

*Disclaimer: in this short little item below I'll be using the terms 'hypothesis' and, notably, 'theory' deliberately in quite a libertarian way – not in the strict way as used by science.*

## Appearances

*by Cazard*

*'Seems, madam? Nay, it is, I know not seems.'  
Hamlet, William Shakespeare, 'Hamlet',  
Act I, Scene 2*

When we look at the murders in Whitechapel of the autumn of 1888 we have a lot to look at, to note, to see and to interpret. Interpretation is what turns the mere visible into an event of meaning, and it happens immediately and inevitably. The moment we're looking at the result of an action we're beginning to connect dots to make sense of what we're seeing, a necessary, well developed process that, where the answers remain in part open like in this case, will continue into ever more elaborate, ever more trying and ever more diverse hypotheses. With this proneness for interpretation it is likely that at some point we might get carried away with it, reading meaning into what we're looking at that is perhaps created solely in our minds, even though it appears to make perfect sense. When we give sense, we might create it in the first place.

If you preoccupy yourself with the Whitechapel murders you'll encounter quite a number of aspects and details of certain appearance, and you'll as often hear assertions made as to how convincing these appearances are – either something being *naturally so, of course*, or someone else questioning the very same notion in this respect. A few of them keep adhering to my mind, and here I'll try to reexamine them, to the best of my humble abilities.

Note that I'm not only about to tackle those interpretations of how things might appear that I'm in disagreement with. Some I might find worthy of the application of more uncertainty and doubt, and others are pretty much representing my own stance.

There can always be more examples given on top of those which I chose, so it is. I'll rest with:

- *Staging*
- *Symbolism*
- *The Goulston Street Graffito*
- *Boldness*
- *Victimology (hunting for prostitutes?)*
- *Escalation*
- *Myth-creation*

that last one by which I'll try to support Tim Riordan in exonerating Francis Tumblety.

And I'd like to begin with one of my favourites.

### *Staging*

A number of gruesome murders have occurred over a period of time. The victims, all but one, have been found laying in the streets, in backyards, on a square, and finally a victim has been found in her bed. They've been lying on their backs, except one who was found on her side. In several cases their clothes had been moved up to expose their abdomens. They'd been subjected to horrifying post mortem inflictions, stabbings and the exposure of guts, the removal of the uterus and other organs, the placing of intestines over the shoulder, the mutilation of the face and finally of the entire body, the arm placed, as if resting, over the carved up belly, the face tilted to look into the camera. You encounter any of these, be it as a contemporary witness or over the gap of 126 years, reconstructing as many details as you can, by means of description, drawings or photographs, you encounter it, and it's hard to look at it and not think you're being addressed. Normally we wouldn't feel this when finding a gutted starling lying on its back on the pavement, although there are some who have a similar reaction, by applying a meaning, as for instance fate, that addresses them personally in the same way – the starling had been 'placed' for them to find, and there is a significance to it that corresponds to their own fate.

Out of any context this is pretty much what occurs when we feel spoken to upon seeing the body of a murdered fellow human being on the pavement much like that starling, and in a way we *are* spoken to. The pressing question is, are we spoken to by a mind oblivious to our presence or is it indeed communicating?

Different from those with a mindset composed to look at the starling in a way that reflects a form of solipsism, most of us would not think that a chance find of a dead bird has significance directly to do with themselves. But many might think of a connection between what they see and the eyes seeing being theirs when finding an Annie Chapman. There are a number of reasons for that, long before we work on establishing rational models for why this could in fact be so. First and most prominent, we can be sure the victim was not one of a cat attack. The being that killed this fellow human was yet another fellow human. A cat doesn't message us, another human does, and this difference is an enormous one. A potent component of how we encounter just about anything outside 'us' is by relating to it. We practically relate to everything, and in quite a personal manner, even to inanimate objects. We look at a piece of furniture and give it character. The more so with animate beings, with beings that look back at us, and most of all with human beings. And the louder, the more extreme something is, the more we establish a spontaneous reaction. The body of another human being will look *displayed* to us, a lot more so than a dead bird, because it *has* been displayed by another human.

But is there really purpose, other than that directly in relation with the murder? Is there purpose in the way they have been found, as relating to the actual event of finding? Did the perpetrator of the murders had those in mind who would find his victim when leaving her in the streets, in the backyard, in the bed, more so than in the sense that it appears obvious that she'd be found in such a place? In other words, was he killing, in part, before an audience?

It's an utterly important question. If only one of the many, mostly boastful letters is genuine, then the conclusion should be that an audience had at least at some point indeed formed in the killer's mind. There are examples for this with later serial murderers. The public seeing what was done was a very important aspect for the Zodiac. And in other cases even what might have been part of a personal ritual in the locations of where bodies were dumped could be rightly interpreted in this way.

