

## **SERIAL KILLERS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PARTIAL TO PROSTITUTES, EXPERT SAYS**

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In the 102 years since Jack the Ripper -- the prototype of the modern **serial killer** -- stalked the murky Whitechapel streets of London, prostitutes have been prime targets of these cyclical murderers.

Prostitutes "are the most likely victims, the No. 1 victims," James Fox, a Northeastern University professor specializing in the study of **serial** killings and mass murders said Friday. "First of all, they are the easiest targets. After all, they get into cars and put their lives in the hands of strangers."

Authorities believe the unsolved slayings of 10 women -- some of whom had police records for prostitution -- in Ypsilanti, Romulus and Inkster since 1985 could be the work of a **serial killer**. A police task force has been set up to determine if the slayings are connected.

According to Fox and articles by the FBI's Robert Ressler, the killings may go on for years before a pattern is recognized. But recognition is no guarantee of a solution.

A police task force in Washington state, backed by computers and scientific laboratories, has been unable to bring charges in the slayings of 48 women around Seattle in 1982-85. Many of the victims were prostitutes in the Seattle-Tacoma area.

Fox said the killing of prostitutes is rationalized. The murderer "dehumanizes them -- they become people who are worthless. This process made it easier for the SS of the Nazis to kill Jews because they viewed them as subhuman or vermin," Fox said.

Further, Fox said, a prostitute can vanish for any number of reasons without arousing suspicion.

"If a college girl disappears, police are more likely to start moving sooner than if a hooker suddenly drops from sight," he said.

Fox said it is unlikely that an enormous police effort would have developed so quickly had John Norman Collins been killing prostitutes instead of college students around Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti in the late 1960s.

Fox said **serial killers** are "sociopaths -- they lack a conscience. If they felt horrible about killing, they wouldn't do it again. But they do."

**Serial killers** are also "sexual sadists," Fox said. "At a certain point he can't control himself and goes too far. That is the ultimate domination, the decision of life or death."

Fox said the **serial killer** "may enjoy the cat and mouse game" with police once his pattern has been uncovered and relish following the investigation.

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