153 serial murderers were responsible for more than 1400 deaths, a rate of approximately 70 victims per year. Overall, 60% of serial murderers are sexual murderers as well (Geberth, 1995). Thus, between 1975 and 1999, serial sexual murderers were responsible for 42 victims annually, i.e. for almost 20% of all sexual-murder victims. Because serial sexual murderers kill an average of 10 victims each, it follows that they account for approximately 2% of all sexual murderers in the United States. The situation is similar in Canada, where serial sexual murderers account for only 3% of incarcerated sexual murderers (Beauregard & Proulx, 2002). Given these statistics, it is surprising that publications on serial sexual murderers are so prevalent in the literature on sexual murder. This state of affairs led Fox and Levin (1999) to conclude that 'there may be more scholars studying serial murder than there are offenders committing it' (p. 166). Clearly, studies of sexual murder that focus on serial killers shed limited light on the phenomenon of sexual murder as a whole.

In the previous section, it was pointed out that ambiguous evidence or testimony may result in the sexual nature of some murders going undetected (Ressler et al., 1988). This may result in the underestimation of the number of sexual murders. Hickey (1997) mentions two other situations that lead to the underestimation of sexual murders: the destruction of the body of a victim; and the failure to report the disappearance of a victim to the police. In the former, the crime will be considered a missing persons case. In the latter case,

common when the victim is socially marginal or lacks well-established social networks, e.g. a prostitute, the crime will not even be considered a missing persons case. Nonetheless, as Roberts and Grossman (1993) point out, almost all the victims of sexual murder are indeed correctly classified, and the solution rate for these crimes is approximately 75%.

### **THEORIES**

Several theories of sexual murder have been advanced. Unfortunately, empirical evidence for any of them is limited. Several of the theories rely solely on clinical observations, and some are based on small study groups. Furthermore, many of the theories are derived from populations comprising only a single type of sexual murderer, namely serial sexual murderers or sadistic sexual murderers, both of which represent only a small percentage of incarcerated sexual murderers (Fox & Levin, 1999). A final caveat is that in no case do the theories take into account more than a limited number of factors. Despite these limitations, these theories make valuable contributions, and the following sections discuss their principal features and empirical bases. The theories can be grouped into three broad categories: biological theories, psychological theories and sociological theories.

#### **Biological theories**

Money's (1990) biological theory of sadistic sexual murder (erotophonophilia) is based on a single clinical case and the scientific literature on the biological basis of violence. In this theory, the sexual stimulation of the sadistic sexual murderer arises from the physical and psychological suffering of the victims in his sexual fantasies or actual crimes. According to Money, the main cause of sexual sadism is a tumour in, or trauma to, the limbic system (comprising the hippocampus, hypothalamus and amygdaloid nucleus), the region of the brain that controls sexual and attack behaviours. Lesions of this system are thought to cause sexual sadism by facilitating the transmission of messages that simultaneously trigger sexual and attack behaviours. The lesions may be quite subtle, and impossible to detect through medical examination. Also, as with epilepsy, the cerebral dysfunction is episodic.

Although Money (1990) considers neurological factors to be the primary cause of sadistic sexual murder, he points out that endocrinological and genetic factors are also at play. Thus, sadistic murderers may have testosterone deficits that result in diminished virility, which in turn causes compensatory hypermasculine behaviours such as sexual murder. This type of criminal may also possess a genetic predisposition towards emotional instability (for example, rage or sexual arousal) and impulsive behaviour.

Money believes that sexual sadism may also have psychological roots. For example, a history of childhood sexual abuse or dysfunctional family relationships may increase the risk of sexual sadism. Furthermore, some intercurrent mental disorders – such as dissociative syndrome, bipolar disorder, or even epilepsy – may facilitate sadistic sexual murder.

While Money's model is coherent, it is not derived from actual research on the role of biological (neurological, endocrinological or genetic) factors in sexual murder. In fairness, however, it should be noted that there is some evidence of a noteworthy prevalence (18–40%) of neurological disorders among sexual criminals (Gratzer & Bradford, 1995; Hucker, 1997; Hucker et al., 1988; Langevin, 1991; Langevin et al., 1988; McKenzie, 1995; Stone, 1994). Nevertheless, this evidence is insufficient to establish a causal relationship between any biological variables and the commission of sexual murder. Consequently, the biological factors included in Money's model remain only *possible* causes of sexual murder: empirical studies are required to clarify their role.

