



Dark Dreams: Sexual Violence, Homicide And The Criminal Mind

By Roy Hazelwood, Stephen G. Michaud

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The Evil That Men Do introduced readers to the lifework and the techniques of FBI profiler Roy Hazelwood.

Now, in *Dark Dreams*, Hazelwood-- writing with bestselling author Stephen G. Michaud-- will take them deep into the minds of his prey, the world's most dangerous sexual criminals, and reveal the extent to which these individuals permeate our society.

Profiler Roy Hazelwood is one of the world's leading experts on the strangest and most dangerous of all aberrant offenders-- the sexual criminal. In *Dark Dreams* he reveals the twisted motive and thinking that go into the most reprehensible crimes. He also catalogs the innovative and remarkably effective techniques-- investigative approaches that he helped pioneer at the FBI's Behavioral Science Unit-- that allow law enforcement agents to construct psychological profiles of the offenders who commit these crimes.

Hazelwood has helped track down some of the most violent and well-known criminals in modern history; in *Dark Dreams* he takes readers into his world-- a sinister world inhabited by scores of dangerous offenders for every Roy Hazelwood who would put them behind bars:

* A young woman disappears from the convenience store where she works. Her skeletonized remains are found in a field, near a torture device. Who committed this heinous crime? And why?

* A teenager's body is found hanging in a storm sewer. His clothes are neatly folded by the entrance and a stopwatch is found in his mouth. Is he the victim of a bizarre, ritualistic murder...or an elaborate masturbatory fantasy gone awry?

* A married couple, driving with their toddler in the backseat, pick up a female hitchhiker. They kidnap her and for seven years keep her as a sexual slave. The wife agreed to this inhuman arrangement in exchange for having a second child.

Who was to blame?

As gruesome as the crimes are and as unsettling as the odds seem, Hazelwood proves that the right amount of determination and logic can bring even the most cunning and devious criminals to justice.

Dark Dreams is a 2002 Edgar Award Nominee for Best Fact Crime.

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Editorial Review

Review

"This book tells it all."--Robert K. Ressler, bestselling author of *I Have Lived in the Monster* and *Whoever Fights Monsters*

"Hazelwood's authentic and unique perspective pierces a darkness most of us would like to believe doesn't exist."--Chris Carter, creator of *The X-Files*

"Take it from me: Roy's insights and experience prove that he is an expert in crime analysis. The story he has to tell is well worth listening to."--John Douglas, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Obsession* and *Mindhunter*

About the Author

Roy Hazelwood spent twenty-two years in the FBI, sixteen of them as a member of the Bureau's Behavioral Science Unit. He is now associated with the Academy Group, Inc., a forensic consulting firm with clients in government, industry, and the criminal justice system. Hazelwood lives in Virginia with his wife, Peggy.

Stephen G. Michaud has written extensively on criminal justice topics. His previous books include *Lethal Shadow*, a study of sexual sadism, and *The Only Living Witness*, an acclaimed portrait of serial killer Ted Bundy that the *New York Daily News* listed as one of the ten best true-crime books ever.

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DARK DREAMS (Chapter 1) Infinite Darkness

A fourteen-year-old girl is kidnapped while hitchhiking with a young male companion. Her abductor immediately kills the youth, then keeps the girl as his captive. He tortures her, binds her with chains, and forces her to pose for photographs in heavy makeup and suggestive clothing. After several days he strangles her with a bailing-wire garrote, then dumps her body in the loft of an abandoned barn.

A twenty-one-year-old woman with no history of arrest or psychiatric problems becomes emotionally attached to a male corpse at the funeral home where she works. After his burial she grieves for the deceased, growing so distraught that coworkers complain of her behavior, and she is forced to resign.

Three years later, while employed at a second funeral home, she again develops a romantic interest in a dead body. Determined this time not to lose the object of her macabre desire, she moves his embalmed remains to an isolated place where she spends three days alone with the body. In a lengthy, handwritten account of the two incidents, she describes touching the second corpse and positioning it so as to simulate cuddling and fondling.

