

Academics complete Britain's largest study of murder

July 8 2015, by Kath Paddison

The most in-depth and comprehensive study of murder in Britain has been completed by a husband and wife team and is the subject of a new book.

Professors Rebecca and Russell Dobash, both criminologists at The University of Manchester, painstakingly analysed 866 case files (786 men and 80 [women](#)) and interviewed 180 men and 20 women convicted of [murder](#) and serving a life sentence in prison.

The Murder in Britain Study, which is the largest database on homicide to date, sought to gather detailed knowledge of all types of murder perpetrated by and against men, women and children.

The findings, which are published in the Dobash's new book called *When Men Murder Women*, (published by Oxford University Press) outline three distinct types of murder.

These are intimate partner murder, sexual murder and the murder of older women – the researchers compared each of these types to those in which men murder other men and uncovered data about the relationships between the victim and the perpetrator.

Professor Rebecca Dobash said: "We've found patterns of why certain types of murder happen which has taught us a lot about the callousness of the perpetrators of these crimes but also about how ordinary some of them appear to be."

The three year study reveals details about the life circumstances, motivations and thinking patterns of men who kill their partners, those involved in sexual murder and those who murder older women. Men who murder women over the age of 65 were found to be the most dangerous male killers of women.

Professor Dobash continued: "We have spent our entire working lives researching various forms of violence, particularly [violence against women](#), with an aim of furthering what is known about the nature of the violence and the contexts in which it occurs.

"We want our research to help society to understand what motivates certain [men](#) to kill and why they finally commit the act. I hope our research provides crucial evidence and insights necessary to prevent these horrific crimes and to better assist the victims. Our hope is that it will help to change social beliefs, policies, practices and laws."

Provided by University of Manchester

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