



### **W4 Sex-Related Homicide and Death Investigations: Practical and Clinical Perspectives — The Significance of Pornography, Sexual Deviance, Autoerotic Fatalities, Signature and *Modus Operandi* (M.O.) in Serial Murder Investigation and Criminal Investigative Analysis**

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After attending this presentation, attendees will be aware of common assumptions made by responders on scene, such as a death is an autoerotic asphyxia death prior to investigating if more than one person may have been involved. Attendees of this presentation will better understand the significance of sexual deviancy, fantasy, and pornography in sex-related events, as well as the investigative and behavioral analysis and medicolegal considerations involved in these types of cases. This presentation will provide attendees with practical, proven procedures for crime scene documentation, law enforcement investigation, and medicolegal investigations.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by providing and familiarizing forensic scientists and investigators with the investigative expertise and medicolegal science involved in the professional examination of sex-related homicide and death investigations. There will be case examples that focus on determining whether or not the death is a paraphilic accident or a sex-related homicide.

Sex-related homicides and other deaths occurring during sexual activities have drastically increased over the years and claim victims from all walks of life: men or women; lovers or strangers; elders or children. These fatalities may occur from recreational misadventures or sex-related crimes, which are perpetrated by sex offenders and are among the most horrific crimes imaginable. The internet has certainly provided society with technological advances but has also resulted in the proliferation of pornography and easy access to sex-related materials to anyone with a computer or computer access. It is significant that the sex industry, which consists of commercial enterprises providing adult entertainment, earns over \$13 billion annually in the United States and how that may influence the increase in sex-related events.

Sexual deviance, fantasy, and the significance of pornography perform major roles in the proliferation of sex-related homicides and unnatural deaths due to autoerotic activities, which expose the participants to danger as in cases involving some of the paraphilias. In DSM-5, the term paraphilia denotes any intense and persistent sexual interest, other than sexual interest in genital stimulation or preparatory fondling with phenotypically normal physically mature consenting adults. Some paraphilias may concern an individual's erotic activities while others primarily concern an individual's erotic targets. An example would be the voyeur, who satisfies himself sexually by observing an unsuspecting person naked, in the process of disrobing or engaging in sexual activity versus the sexual sadist who is aroused by the physical or psychological suffering of another person.

The applications of clinical criteria and abnormal psychology to the investigative process are an integral parts of criminal personality profiling and have been universally recognized and accepted as genuine and legitimate investigative techniques. Detectives and criminal investigators routinely employ these techniques in their investigation of violent crime on a case-by-case basis. From a practical standpoint, there are only so many ways to



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kill and only so many stories to tell as an offender attempts to explain the killings. After a while, a distinct pattern emerges, which encompasses a series of clusters of behavioral information and specific typologies of offenders. Human behavior is frequently repetitive. Certain actions engaged in at the scene by certain types of personalities will tend to repeat themselves.

Clinically speaking, there is a behavioral distinctiveness in human sexuality. This unique aspect of our sexual arousal and response system accounts for why individuals differ in their sexual behaviors and engage in a specific series of behavioral patterns. In sex-related criminal incidents, the offender is oftentimes subconsciously “acting out” a sexually significant behavioral pattern, which reflects the underlying personality, lifestyle, and developmental experiences and fantasies of the offender.

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### **Sex-Related Deaths, Sexual Deviance, Signature and M.O.**