Three male children, ages seven, nine, and ten, take a female playmate to an isolated building where they forcibly undress her and demand that she perform oral sex on them. They insert sticks, rocks, and bottles into her vagina and rectum before releasing the little girl with a threat to kill her if she tells. The three are later identified and arrested after assaulting another young female playmate.

Before my retirement on January 1, 1994, I spent sixteen years examining these shocking crimes, and many others, as a member of the FBI's Behavioral Science Unit. Most people associate the BSU with its best-known responsibility, profiling, a discipline that was dramatized in the book and movie *Silence of the Lambs*. The fictional heroine, Special Agent Clarice Starling, and her nemesis, Dr. Hannibal Lecter, lent a touch of Hollywood glamour to our often grim and harrowing investigations.

But besides working the occasional high-profile serial murder case or testifying at the defendant's trial, our work also had a less-known side. Since the BSU opened for business in 1972, its personnel have studied aberrant crime, taught classes, and consulted—out of the spotlight—in scores of ongoing cases. And all the while, we were learning.

In my research, I chose to focus on previously unexplored or poorly understood deviant behaviors. These practices, ranging from dangerous autoeroticism to sexual sadism, brought me face-to-face with dark instincts I had never imagined existed.

The most appalling murder I ever encountered was that of a young girl discovered with her intestines wrapped around her neck. The child vanished one evening as she walked a short fifty feet to the next-door neighbors' house. A few hours later, her body was found several blocks away. She also had been raped and beaten to death. To my knowledge, the crime was never solved.

In another case, a man hanged himself after leaving twenty-seven suicide notes around his home, garage, and car. Perhaps the most surprising incident of my career was the bleeding death of a woman who nearly amputated her own arm at the shoulder with a butcher knife.

My casework taught me several essential lessons. The first is that there are no boundaries to what a particular individual might do to other people or to him- or herself. The second lesson is equally wide-ranging: When it comes to sexual behavior, there are no limits to what a person might find erotically stimulating.

Among violent sexual offenders, often the only logic to their crimes is internal. The criminal alone knows why he commits his deviant acts. Although we can find patterns and common elements among them, no two offenders ever commit exactly the same sexual crime. In the world of dark minds, the darkness truly is infinite.

The sexual component of a crime is not always self-evident either. The behavior may be blatant, or it may be so subtle that it escapes detection, even by experts. Then again, some crimes may only seem to be sexually motivated.

I once worked for a public defender whose client was accused of the robbery/murder of an elderly woman. The victim was discovered dead on the floor at the foot of her bed. She had been struck twice in the face with sufficient force (according to the medical examiner) to have stunned her or rendered her unconscious. The cause of death was two stab wounds in the chest. Her pants and panties had been pulled down to just above her knees.

There was no sign of forced entry or of a struggle. All doors and windows were secured. Her purse, containing credit cards, was missing. But more than twenty thousand dollars' worth of jewelry and in excess of forty thousand dollars in negotiable securities were left untouched in her unlocked office safe in an adjacent room.

An ATM security camera caught my public defender's client attempting to guess the victim's cash card number. When he was later arrested, he told the police he'd found the card at a bus stop in a bad neighborhood of town.

I know that's an unlikely sounding story, but I believed him. Here's why:

He'd stupidly allowed himself to be videotaped in front of the ATM, trying to guess the card code. Yet the prosecution contended that this inadequate criminal supposedly was smart and savvy enough to enter a total stranger's house, leaving no physical trace of himself. Then he approached the victim in her bedroom and struck and stabbed her twice before she could raise a hand in her defense.

If this defendant had been capable of such improbable sophistication, I said, then surely he also would have searched the open safe to steal her jewels and securities.

I thought this was a staged crime. Someone who knew the victim had killed her then pulled down her clothing to suggest a sexual motive in the case. Further, I said, if I had been that person, I too would have left her credit cards in a rough area, knowing that some punk would try to use them.

I didn't testify in the case. But the public defender presented my logic via her arguments and questioning and persuaded the jury that this defendant lacked the cunning to have committed the crime. The case remains officially unsolved.