## Psychological theories

### *Classical (respondent) conditioning*

Meloy (2000) posits that sexual arousal in sexual murderers is a conditioned response to the conditioned stimuli of coercion and violence. As an illustration of this process of classical conditioning, consider an adolescent who watches horror films in which naked women are killed by monsters. In Phase 1, the sight of naked women is an unconditioned stimulus that triggers sexual arousal as an unconditioned response. However, violent behaviour towards women (i.e. a neutral stimulus) triggers no such response. In Phase 2, the neutral stimulus (violent behaviour towards women) becomes a conditioned stimulus through its repeated association with the unconditioned stimulus (naked women). In Phase 3, the conditioned stimulus (violent behaviour towards women) is sufficient to provoke a conditioned response of sexual arousal.

MacCulloch, Snowden, Wood and Mills (1983) note that the observed progressive escalation of the violence of fantasies and crimes can be explained by the process of habituation. According to these authors, the sexual arousal generated by a violent sexual fantasy or violent sexual crime decreases with repetition, driving sexual murderers to increasingly violent stimuli (fantasies, crimes) in order to obtain the same, high, level of sexual arousal.

### *Operant conditioning*

MacCulloch et al. (1983) have also suggested that sadistic sexual fantasies constitute operant behaviours that diminish feelings of incompetence.

Consider the sexual murderer whose interpersonal difficulties with women make him feel incompetent. In such an individual, sadistic sexual fantasies may result in feelings of power and control. The probability of such fantasies recurring when the murderer experiences feelings of incompetence is increased by the efficacy of these fantasies in reducing such feelings (negative reinforcement).

Classical and operant conditioning theories appear to be promising avenues of explanation for the initiation and progression of violent sexual fantasies and behaviours. However, the hypotheses have yet to be tested in empirical studies.

### *Psychodynamic approaches*

According to Revitch and Schlesinger (1981, 1989), there are two types of sexual murders: catathymic and compulsive. Catathymic murders are a form of symbolic matricide, in which the murderer's intense and invasive rage towards his mother is displaced to another woman. Such rage may have many origins, including: (1) an overprotective mother; (2) a seductive mother; (3) a mother with inappropriate sexual behaviour (for example, prostitution); and (4) a mother who infantilizes or feminizes her son. The catathymic process comprises three phases: (1) incubation, during which tension and rage are accumulated; (2) the murder itself; (3) relief following the expression of the rage (Revitch, 1980). In general, catathymic murder is an isolated event that involves only one victim, specifically a woman known to the murderer (Revitch, 1965).

Compulsive sexual murders are the work of loners who nurture feelings of rage towards women (Revitch & Schlesinger, 1989), and spend considerable time lost in sadistic sexual fantasies (Schlesinger, 2000). These fantasies induce a state of sexual tension which, when finally unbearable, precipitates a murder. The emotional and sexual gratification attendant on the murder reduces this tension. Compulsive sexual murderers usually attack victims unknown to them. A great many of them become serial sexual murderers (Schlesinger & Revitch, 1997).

Revitch and Schlesinger's model of sexual murder is based on their clinical analysis of 43 individuals, only nine of whom were sexual murderers. While their theory of catathymic sexual murder is based on an empirically unverifiable psychodynamic paradigm (Fox & Levin, 1999), it should be noted that the displacement process they invoke has been demonstrated in laboratory experiments (Tedeschi & Norman, 1985). Their explanation of compulsive murder, on the other hand, is inherently descriptive (sadistic sexual fantasies, sexual tension, sexual murder, sexual gratification) and therefore includes few interpretative elements.

The theme of matricentric rage is also at the heart of Stone's (1994) explanatory model of sexual murder. After clinical analysis of 42 biographies of serial sexual murderers, Stone concluded that sexual murder is

always an act of displaced vengeance against a mother who humiliated the murderer or exhibited inappropriate sexual behaviour.

According to Meloy (2000), matricentric rage stems from an abnormal child–mother differentiation process. This conclusion is based on Stoller's (1978) theory, which argues that boys who are unsuccessful in differentiating themselves from their mothers develop not only an ambiguous masculine identity but also sexual perversions that allow them to indirectly express their rage against their dominating and controlling mothers.

Finally, Liebert's (1985) psychodynamic model is based on the theories of Klein (1948) and Kernerg (1975). According to this model, maternal hostility during a child's early psychological development favours splitting, an archaic defence mechanism, which enables the child to cope with its paranoid anguish. This results in a vision of interpersonal relations in which the Other is either totally good or totally evil. Sexual murderers see their victims as the embodiment of evil, and displace their rage, from their hostile mothers to surrogate female victims.

