

# IS SERIAL KILLING AN ADDICTION? EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR AND SERIAL KILLING

*Posted on July 1, 2021 by Burcak Unal*



Serial murder is the choice of very few individuals and is extremely rare. However, given the sensational nature involving serial killers, an important question should be posed. ***Is serial killing a choice?*** Some researchers have suggested this action is the result of addictive thinking (McAlister, 2001). According to experts, criminal behavior and the act of serial murder could be similar to behaviors seen within substance addiction. It is possible that rehearsed criminal offenses might result because an individual has discovered the sentiments and feelings acquired from this deviant conduct to be habit-forming and that it might promote a sense of personal exhilaration. While alcohol addicts fight the longings for liquor and battle to oppose these desires, a serial criminal, particularly those who commit murder, mutilation, or sexual

assault, may have a comparative relationship with deviant activities and behaviors (Esmail, 2005).

Addiction is characterized as the repetition of conduct in spite of unsafe results. Lots of drug-addicted persons seem to disregard the consequences of their abuse. Additionally, for some, despite the fact that they know that if they proceed with usage, the substance will have very adverse consequences for them, they keep utilizing them (Grant, Potenza, Weinstein & Gorelick, 2010). Similarly, some criminals show nearly the same disregard for the impact of their serial criminal conduct and the consequences for themselves, such as incarceration or death, should they be caught. Even though these two groups seem completely different from each other, the desires and impulses that drive these decisions may be shockingly similar. According to many psychological analyses, serial killers are likely suffering from narcissism, paranoia, psychopathy, or other antisocial disorder. But, against this background, the central question that motivates criminologist Craig Traube is identifying what common behaviors there may be between serial killers and substance abusers (Kim, 2014). Traube utilized the infamous American serial killer Ted Bundy as an illustration to feature the similarities between serial killers and drug addicts. Bundy killed at least 30 female victims, routinely following a number of females at the same time, should he need an "emergency hit," as he called it. He favored killing brunettes between the age of 15 and 25, however, he "experimented" with ladies of various ages (Kim, 2014). Traube contrasted this with how addicts develop. "They begin exploring different avenues regarding various things and afterward they discover the substance they like," he said. Bundy held on to alcohol, pornography, and drugs while in prison. From Traube's point of view, he concluded that Bundy turned to psychoactive and other bad habits when he could no longer kill. Furthermore, Traube likewise called attention to how Bundy, like most addicts, would not take responsibility for their atrocious and clearly criminal activities (Kim, 2014).

To sum up, it does appear that many serial killers get an enormous dose of enjoyment out of killing like most addicts do when consuming drugs. There is likewise supporting proof that criminal activities, all by themselves, can be habit-forming. Studies have shown, "that impulse-driven disorders, like pyromania and kleptomania, trigger the arrival of additional dopamine, which causes sensations of pleasure" (McAlister, 2001). Over time, this individual can become as addicted to their particular form of criminal activity as a heroin addict does to opioids or an alcoholic to intoxicating beverages (Esmail, 2005). In addition, during the "cooling-off" period after a killing, "serial killers experience a gradual build-up of tension again, and the cycle repeats itself. Over time the killer needs more and more stimulation to get the same psychological payoff, therefore it can be similar to the tolerance seen in physical addiction" (Malizia, 2017).

Studies have demonstrated that addiction to behaviors and actions, rather than ingested substances, are entirely possible, and recent research has proposed that the addictive forming component to serial murder is conceivable inside an addictive forming cycle (McAlister, 2001). Addiction is an intricate issue including both physiological and psychological elements. All of this points to the fact that brain imaging in cocaine, methamphetamine, alcohol, benzodiazepine, and heroin abusers has uncovered changed absorption in the orbitofrontal cortex that causes an interruption in neural capacity and dopamine pathways related to this part of the brain (Grant et. al., 2010). The mesolimbic dopamine system is the basic factor for drug-associated "reward chasing" behavior and has been shown to be firmly related to the orbitofrontal cortex (Grant et. al., 2010).

Ultimately the real question is, in the light of this research and related conclusions, should society consider screening people in their childhood by using brain scans and genetic analysis in an effort to take preventive actions at an early

stage to avoid addictions, whether they involve drugs or alcohol.....or even deviant and antisocial behavior? What do you think?

## References

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