Thanks to the vast diversity of human nature, an investigator may expect to encounter a wide range of behaviors. Offenders may be attracted to nonliving objects (fetishism), animals (bestiality), or people. Or they may be drawn to all three.

Some people preferentially act out their desires with prepubescent children (pedophiles), teenagers (hebephiles), or the elderly (gerontophiles). Others select age mates as their victims, and a few will sexually assault victims of any age.

Certain offenders commit exclusively homosexual crimes, others limit themselves to offenses against heterosexuals, and still others are attracted to either gender.

Ted Bundy is an example of a necrophiliac, the term used for one who preferentially assaults the dead. Yet to the vast majority of sexual criminals (as to the rest of us!), such an act is abhorrent.

Some sexual crimes involve only the sense of sight (voyeurism and exhibitionism), only the sense of hearing (telephone scatology), or only the sense of touch (frotteurism). However, most offenders will employ all of the available senses.

Many offenders are aroused by a victim's suffering (sadists), while others are excited by their own pain (masochists). Then there are sadomasochists, who may be aroused in either way—simultaneously or in separate incidents.

Highly ritualistic behavior marks some types of sexual crimes, while others are characterized by impulsiveness. At times, we find strange mixes of both ritualism and spontaneity.

I've encountered sexual offenders who almost always seriously injured or murdered their victims. For others, such injury greatly diminishes or destroys the gratification process.

A victim's torment may be protracted by extended captivity. Conversely, as in cases involving comatose patients, those under anesthesia, or victims who have been given the "date rape" drug Rohypnol, the target might be completely unaware of what is happening.

Some offenders select victims who are total strangers. Others attack those who are well acquainted with them—associates, clients, patients, customers, students, or relatives. In short, you name it—anything is to be

expected with sexual criminals.

Sometimes it's hard to draw the line between criminal and noncriminal sexual behavior. After all, many practices that would have shocked previous generations in our country tend to be more common today. The distinction between what is acceptable and what is not may even depend on the jurisdiction where the behavior takes place.

A detective in one of my courses brought to my attention a case involving a woman and two of her dogs. When she brought some film into her local pharmacy for processing, the employee who developed it saw that the photos depicted the customer having sex with the dogs. The police were called, and an investigator presented the matter to the local prosecutor.

After examining the pictures, the assistant district attorney asked if the dogs belonged to the woman. Why would that matter? the investigator wondered aloud. "Because if they don't belong to her, she can be charged with animal abuse," the prosecutor explained. "But if the dogs are hers, there has been no criminal violation in this state."

Although certain aberrant sexual practices (such as dangerous autoeroticism) are not crimes, society still officially condemns most deviant sexual behavior. This is especially true when children are the victims. Yet ironically, we are increasingly permissive toward the graphic portrayal of sexual violence in practically all forms of the media. Magazines, television, and the Internet are rife with explicit and often violent sexual fare.

In my experience this climate of tolerance is having two important social consequences: First, as deviant behavior becomes more common in the material we read, hear, and see, parallel behaviors quickly appear in sexual crimes, particularly those acted out against strangers. Second, an increasing number of serious injuries and/or deaths are occurring during "rough sex." When criminal charges are filed, defense attorneys try to portray the injurious behavior as "consensual and accidental."

I have been retained by defense lawyers in three murder cases in which the defendant claimed that his partner's death occurred during voluntary "erotic asphyxiation," one form of rough sex. In each case the attorney asked me to review the evidence and advise whether or not I could testify that the death was an accident.

For different reasons I told each of these clients that I would be unable to assist in the defense because the facts indicated that the manner of death was homicide. Yet in other cases, defense attorneys succeed in presenting a plausible scenario of accidental death. In our "anything goes" society, it can be difficult to convince a judge or jury that any behavior is necessarily involuntary.

Who commits sexual crimes? You may be surprised (as I often am) at the wide range of answers to this question.