### *The motivational model*

A group of researchers associated with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) have developed a motivational model of sexual murder (Burgess et al., 1986; Burgess et al., 1994; Douglas et al., 1992; Ressler et al., 1988; Ressler, Burgess, Douglas et al., 1986; Ressler, Burgess, Hartman et al., 1986). This model is based on data collected during interviews with 36 sexual murderers who had killed a total of 118 victims. The majority of the subjects in this study (25/36) were serial sexual murderers. The majority of victims were female (82%) and older than 13 years (88%).

According to the FBI researchers, both the fantasy and the act of sexual murder are inappropriate coping strategies used by murderers in the face of stressful situations. This propensity for sexual murder is the result of a long process that comprises the following steps:

1. In early childhood, the absence of care and affection establishes a problematic attachment style characterized by detachment and hostility.
2. During childhood and adolescence, sexual, physical or psychological victimization experiences result in social isolation and favour the emergence of violent sexual fantasies which compensate for the absence of real-life control. Masturbatory activities reinforce the coping role of fantasies in the psychological world of the developing sexual murderer.
3. The negative personality traits (rebelliousness, aggressivity, feelings of entitlement, desire for vengeance) that develop in the preceding steps interfere with the development of gratifying social relationships, prosocial values and empathy. Consequently, both social isolation and preferential reliance on sexual fantasies as a substitute source of affective

stimulation grow. In these fantasies, the future murderer, unconstrained by reality, assumes a grandiose and omnipotent role.

4. Aggressive fantasies are concretized as nonlethal destructive actions such as arson, animal cruelty and physical, sexual and psychological violence towards those both close to and unknown to the future murderer. The future murderer experiences these behaviours both as an extension of the power he assumes in his fantasies and vengeance for injustices he has experienced.
5. The first sexual murder is precipitated by an intense stressor, such as conflict with a woman (59%), conflict with parents (53%) or financial difficulties (48%).
6. Following the first murder, the murderer's fantasies become richer and even more invasive. When the next stressful episode occurs, the murderer plans his next crime, in which he not only attempts to reduce the risks of being caught, but also maximizes the congruence of the crime to his fantasies.

This motivational model of sexual murder has many strengths. Firstly, it has an empirical basis, namely in-depth interviews with, and official files (police reports, court files) related to, 36 sexual murderers. Furthermore, the model is particularly comprehensive, as it takes into account developmental factors, personal characteristics and situational factors. Nevertheless, the model does have some limitations. First, the study group is not a random sample (Godwin, 2000), and serial sexual murderers are over-represented in it. Secondly, it is not possible to identify factors specific to sexual murderers, as the FBI study did not use a comparison group. Finally, the study does not differentiate between sexual murderers of women, of men and of children – all of whom were present in the study group – despite the fact that these three types of murderers may be so different as to justify separate studies (Beauregard & Proulx, in press; Beauregard et al., in press).

Social isolation and deviant sexual fantasies are the two central elements of the FBI's motivational model. The conclusions of other studies agree with those of the FBI and underscore the importance of these two factors. McKenzie (1995), for example, found that 55% of the 20 serial sexual murderers he studied were socially isolated, and Grubin (1994) considered sexual murder to be directly and indirectly related to social isolation. In the latter's opinion, social isolation is a symptom of a psychopathology that itself leads to sexual murder; furthermore, in the absence of interpersonal contacts, sexual murderers rely on their inner worlds and fantasies for emotional gratification. Finally, Marshall (1989a) has mentioned that loneliness is a source of psychological suffering and can engender violence.

Brittain (1970) considered deviant sexual fantasies to be at the heart of the process that culminates in sexual murder. In his view, these fantasies are the mechanism by which individuals compensate for low self-esteem. In fact, sexual murderers, in their fantasies and crimes, perceive themselves to be

superior to others, and even omnipotent (see also Hazelwood & Warren, 1995; MacCulloch et al., 1983; Meloy, 2000). In addition, Prentky, Burgess et al. (1989) suggest that such fantasies are the cause of serial sexual murders. This is supported by their finding that 86% of serial sexual murderers in their study ( $N = 25$ ), but only 23% ( $N = 21$ ) of nonserial sexual murderers, reported homicidal fantasies. Other studies have also reported a high prevalence of aggressive sexual fantasies among serial sexual murderers (Myers, Burgess & Nelson, 1998; Ressler et al., 1988; Warren, Hazelwood & Dietz, 1996). With repetition, the fantasies preceding the first sexual murder lose much of their gratifying power (due to habituation), which precipitates a quest for emotional intensity that culminates in a sexual murder that concretizes the fantasies (Gacono & Meloy, 1994). In sexual murderers, coercive sexual fantasies are also thought to facilitate the progression from the first murder to subsequent ones, as they are reinforced by masturbatory activities (Meloy, 2000). Furthermore, as new elements are introduced into the fantasies, the murderer is stimulated to undertake new murders that concretize them.

