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CAROL ANNE DAVIS



SADISTIC KILLERS

PROFILES OF PATHOLOGICAL PREDATORS

SADISTIC KILLERS

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A full-time writer since graduating, her crime novels *Kiss it Away*, *Noise Abatement*, *Safe as Houses* and *Shrouded* have been described as chillingly realistic for their portrayals of dangerous sex and death.

She is also the author of the true crime books *Couples Who Kill: Profiles of Deviant Duos*, *Children Who Kill: Profiles of Preteen and Teenage Killers* and *Women Who Kill: Profiles of Female Serial Killers*.

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For Ian

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INTRODUCTION

'Life being what it is, one dreams of revenge,' wrote the artist Paul Gauguin in the nineteenth century. It's a sentiment echoed by many sadistic killers. Most are working class males in their twenties and thirties, but the chapter on female sadists explores murders committed by women as young as 19.

Sadistic killers differ from most murderers in that they love to control their victims and make them suffer – witnessing such pain and fear brings the sadist immense sexual satisfaction. They also want to prolong this controlling phase for as long as possible. This is in stark contrast to the man or woman who kills for profit, to eliminate a love rival or during a domestic argument. Such non-sadistic killers try to annihilate the other party as quickly as possible, often stabbing them through the heart or bludgeoning them about the head. Similarly, the murderous parent hurriedly smothers their baby's cries and the necrophile kills swiftly in order to have access to dead flesh.

To the sadist, this shoot-to-kill approach is a complete anathema, as it leaves him (or, less commonly, her) with a dead body. In contrast, he needs a live, sentient victim who will respond to his commands. If he can transport his victims to his home or to a hotel, as Robert Rhoades and Richard Cottingham did respectively, then he can train them to satisfy his every desire. But if a sadist inadvertently kills his victim too quickly, he will often try to hurt or humiliate the corpse, extensively mutilating the flesh in his desire for revenge. His rage, which has invariably built for years during his unhappy childhood, has to go somewhere so he attacks the cadaver.

Details of what the sadist did to his victim (and, in some instances, how the victim responded) have often come from the sadist himself as he confided in close friends, a tape recorder

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or a diary. In other instances, this information comes from pathologist, police or psychiatric reports.

The British sadists profiled in this book were often on low incomes so lacked a safe house to take their victims to. Consequently they killed in hotels, hostels or the victim's own home. In contrast, the American sadists had customised vans in which to transport their victims and one of the sadists even owned a small plane. Similarly, the Australian sadists often utilised the great outdoors, attacking their victims on secluded beaches or taking them deep into the woods. I chose these cases from the many available because of their variety: every type of sadist, from a teenage boy scout to a wealthy building contractor to an unemployed cross-dresser, is portrayed in detail here.

Sadism isn't new, but it was once the province of the comparatively rich – as Maslow's hierarchy of needs delineates, you have to be well fed and comfortably housed before you can begin to feel sexual. But in our industrialised society, even the unemployed sadist has his basic requirements taken care of and can find the energy to lure victim after victim to a secluded forest, safe house or modified van.

Broadly speaking, there are three types of sadists – the sadistic killer, the sadistic criminal and the consensual sadist. The profiles in this book obviously concentrate on the killers, with the majority of them killing serially. But it also covers the second category by default as almost all of the killers were sadistic criminals earlier in their offending careers. That is, they abducted and harmed various victims but did not kill them, either because they came to their senses or their quarry escaped.

The third category, that of the consensual sadist, should ideally be outside of a study of criminality, but law enforcement agencies and the general public don't always make the distinction and, as a result, the man who whips his consenting sexually-

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submissive girlfriend is confused with a genuine abuser and may even be charged with actual bodily harm. Yet many of our most lauded literary figures and artists have been recreational sadists – and ten per cent of the general population has an interest in sadomasochistic exchanges – a subject explored in the penultimate chapter on consensual erotic punishment.

The final chapter explores how we can prevent sadistic killers being formed and how we can potentially treat those who already exist. It's followed by a *Useful Addresses* section for anyone who wants to know more about sexual power play, child protection and criminal violence.

Doubtless the occasional Pollyanna figure will dismiss this book as gratuitous, but, as former FBI agent John Douglas pointed out, it's only by studying a man's actions that we can know what kind of person he truly is. More importantly, without this knowledge we can never change anything.