Often, when I address audiences and classes, I tell them about the case that opened this chapter—the one in which a fourteen-year-old girl was kidnapped, tortured, and murdered. After dumping her body, the killer anonymously taunted a member of his victim's family by relating truthful, but investigatively useless, details about the location where he left her dead body. He said, for instance, that she would be found in a barn. That was true, but of no help in locating her.

When he was arrested some months later, investigators searched his residence. There they found a trove of telling artifacts—the undeveloped film he had shot of the victim during her captivity, articles of her clothing, bondage paraphernalia, detective magazines, and a variety of weapons.

After presenting the facts of the case, I ask my listeners to guess what the killer looked like. Their responses are as varied as the audience members themselves. However, when I show them two photographs of this criminal, practically everyone gasps in surprise.

The “monster” who committed these heinous crimes was a well-groomed, middle-aged man, six feet tall, and weighing about 185 pounds. In one of the photographs, he is wearing a police uniform; in the other, he is dressed as an airline pilot. Is this the image you expected for a sexual criminal?

My audiences—usually professionals who work within the criminal justice system—often feel uneasy when they see these pictures for the same reason that I do: the sexual killer looks so normal. He looks like us, and that resemblance is very disturbing.

Professionals and laymen alike, we all want sexual offenders to look like perverts so that we can readily identify them in our neighborhoods, schools, and shopping malls. Unfortunately, with the vast majority of sexual offenders, it just doesn't work that way.

In the early 1980s, when authorities in Texas arrested drifter Henry Lee Lucas, hardly a soul expressed any skepticism over Lucas's claim to have murdered as many as six hundred people. Why? Because, according to popular stereotype, Henry Lee Lucas looked like a pervert! He was unshaven, poorly groomed, shabbily dressed. Nearly penniless, he drove a worn-out wreck of a car. Everything about him was uncouth.

His alleged accomplice, Ottis Toole, looked just as bad, if not worse. The appearances of both men fit well within the public's perception of what a serial killer should look like.

We at the BSU cringed when we saw the pictures of Lucas and Toole. We knew that they would reinforce the mistaken notion that sexual offenders typically look different from other people—and thus encourage many innocent victims to overlook dangers that come in more ordinary forms.

In the late 1970s, before Lucas and Toole were captured, we hoped that Ted Bundy had effectively disproved the public's mistaken perceptions. Bundy was handsome, well-spoken, and educated. He did not appear capable of the horrible sexual crimes for which he was accused and later convicted. Bundy's arrest made a lot of people very uncomfortable because it forced them to rethink their previous ideas about sexual criminals. When Bundy stood trial for two murders in Florida, his wholesome appearance complicated the prosecutors' job. Fortunately, both juries heeded the evidence, and Bundy was convicted and sentenced to death.

In contrast, Richard Ramirez, the Los Angeles killer known as “the Night Stalker,” fit the public's stereotypical concept of serial killers. In thirteen months Ramirez murdered at least thirteen victims whose ages ranged from six to eighty-four. He sexually assaulted and, in some cases, mutilated the victims after death. Ramirez had dark, penetrating eyes, disheveled black hair, a pentagram on one hand, and poor dental hygiene. He was difficult to control in court, often erupting into verbal and physical obscenities. Richard Ramirez was mentally disturbed, and he looked it!

Sadly, violent crimes committed by the severely disturbed tend to attract a disproportionate amount of attention from the press. In fact, the mentally ill are responsible for less than 3 percent of sexual crimes. Such people usually pose a greater threat to themselves than others. Richard Ramirez was an exception to the rule.

Who is the sexual offender? A few examples demonstrate the wide range of individuals who fit the description.

Jon Barry Simonis was a former star high school athlete with a full-scale IQ of 128 (the average is 90—110).

By his own count, Simonis raped and battered as many as seventy-five women across at least twelve states.

The sexual sadist Gerard John Schaefer is believed to have killed more than twenty women—and he was a deputy sheriff. The “Son of Sam,” David Berkowitz, was a mailman. John Wayne Gacy was a building contractor active in local politics. Harvey Glatman, the Los Angeles “Lonely Hearts Killer” of the 1950s, was a television repairman. Australian-born spree killer Christopher Wilder, who tortured and murdered women from coast to coast, was a millionaire entrepreneur.