### *Paraphilias and sexual murder*

Several studies have reported the presence of a high prevalence of paraphilias among sexual murderers (Arrigo & Purcell, 2001; Dietz, Hazelwood & Warren, 1990; Gratzer & Bradford, 1995; Langevin et al., 1988; McKenzie, 1995; Prentky, Burgess et al., 1989). The most frequently encountered paraphilias are sexual sadism, fetishism, exhibitionism and voyeurism. According to Prentky, Burgess et al. (1989), individuals who exhibit paraphilias prefer the world of fantasy to that of reality, and are constantly searching for new fantasies that increase their sexual pleasure. Because of habituation, the maintenance of a high level of pleasure requires an escalation of the coercive nature of the murderer's sexual fantasies and behaviours. Voyeurism, exhibitionism, rape and sexual murder are thus simply stages of a paraphilic continuum.

### *Psychopathologies and sexual murder*

Several divergent positions have been taken with regard to the role of psychopathological factors in sexual murder. Some authors believe that sexual murderers are schizophrenic (Revitch, 1965), while others suggest dissociative disorders (Watkins, 1984) or obsessive-compulsive disorders (Brown, 1991) are at play. In addition, sexual murder appears to be associated with a variety of personality disorder, including psychopathy (Dietz, 1986), antisocial personality disorder (Yarvis, 1995), borderline personality disorder (Gacono & Meloy, 1994) and schizoid personality disorder (Myers & Monaco, 2000). Debate over the relationship between sexual murder and psychopathological factors will be discussed in Chapter 3.

### Sociological theories

Leyton (1986) developed a socio-historical theory of serial sexual murder in which this crime transcends temporary personal frustrations and the quest for immediate gratification. According to this theory, sexual murder is 'a kind of sustained sub-political campaign directed towards the timelessness of oppression and the order of power' (p. 331). The specific features of sexual murder are thus reflections of specific socio-historical contexts: 'It is precisely at the point in time when a single class is most threatened that we expect to find some members of that class beginning to fantasize about killing members of another class' (p. 376).

Serial sexual murders were rare before the nineteenth century. In traditional communal societies, most people enjoyed a modest standard of living, and mutual help was the rule, competition the exception. In this world, sexual murderers were members of a select social group – nobles – and their prey were members of the peasantry. The constructed meaning of sexual murders committed by nobles is rooted in the crisis of feudalism that started at the end of the Middle Ages. These crimes were the expression of a desire to restore the absolute power of the nobility, which was threatened by the claims of peasants and merchants.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth century, serial sexual murderers were members of the *petite bourgeoisie*, and their victims were servants or prostitutes. The social meaning of their crimes can be found in the murderers' need to negate the insecurity associated with their newly acquired social position. Servants and prostitutes with their coarse and vulgar ways were the cesspool into which they feared to return.

The new social dynamics that emerged after the end of the Second World War resulted in yet another change in the face of the serial sexual murderer. The sexual murderer is now an ambitious, but untalented, young man from the middle class, and his victims belong to the social class to which he aspires. Thus, sexual murder has become a way of exacting revenge on an unattainable social class, an outlet for failed aspirations. In this analysis, the relatively high rate of serial sexual murder in the United States can be understood as a reflection of a dominant culture that exalts upward social mobility and tolerates violence as a problem-solving strategy.

From a strictly intellectual perspective, Leyton's model is seductive. However, it rests on a tenuous empirical base, namely the biographies of only a few serial sexual murderers. Furthermore, Leyton's theory is rhetorically unsatisfying. For if sexual murder does indeed fulfil a political function – the struggle against oppression – why are there so few murderers of this type? Furthermore, the selection of biographies of pre-twentieth-century sexual murderers is subject to sampling bias, as it is probable that the crimes of the nobility or *bourgeoisie* elicited greater interest than those of the peasantry or proletariat. Finally, it is possible that the choice of victims is a function of criminal opportunity, and is totally unrelated to

social conflict (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Miethe & McCorkle, 1998). It should be recalled, in this connection, that in the nineteenth century servants and prostitutes were common, in contrast to 'guardians' likely to interfere with the criminal intentions of a serial murderer.

