

**Report of June 2012 Meeting**  
**Royal Society**  
**Southern Highlands Branch**

**Speaker: Dr Stephen H. Allnutt**  
Conjoint Senior Lecturer, UNSW  
Clinical Director NSW Community Forensic Mental Health Services

**Topic: Serial Sexual Homicide**

This wide ranging lecture was delivered to an audience of 45 people at the Chevalier College Performing Arts Centre, Burradoo, a most comfortable and attractive venue.

Allnutt's scientific interest lies in the bizarre, the deviant and the dangerous. His fascinating lecture provided an overview of three forensic psychiatric concepts and behaviours that likely underpin serial sexual killers, namely stalking, psychopathy and sexual deviance.

Allnutt described the three distinct characteristics of the killer's behavior as follows. The first was the paraphilia, sexual sadism, which gave the killer the drive, desire and need to commit the crime. The second involved the lack of internal inhibitors, which was usually satisfied by the killer's psychopathic or schizoid personality, and the third was the ability to overcome external inhibitors. This third characteristic was usually demonstrated by recurrent preoccupation with fantasy, and by stalking behavior which is in fact a behavioral try-out.

The paraphilia, sexual sadism, which gave the killer the drive to commit the crime, was described by well defined characteristics. The act was non-consensual, the killer demonstrating lack of empathic feelings when inflicting pain or humiliation. More force than necessary was used to complete the sex act, and the violence itself was a source of pleasure.

Regarding the lack of internal inhibitors, Allnutt presented Hare's criteria for psychopaths. (Hare, 1991) Pathological narcissism, "Factor 1", described numerous criteria such as glibness and superficial charm, grandiose sense of self-worth, pathological lying, conning/manipulative behavior, lack of remorse or guilt, shallow emotions, callous/lack of empathy, parasitic lifestyle, non-acceptance of responsibility and being prone to boredom.

Impulsive/deviant lifestyle, Hare's "Factor 2", listed the following characteristics: poor behaviour controls (hair-trigger), early behavior problems (cruel kids), juvenile delinquency (bad kids), promiscuity (indiscriminate), lack of realistic long-term goals (absolute dreamers), impulsivity (lives for the spur of the moment), irresponsibility (no

loyalty), revocation of conditional releases (the law does not apply to me) and criminal versatility (master of all trades).

At the end of this fascinating, wide-ranging lecture full of crime and behavioral statistics, Allnutt's sobering concluding comments described how a psychopathic serial killer will dazzle you with charm, exploit your weaknesses, feed on your trust, use props to distract your attention from his deception and leave you hurt, poor, alone and wondering or dead. His advice was to never marry one, go into business with one, or take a country trip with one.

Anne Wood