What goes into the creation of a sexual criminal?

During my lectures, I frequently pose this question, “What have you heard are the causes of sexual violence?”

Responses invariably include poverty, childhood sexual abuse and/or emotional abuse and/or physical abuse, violence in the media, pornography, peer pressure, lack of discipline at school or in the home, single parenting, lack of morality in our society, chemical imbalance in the brain, childhood brain damage, genetics, mental illness, inappropriate role models, alcohol and/or drug abuse. All these factors have been proposed by experts as a rationale for seemingly inexplicable behavior. Which are correct?

A wonderful and wise sociology professor once said to me, “Roy, when you have more than one answer to a question, you don’t have the answer!”

Any purported explanation for why an individual commits sexual violence is incomplete if it ignores the most important variable, the criminal himself. Each person is a unique product of nature and nurture, genetic destiny, and environmental influences. What has a great impact on one person may have no effect at all on another. So while a number of factors seem to contribute to the genesis of a sexual offender, no single element is the cause of deviant behavior.

Let’s take a closer look at a few of the more common theories.

Poverty

A great number of sexual offenders come from poor families, and a great number of them don’t. For every criminal raised in a poverty-stricken environment, we can find countless law-abiding citizens who overcome that disadvantage to lead honest lives.

Childhood Abuse

My research on serial rape supports the view that a large number of sexual criminals have been childhood victims of physical, sexual, or psychological abuse. Yet, as is true with poverty, there are many more abused kids who do not become sexually violent as adults.

Violence in the Media

Movies and television often are blamed for glamorizing violence. In 1977, a fifteen-year-old Florida youth named Ronny Zamora claimed in court that he killed an elderly female neighbor because of “television intoxication.” Zamora’s attorney said his client had become addicted to violence by watching television. Fortunately for society, the jurors didn’t buy into that theory.

Books, magazines, and music have also been faulted for promoting violence. Rap music, especially, has been accused of objectifying women and using gender-demeaning terminology in the lyrics. While I might not personally appreciate certain kinds of music or films, behavioral studies do not suggest that men who watch

or listen to them are, as a result, driven to commit crimes. Certainly offenders with preexisting fantasies might seek out such stimulation and even attempt to incorporate some of its elements into future crimes. But to say that a cause-and-effect relationship exists is simply not supported by scientific inquiry.

Pornography

I dislike pornography for a multitude of reasons, but speaking as a professional, I have to say that I don't believe that it causes sexual violence.

Opponents of pornography often point to Dr. James Dobson's death-row interview with Ted Bundy to support their cause. But they frequently—possibly intentionally—misquote Bundy on the subject. Speaking with the convicted murderer on the eve of his execution, Dobson questioned Bundy closely about the reasons for his deadly behavior.

Bundy said that pornography had had a tremendous effect on his life, but nowhere in the interview did he say that pornography had made him violent. He did not say pornography caused him to become a serial killer, and there is no reason to believe that was the case.

Nevertheless, my experience, education, and training led me to believe that pornography contributes, both passively and actively, to sexual violence in some individuals.

Humans learn something from every experience, good or bad. What are the lessons that are taught by pornography? First, it treats women and children as objects. By taking away their individual humanity, it supports the mind-set that seeks to use others solely for sexual gratification. Second, it teaches that sex is merely a bodily function, having no special significance. When the essential connectedness of sexual contact is denied, the physical or emotional needs of a partner have no relevance. Third, pornography conveys the message that sex is an expression of instinctive urges, with no need for love or commitment. These are not healthy lessons.

Pornography may play an even more serious role in the process that leads to violent sexual assault by providing offenders with a continuous source of new ideas.

Certain pornographic images validate aberrant tendencies by showing the offender that his behavior is not so unusual within our society after all; in certain circles it is even accepted. Further, pornography reinforces violent sexual fantasies by providing a continuous and never-ending source of richly graphic inspiration.