It is possible to see the biological, psychological and sociological theories of sexual murder as various levels of description of the same phenomenon: that is, as complementary rather than mutually exclusive explanations. However, given the current level of understanding of sexual murder, it is essential to conduct empirical studies designed to verify the hypotheses derived from these theories. A further necessity is the performance of comparative studies in order to identify the characteristics that differentiate serial sexual murderers from nonserial sexual murderers and from sexual aggressors. The following section takes up this theme.

### **COMPARISON OF NONSERIAL SEXUAL MURDERERS, SEXUAL AGGRESSORS AND SERIAL SEXUAL MURDERERS**

To our knowledge, very few studies of nonserial sexual murderers have included a comparison group composed of other types of sexual offenders. In fact, only three studies have compared nonserial sexual murderers to sexual aggressors of women (Grubin, 1994; Langevin et al., 1988; Milsom, Webster & Beech, 2001), and only one study has compared nonserial and serial sexual murderers (Prentky, Knight et al., 1989). This section will first present the results of these studies, and subsequently interpret them in the light of the theories of sexual murder outlined in the preceding section.

#### **Nonserial sexual murderers and sexual aggressors of women**

Langevin et al. (1988) conducted the first, and still the most comprehensive, comparative study of nonserial sexual murderers. Although a broad range of developmental, psychological and criminological variables were analysed, the generalizability of their results is seriously limited by the small number of subjects studied (13 nonsexual murderers, 13 nonserial sexual murderers and 13 sexual aggressors of women). A further limitation is the study's biased sample, as only sexual aggressors having committed nonviolent sexual assaults were included. Grubin (1994) compared nonserial sexual murderers ( $N = 21$ ) to sexual aggressors of women ( $N = 121$ ). While this study is noteworthy for the significant number of subjects, it investigated a narrower range of variables, particularly psychological and developmental ones, than did Langevin et al.'s (1988). Finally, Milsom et al. (2001) studied a limited number of variables in two small samples, namely 19 nonserial sexual murderers and 16 sexual aggressors of women.

**Table 1.1** Sociodemographic and developmental characteristics of three types of violent criminals

Characteristics	Langevin et al. (1988)			Grubin (1994)		Milsom et al. (2001)	
	NSM (N = 13)	SM (N = 13)	SAW (N = 13)	SM (N = 21)	SAW (N = 121)	SM (N = 19)	SAW (N = 16)
<b>Sociodemographic</b>							
Age (years)				30	26*		
Number of jobs held	3	7	1				
<b>Developmental</b>							
Social isolation prior to age 18		45%	83%	43%	19%*	+	-
Behaviour problems at school	18%	80%	0%*				
Running away from home	11%	62%	33%				
Enuresis beyond age 5	33%	83%	100%*				
Temper tantrums	40%	39%	40%				
Cruelty towards animals	10%						
Father present prior to age 10				76%	52%		
Father violent		+	-				
Mother present prior to age 10				71%	65%		
Mother controlling						+	-
Deviant sexual fantasies prior to age 18		17%	83%			+	-
Violent hobbies	40%			50%	50%		
Previously charged with a sexual crime	0.33	0.67	3.0*	29%	7%		
Previously charged with a violent crime				50%	50%		

\*  $p < 0.05$

An examination of the developmental variables presented in Table 1.1 reveals that nonserial sexual murderers are more likely than sexual aggressors of women to have experienced social isolation (Grubin, 1994; Milsom et al., 2001) and to have run away from home (Langevin et al., 1988). The prevalence of controlling mothers (Milsom et al., 2001), as well of violent fathers (Langevin et al., 1988), was higher among sexual murderers than among sexual aggressors. Finally, the prevalence of deviant sexual fantasies was higher among sexual murderers (Milsom et al., 2001).

These results highlight certain developmental characteristics that distinguish sexual murderers from sexual aggressors of women. Several of them – social isolation (Brittain, 1970; Ressler et al., 1988), hostility towards a dominant mother (Revitch & Schlesinger, 1989) and deviant sexual fantasies that compensate for a lack of control in the real world (MacCulloch et al., 1983; Ressler et al., 1988) – have found a place in theories of sexual murder. It is worth emphasizing that these comparative studies confirm the theoretical relevance of developmental factors in attempts to understand nonserial sexual murderers. These studies also indicate that sexual murderers and aggressors share a number of problematic behaviours, such as cruelty towards animals and temper tantrums.