PART ONE

NOWHERE TO GO: BRITISH SADISTS

CHAPTER ONE

NEVILLE GEORGE

CLEVELY HEATH

Heath's obsession with flagellation began during his childhood in England. By adulthood he had bankrupted himself by paying prostitutes in foreign climes to let him cane them again and again. Returning to Britain and purchasing several riding switches and dogwhips, he sadistically murdered two young women.

Formative influences

Neville was born on 6 June 1917 to Bessie and William Heath, a housewife and barber. Bessie was described as much more domineering than her significantly older spouse. The family lived in Ilford but soon moved to Wimbledon where Bessie gave birth to a second son. Neville was always much closer to his mother and brother than to his father.

When Neville was five, his parents enrolled him at a mixed gender convent school which was just down the road. Unfortunately the school believed in caning children and – like many other English schoolboys – Neville became terrified of receiving a painful beating. However, watching other children

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being caned, he began to fantasise about flogging them himself. At six years old, he grabbed one of his female contemporaries in the classroom and wildly applied the rod to her until a passing teacher intervened. The little girl was so upset that she had to be sent home.

It's likely that he was expelled for this incident – leastways he now moved to Rutlish public school which only catered for boys. But the damage had already been done and his sexuality was now sadomasochistic to the core.

By his early teens he'd developed a fetish for handkerchiefs, probably because they featured in his fantasies about tying girls' wrists, and began to steal them from the neighbourhood women. It was the start of an escalating pattern of sexual offending that is still prevalent in today's criminals: many young men graduate from stealing knickers from washing lines to peeping through windows to indecent exposure and even rape.

At 15, Heath was at a party playing a parlour game called 'Murder' and, alongside another boy, locked a teenage girl in a room and began to kiss her. The girl became upset and the other boy backed off but Neville grabbed her by the throat to hold her head in place, his fingers leaving deep red marks on her neck. He only let go when she became hysterical and he feared that other partygoers would intervene. Her father was concerned at the level of aggression that the teenager had shown but decided that it was merely horseplay which had gone too far and let Heath off with a warning not to do it again.

Sadly, this failure to recognise early criminal sadism is all too common, with onlookers dismissing a child's cruelty towards younger children, or even to animals, as just a phase. Granted, at this stage, juvenile sadism can fade if the child is removed from the influence of a brutal parent or sadistic schoolteacher; but, without such intervention, his inhumane tendencies will invariably increase.

Early thefts

Neville left school at age 17, became an office boy and soon found out that he hated mundane work. Desperate for instant gratification, he joined the Territorial Army, which offered status and physical exercise, both important to the teenager. Soon he enlisted in the air force cadets and was variously posted to Cambridgeshire, Sussex and London, his male comrades finding him a superficially nice young man. Young women also liked him and he went to bed with lots of them, but none offered the sadomasochistic experiences he craved.

However, in London he found prostitutes who would allow him to whip them if the price was right – and it was rumoured that he whipped some of the girls so hard that he actually drew blood. (Most consensual sadomasochistic encounters involve a great deal of ritual and stop far short of bloodshed or lasting damage, but Neville Heath was intent on causing maximum pain.)

Desperate for cash to fund his prostitution costs, he soon began to steal and was questioned by the army authorities. Facing arrest, he made one of his very rare visits home to his mother – this was technically desertion – and was subsequently discharged.

By now he'd matured into a handsome and well-built young man with wavy fair hair, bright blue eyes and a propensity for laughter. Only the sometimes cruel set of his mouth belied his underlying pathology. He continued his life of crime, often reinventing himself and forging cheques to fund his club- and pub-based lifestyle. Again, the authorities caught up with him and he was soon facing jail. But his good looks and good family name worked in his favour so that he was given probation instead.

Not one to learn from experience, the 21-year-old robbed a friend's flat, purchased clothes by forging a banker's order and attempted to obtain a car by false pretences. This time he was sent to borstal where the staff found him condescending and sly.

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£50 whippings

Released from borstal in October 1939 to help in the war effort, Neville Heath was drafted into the army. Like many psychopaths he did well there, being completely fearless. He also found numerous females willing to go to bed with him. But one girl sarcastically refused him and he immediately pulled her hair back and began to beat her about the face until she broke away.