From my interviews with rapists, sexual killers, child molesters, sexual sadists, and the wives and companions of these sexually violent men, I know that ritualistic sexual offenders not only own pornography but they typically collect it. They pore over it, spending endless hours with a favorite picture or video, all the while reinforcing the aberrant fantasy.

A medical examiner once brought to my attention a rape-homicide case in which the victims, a woman and her prepubescent daughter, were stabbed to death in their home. The mother's body was discovered with her legs bent at the knees and spread apart. It was obvious the killer had intentionally positioned her that way.

The murder weapons were two knives belonging to the victims. Both mother and child had been stabbed multiple times. Shoe prints left at the scene indicated that the killer had been wearing military boots. Before leaving, he took a Polaroid of the crime scene and placed it on top of the victim's television set, where it immediately caught investigators' attention.

When the subject was later arrested, a search of his possessions revealed a detective magazine, inside of

which was a picture of a rape-homicide that was practically identical to his own crime. The accompanying article explained that the victim had been stabbed with two of her own knives, her legs had been positioned in the same manner, and the killer, a U.S. soldier, had worn combat boots during the commission of the crime. However, there was no young child in the magazine story. This discrepancy is telling for it suggests that the killer murdered the daughter simply because she was at home when he attacked her mother.

Genetics

Some years ago, a new theory connected the presence of an extra "Y" chromosome in a male's genetic material to a superabundance of testosterone, which was believed to result in violent behavior. No one has ever developed scientific evidence to support this theory, and it is largely discounted today.

A more recent, and also unsubstantiated, hypothesis holds that individuals can inherit a gene that predisposes them to commit criminal acts. This genetic explanation for criminality poses an interesting dilemma for sociologists, psychologists, criminologists, and penologists.

If such behaviors are determined from birth, professionals could do little to prevent them; and rehabilitation would be a hopeless task. I believe that this theory will prove to be another false lead in the quest to understand violence in our society.

Still another theory, recently advanced by so-called evolutionary psychologists, takes the radical view that rape is a natural biological phenomenon. To paraphrase one adherent, rape is an unfortunate but nonetheless adaptive strategy for passing on one's genes that is seen in a number of animals besides man, including fish, birds, and other primates.

In my view, this reasoning will go the way of the extra Y chromosome theory.

Insanity

It's all too easy to dismiss sexual offenders as being "sick," "perverted," or "deranged." However, this assumption does not explain the 97 percent of crimes committed by individuals who are not psychotic (insane).

One of the more esoteric explanations for criminal behavior I have heard is brain shrinkage. This theory arose when the executive director of a huge U.S. charity was charged with embezzlement after he stole \$250,000 from the organization's funds and took his teenage girlfriend to Las Vegas. The seemingly reputable defendant argued that he should not be held responsible for his acts because his brain had shrunk, thus affecting his ability to discern right from wrong. I didn't buy this defense and neither did the court.

Premenstrual Syndrome

A professional woman attacked a state police officer with a heavy, blunt object after he had stopped her for DWI. Her position at trial was temporary insanity due to PMS, and it was successful.

Blood Sugar Imbalance

Even junk food has been blamed for causing violence. In San Francisco in November of 1978, Supvr. Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone were gunned down at city hall by Supvr. Dan White. At trial the following May, White's attorney blamed his client's violent behavior in part on the inordinate number of Twinkies that White had consumed. The argument's been known ever since as "the Twinkie defense." White, who was charged with first-degree murder, was convicted of the lesser charge of manslaughter.

Some of these theories and ideas sound implausible, but in the unpredictable arena of human behavior, it doesn't pay to dismiss any possible reason, however bizarre it may seem, without examining it closely. Yet I'm confident that no single factor of any sort will ever suffice to explain the millions of variations that occur among individuals. No two people are alike, and the factors that combine to cause people to turn to violence—especially sexual violence—will always be unique.

Perhaps the most obvious (and most frightening) explanation of all is that some offenders commit sexual crimes simply because they want to! They like it! And they have no regard for what the rest of society thinks.

This is the dark mind's most disturbing corner of all.

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From reader reviews:

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