Turning now to psychological factors, we see, in Table 1.2, that over-controlled anger is more prevalent among sexual murderers (Grubin, 1994). Furthermore, a diagnosis of antisocial personality was more common among sexual murderers than among sexual aggressors of women (Langevin et al., 1988), although the former scored lower on the psychopathy scale (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, MMPI) than did sexual aggressors. How should we interpret this contradiction? A plausible explanation is that clinicians have a tendency, in judicial contexts, to formulate judgements about the crime – in this case, sexual murder, the ultimate antisocial act – rather than about the criminal. The MMPI, in contrast, evaluates the sexual murderer rather than the murder.

In Langevin et al.'s (1988) study, sexual murderers exhibited higher IQs and higher testosterone levels than did sexual aggressors. This latter result is consistent with Money's (1990) biological model. However, sexual murderers were little different than sexual aggressors with regard to the frequency of brain damage, which was relatively common in both groups of sexual offenders and totally absent in nonsexual murderers.

Paraphilias were more common among sexual murderers than among sexual aggressors of women (Grubin, 1994; Langevin et al., 1988). The most frequently reported paraphilias were voyeurism, transvestism and sadism. Sexual murderers also exhibited phallometric responses consistent with a sexual preference for sadistic behaviours. The results of these comparative studies with regard to paraphilias agree with Prentky, Knight et al.'s (1989) model.

Table 1.3 summarizes the comparative studies' results with regard to the pre-crime phase. Adult sexual murderers were more socially and sexually

**Table 1.2** Psychological characteristics of three types of violent criminals

Characteristics	Langevin et al. (1988)		Grubin (1994)		Milsom et al. (2001)	
	NSM (N = 13)	SM (N = 13)	SM (N = 21)	SAW (N = 121)	SM (N = 19)	SAW (N = 16)
<b>Personality</b>						
Psychopathy (MMPI score)	88	60				
Antisocial personality (DSM)	15%	58%				
Personality disorders	54%	83%				
Overcontrolled anger			38%	18%*		
Hypochondria			52%	20%		
IQ (mean)	104	109				
<b>Biological factors</b>						
Brain damage	0%	40%				
High testosterone level	14%	71%				
<b>Paraphilias</b>						
Paraphilia					43%	26%
Voyeurism	17%	54%				
Transvestism	8%	54%				
Sadism (behaviour)	8%	75%				
Sadism (phallometry)		44%				

\*  $p < 0.05$

NSM: nonsexual murderer; SM: sexual murderer; SAW: sexual aggressor of women

**Table 1.3** Characteristics of the pre-crime and crime phases in three groups of violent criminals

Characteristics	Langevin et al. (1988)		Grubin (1994)		Milsom et al. (2001)	
	NMSM (N = 13)	SM (N = 13)	SM (N = 21)	SAW (N = 121)	SM (N = 19)	SAW (N = 16)
<b>Pre-crime (older than 18)</b>						
Deviant sexual fantasies			5%	7%		
Social isolation			29%	5%*		
Lives alone			43%	22%*		
No sexual partner			38%	15%*		
Little sexual experience			62%	19%*		
At least one characteristic of social isolation			86%	45%		
<b>Pre-crime (preceding 48 hours)</b>						
Anger	25%	69%	50%			
Alcohol/drugs	54%	25%	43%		+	-
<b>Crime</b>						
Age of the victim (years)	36	20	38.3	28.2*		
Victim unknown to criminal	8%	69%		82%*		
Victim female	38%	92%		100%*		
Use of a weapon	100%	100%		42%		
Murder by strangulation	8%	71%		24%		
Murder by firearm	46%	8%		39%		

\*  $p < 0.05$

NMSM: nonsexual murderer; SM: sexual murderer; SAW: sexual aggressor of women

+: subjects in this group exhibited the characteristic in question more often than did the group indicated by-

isolated than were sexual aggressors of women (Grubin, 1994). However, deviant sexual fantasies appear to be virtually absent in both groups. These astonishing results probably reflect the forensic context of the data collection. It must be recalled that sexual offenders are only likely to reveal their sexual fantasies if they believe such revelations will not have negative consequences; this condition does not appear to have been true in Grubin's study. Nevertheless, these results unequivocally confirm the importance of social and sexual isolation, reported in Brittain's (1970) seminal clinical profile of sexual murderers.

In sexual murderers, the dominant feature of the hours preceding the crime is anger (Grubin, 1994; Langevin et al., 1988; Milsom et al., 2001), whereas in sexual aggressors of women it is intoxication with psychoactive substances. According to Langevin et al. (1988), these pre-crime differences can be explained by the fact that sexual murderers may experience less sexual pleasure when they are intoxicated. It may also be that control over the offending process, which is incompatible with excessive consumption of alcohol and drugs, is more important to sexual murderers.