He was posted to Cairo and soon discovered the Amazon Room available in most of the brothels, where a customer could whip reluctant young girls for £50 a night. (At the time, a visit to a 'vanilla' – straight sex – prostitute in London only cost a pound.) He paid handsomely to thrash a pair of 15- and 16-year-old sisters, using a cat-o'-nine-tails. He later told an acquaintance that he liked to leave a minute between each stroke of the whip for the full pain to be realised, and for the hellish anticipation to build again. He also found that several female sadists from the upper classes had paid large sums to whip and cane the girls.

On other occasions he lashed a 20-year-old female sex worker with a slender leather switch and on yet other occasions used a whip on an 18-year-old female. He told his fellow officers that he liked to hang a girl upside down from the brothel's pulley system before choosing the whip which he would use on her for an extended period of time.

Heath also paid to watch one young girl whip another in his favourite Cairo brothel. Later he joined in, bending one of the teenagers over a wooden bar and binding her wrists together with handkerchiefs before tying her hands above her head to a ceiling post – handkerchiefs formed part of his fetish so he often introduced them to a sadomasochistic encounter. The brothel keeper encouraged him to whip the girl as hard as he wanted, providing he didn't draw blood.

When the young officer couldn't afford another session he would go to bed and have regular sex with someone he'd picked up at a bar, but whatever he did it failed to rid him of his demons and he began drinking heavily. He would later tell a friend that he once got so drunk and out of control that he feared he'd beaten a belly dancer to death – and there would later be conjecture that he'd stabbed another girl to death whilst posted abroad.

Spending beyond his means on whipping prostitutes, the young lieutenant soon got hopelessly into debt and once again began to pass bad cheques and forge more. Drummed out of the army for these offences, he fled to South Africa and joined the air force under the pseudonym James Robert Cadogan Armstrong. He became a pilot instructor and was valiant when facing death.

Marriage and fatherhood

Whilst in Johannesburg, the 25-year-old introduced himself as Bruce Lockhart to Elizabeth Pitt-Rivers, an 18-year-old from a good family. He was so eloquent and well read that she soon fell madly in love with him. But her parents discovered that Bruce Lockhart was not his real name and demanded an explanation. He then said that his birth name was James Robert Cadogan Armstrong but that the Armstrong family had died and it was too emotionally painful for him to use his own name.

Unsurprisingly, the Pitt-Rivers raised an eyebrow or two but young Elizabeth was determined to stand by her man and promptly eloped with him. Seven months after their marriage she was proud to bear his son.

The next two years were the most stable in Neville Heath's life. He was promoted to the rank of captain in the South African Air Force and also proved to be a charming husband (and doting father to little Robert) who made no unusual sexual demands on his wife.

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But, sent to the RAF in Britain for a few months, he returned to his criminal ways, making money by getting engaged to girls from wealthy backgrounds then selling the engagement presents. Moved to Belgium, he quickly sought out brothels where he could whip female teenagers for a price.

Returning to South Africa and his doting wife, he started to write bad cheques, some of which were honoured by his embarrassed father-in-law. Eventually Heath was arrested for fraud. More and more evidence of his criminal ways came to light and his wife reluctantly began divorce proceedings, unusual in those till-death-us-do-part conventional times. He agreed to the divorce, which seems to have involved his unfortunate father-in-law paying off more of his debts, and it became final in October 1945.

Deported from South Africa, the newly single captain arrived back in England on 5 February 1946. He immediately borrowed money from his father, saying it was to take flying lessons (in reality, he was already a proficient pilot), but instead moved to London and began to drink and socialise in the capital's hotels.

He found a club where he could pay to watch prostitutes being bent over naked and caned before an audience. At first he took a group of friends along but it was obvious to them that he was obsessed by the spectacle and this made him poor company. Soon he returned to the club alone. Interestingly he paid to watch women whipping men, suggesting he may have had a masochistic side as well. He also bought a whip from the club – one of four whips he owned – which would later be used on his first confirmed murder victim. But prior to this he'd use it on sexually-submissive girls...

Flagellation

On 23 February 1946, Heath took one of his acquaintances to a hotel for what was initially a consensual sadomasochistic