There is little difference in the features of the crime phases of sexual murderers and sexual aggressors. Both types of offenders, in most cases, choose victims who are female and unknown to them (Langevin et al., 1988). The differences with regard to victim age and the use of weapons reported by Grubin and by Langevin et al. may reflect differences in sampling procedures. A final noteworthy finding is that sexual murderers most often killed their victims by strangulation, while nonsexual murderers used firearms.

Overall, the results of these three comparative studies are consistent with the theories of sexual murder outlined previously. In summary, nonserial sexual murderers can be distinguished from sexual aggressors of women by their greater social isolation and anger, and by a higher prevalence of deviant sexual fantasies and paraphilias. These results should be interpreted prudently, however, given the studies' limitations, already outlined.

### **Nonserial sexual murderers and serial sexual murderers**

Prentky, Knight et al.'s (1989) study is the only one, to our knowledge, to compare serial sexual murderers (i.e. murderers responsible for at least three deaths) to nonserial sexual murderers (i.e. murderers responsible for one or two deaths). The serial-murder group was composed of 25 of the 36 murderers in the FBI study (Burgess et al., 1986), while the nonserial-murder group comprised seven subjects from the FBI study and 10 subjects from the Massachusetts Treatment Center (MTC). The constitution of the nonserial-murder group is less than ideal, as it relied on recruitment from two different sources: whereas the FBI researchers interviewed each

**Table 1.4** Characteristics of serial and nonserial sexual murderers

Characteristic	Serial murderers ( <i>N</i> = 25)	Nonserial murderers ( <i>N</i> = 17)
IQ > 110	58%	29%
Exhibitionism	25%	7%
Voyeurism	75%	43%*
Fetishism	71%	33%*
Transvestism	25%	0%*
Deviant sexual fantasies	86%	23%*
Compulsive masturbation	70%	50%
Planned crime	42%	41%
Organized crime scene	68%	24%*

\**p* < 0.05

Source: Prentky et al., 1989

subject in person and analyzed his police file, the MTC study relied solely on the subjects' clinical files. In addition, different sampling strategies were used to construct the groups. Despite these methodological flaws, however, the study sheds new light on both serial and nonserial sexual murders.

The characteristics of serial and nonserial sexual murderers are presented in Table 1.4. The most striking feature is the significant proportion of serial sexual murderers with superior intelligence, i.e. IQs above 110. Serial sexual murderers also reported deviant sexual fantasies more often than did nonserial sexual murderers, and were associated with organized crime scenes more often than were nonserial sexual murderers. According to Prentky, Knight et al. (1989), a high IQ is unrelated to the content or vividness of deviant sexual fantasies, but does favour the transposition of these fantasies to reality, i.e. the degree of organization of the crime. These authors also hypothesize that deviant sexual fantasies are the cause of repetitive sexual murder. However, they emphasize that the presence of deviant sexual fantasies does not in itself explain sexual murder, serial or not.

The prevalence of paraphilias was also higher among serial sexual murderers than among nonserial sexual murderers. More specifically, the two groups differ with regard to the prevalence of voyeurism, fetishism and transvestism. According to Prentky, Knight et al. (1989), these paraphilias reinforce the sexual fantasy world of sexual murderers, to the detriment of appropriate interpersonal relationships. The results concerning sexual murderers' fantasies and paraphilias are consistent with the FBI's motivational model. In fact, the presence of fantasies and paraphilias is proportional to the intensity of the criminal activity of both serial and nonserial sexual murderers.

## THE MONTREAL STUDY OF SEXUAL MURDERERS OF WOMEN

### Objectives

Virtually all theories of sexual murder rest on limited empirical bases. In some cases, there is a limited amount of data from a limited number of subjects (Leyton, 1986; Money, 1990). In others, the sample is biased by the overrepresentation of serial murderers (Burgess et al., 1986). In yet others, sexual murderers of women, of children and of men are grouped together, despite the fact that it is possible that the three types of sexual murderers differ with respect to their development, motivation and offending process. Finally, it should be noted that the narratives of sexual murderers are often the only source of data available.

Comparative studies identify the factors that distinguish sexual murderers from sexual aggressors, as well as the characteristics of serial sexual murderers. Unfortunately, few comparative studies have been conducted, and those few have significant limitations. These limitations include small study groups, which restricts the generalization of the results, and the analysis of only a small number of variables, which reduces the scope for comparisons.

The main objective of the Montreal Study was therefore to determine whether there are characteristics that distinguish sexual murderers of women from sexual aggressors of women. In order to avoid the pitfalls of previous studies, care was taken to ensure that the two samples were both of respectable size and, as they included only murderers of women, relatively homogeneous. Care was also taken to avoid the over-representation of serial sexual murderers. In fact, our sample, which is almost a population in itself, includes 70.7% of the sexual murderers incarcerated in the province of Quebec (approximate population of Quebec in 2000: 7 million) at the time of data collection. However, our sample included no serial murderers, and there was only one among the potential subjects who refused to participate in the study. As we can see – and contrary to popular belief – Ted Bundy is hardly the archetype of the sexual murderer.

The variables analysed were selected to ensure an exhaustive inventory of developmental, psychological and situational factors related to sexual murder. Finally, to improve the quality of the results, data was collected from both official records (police reports, victim statements, correctional files) and subject narratives.

### Methods

#### *Subjects*

In this study, 40 nonserial sexual murderers of women (i.e. of females at least 14 years old) were evaluated. Five murderers had killed two victims.

Subjects with close emotional relationships with the victims (spouses, ex-spouses) were excluded, as such relationships influence the modus operandi (St-Yves, Granger & Brien, 1998). The mean age of the murderers at the time of incarceration was 32.3 years (s.d. 10.4 years). At the time of their crimes, 75% were single, 7.5% were separated, divorced or widowed, and 17.5% were in traditional or common-law marriages. The majority of these murderers were white (95.0%); blacks and other groups each accounted for 2.5% of the sample. These murderers represent 70.7% of the population of sexual murderers of women ( $N = 57$ ) incarcerated in Quebec at the time of data collection (1998–99).

The comparison group was composed of 101 sexual aggressors of women (i.e. of females at least 14 years old). None had close emotional relationships with their victims. The mean age of the sexual aggressors at the time of incarceration was 32.8 years (s.d. 8.9 years). At the time of their crimes, 48.5% were single, 13.0% were separated, divorced or widowed, and 38.5% were in traditional or common-law marriages. Whites accounted for 78.2% of the sample, blacks for 15.8%, Aboriginal peoples for 5% and other groups for 1.0%. This group of 101 sexual aggressors represents 93.5% of the 108 subjects whose participation in this study was requested from 1995 to 2000.

At the time of data collection, all 101 sexual aggressors and 13 of the sexual murderers of women were incarcerated at the Centre Régional de Réception (Sainte-Anne-des-Plaines, Quebec, Canada), a maximum-security penitentiary of Correctional Service Canada. During their stay of approximately six weeks at this institution, the subjects were evaluated by members of a multidisciplinary team composed of psychologists, criminologists, sexologists, vocational training professionals and correctional agents. This evaluation was carried out both for the purposes of this study and to determine the appropriate treatment and degree of security for each criminal. The 27 other sexual murderers of women in this study were evaluated during their incarceration in another Quebec penitentiary of Correctional Service Canada.

In cases in which a subject had assaulted more than one victim, we used only the information concerning the last victim. This decision reflects our premise that it is the most recent modus operandi that most accurately reflects the sexual preferences of the experienced offender (Kaufman et al., 1996).

### *Procedure*

All study participants signed a consent form that stipulated that the information collected was for research purposes. Each was subjected to a battery of psychometric instruments (Chapter 3). Information on developmental factors (Chapter 2) and modus operandi (Chapter 4) was collected during semi-structured interviews based on the Computerized Sex Offenders Questionnaire (CSOQ) (St-Yves, Proulx & McKibben, 1994). This was

complemented by information from official records (police files, victim statements). In cases of divergent information from the two sources, the information from official sources was considered more reliable, and retained.

The methodological outline presented here is applicable to the results discussed in Chapters 2 to 9. Each of these chapters also presents methodological information specific to its subject matter. The comparison of sexual aggressors to sexual murderers occupies Chapters 2 to 5: developmental factors are discussed in Chapter 2, psychopathological factors in Chapter 3, situational factors in Chapter 4 and an integrative model in Chapter 5. In Chapter 6, our sample of nonserial sexual murderers is compared to the sample of serial murderers in the FBI study (Ressler et al., 1988). Chapter 7 discusses differences in developmental, psychopathological and circumstantial factors in sadistic and nonsadistic sexual aggressors of women. Finally, typological analyses of modus operandi and criminal motivation are the subjects of Chapters 8 and 9.