If we look at each of the murders, restricting ourselves to the 5 so-called 'canonical' victims – without respect to whether or not they've been killed by the same hand - it might very much seem so, and it does to some. But what do we really see: we see the body of a woman outstretched on her back in Buck's Row, her throat cut [the wounds to her abdomen were discovered later]. We see a woman on her back in the backyard of 29 Hanbury St., her throat cut, her skirt pushed up, her

abdomen mutilated, her intestines laying over her shoulder, some of her effects at her feet, we see her legs spread and propped. We see a woman on her side in Dutfield's Yd., her throat cut. We see a woman on her back on Mitre Sq., her face mutilated, her body cut open, her intestines around her, her abdomen abominated, her effects near her, and again we see her legs spread. And we see the grossly mutilated body of a woman lying on her back in her bed at 13 Miller's Court, her abdomen and torso opened, flesh of hers on the table, organs arranged by her side and between her legs, the flesh of her thigh scraped off to the bone, her heart missing, a breast, a kidney and her uterus under her head, her face a complete mess and blood everywhere. That's what we see. And, for all the reasons above and more, we immediately see more. We see a tableau, we insert the first meaning, we're making the first sense to bring order into what seems senseless. Once begun, we have no difficulties in giving the assertion a good standing, brick by brick, on one of which we write our reasoning with white chalk. That is particularly easy with Mary Kelly, since here little, it seems [at first], is left to the imagination. With all the other victims it's the outdoor locations that already does half the trick: surely the killer had in mind that they were to be found? Surely he was aware of the shock value of intestines outlaid over a shoulder? Surely this exhibition of public outcry, with spread legs and horrific inflictions has been left as it is in part to be seen?

Until one asks oneself the simple question:

*would it look any different, and how so, if no staging was involved, if there wasn't an audience in the perpetrator's mind?*

And if he was conscious of such a thing, how big a priority really was it, as far as we can tell from what is there to see alone?

The first question that needs to be answered is that of the respective location. If we could positively answer it with their choice as one of a number, the victims being killed where they were found *because* the killer wanted them to be found *there*, as opposed to a more secluded dumping place after having killed them in a safer location, a lair of his, his home, or a hansom perhaps, then the question is solved. Alas, nothing at all points to this. Nothing points away from the alternative, that he searched out his victim outside, killing her on the spot, doing what he wanted to do and leaving her right there. Which is what we can see, nothing else. It has been established how he killed. The first two victims were strangled, their throats been cut when they had already been lowered to the ground. And from there he'd proceed with the abdominal, and later other mutilations. For which the victim would best have to be laid out on her back, the legs out of the way.

Consider these aspects separate from other 'garnishing' – all about them is of practical essence. Up to this point we have no reason to believe they were found thus because the killer had wanted to present us with an image. The alternative you might want to imagine is him restoring some 'decency' back to this image before leaving, straightening out the legs and the skirt over them, putting her arms along her sides or even folding them on her chest. Which is something that might even happen with other murderers, and it would imply quite a specific set of information about him. A set that doesn't at all fit with these murders. There was no sense of forced respect for these victims in their murders, quite the opposite. It's not even a Why Bother, this respect would have not entered the killer's mind, he didn't have it. So what else could he have done, trying his best to avoid us jumping into conclusions about messaging? Hide them? Where? Put something over them, a tarpaulin perhaps? Which he should have better brought along. Plus, there is the other, equally practical imperative, to get away speedily. Look at it from this angle, and there's not much variation left in how the bodies were to be found.

But what about the intestines over the shoulder, and what about the obscene arrangements of Mary Kelly? Yes, it's a lot harder to swallow lack of variation there. One aspect before all others actually invites the idea of public display in every sense as being a plausible one, and it could be one way of explaining the exacerbating mutilations, each victim, with exception of Stride, looking more horrifying than the previous one. It is an often mentioned point that the sort of media attention the case was getting was unprecedented. It could easily have encouraged the killer to 'do ever better.' One needs to allow the alternative of everything he did besides the practical being a totally private matter, coexisting along with the possibility of conscious exhibiting, however. We're still left with

the killer murdering on location because he had no other place where to do it [and where he'd first have to get his victim] – the question of the number of choices in this respect an utterly decisive one. We still have nothing that implies anything to the contrary. Hence the next question is a very difficult one: were all the things he did with the bodies post mortem what he desired to do, and if yes, of what precise nature were these desires? The whole complex question of motive isn't positively answered as of yet, and we're left with speculating. Without anything that gives this answer the possibility that actions like placing the intestines over the victim's shoulder where meant for nobody's but his own benefit is *at least* as likely as the so easily overwhelming image of display for the eyes there are to come.

The scene found at 13 Miller's Court is the one that wakes the impression of a conscious arrangement for the public the most. It – *almost* – seems to dictate it. Besides the multiple mutilations and positioning of organs, besides the seeming order or disorder and besides the overall image, it is especially the head, cocked to the side, the face looking at us, and the arm placed, almost in a relaxed way, over her belly that seem like a macabre posture arranged by the killer to 'greet' us with her body.

I'd argue that in essence nothing here is different from any of the above. The body is again on its back, the position most practical for everything that's been done to it. The actions taken in respect to the carved off and extracted body parts and organs are again subject to the same choice of ours to make. As for the head, the first thing we must remind ourselves of is what direction it was really facing – what we see is a photograph. The face, as to where the photographer was standing, is 'looking' into a *camera*. It is therefor the *photographer* who chose that it does. Any other angle, and the face would not face 'us'. Only 2 photos of the crime scene interior appear to have survived, it is likely that there had been more, notably one taken from the foot end of the bed – the face would have been completely averted. And did it greet the entering policemen? No. The head-end of the bed was aligned with the door, one would have to make a few steps into the room first to position oneself in order to *face* the face. What's more, the door opened inwards, so the view would at first be obscured by it. Did she face the spectator at the window then? Perhaps the 2<sup>nd</sup> window, the one deeper into the backyard, more away from the door. Thomas Bowyer would have looked through the 1<sup>st</sup> window after knocking at her door, and did so, he was said to have removed a coat serving as a curtain, so he'd reached through the hole in the window. So no macabre 'greeting' by facing you. And the face had to 'look' *somewhere*.

Why this direction? Why not towards the wall? Well, I wonder what we would have read into *that* then. There's only 3 ways the head could end up, face to the wall, face up or face to the left. The head of a dead person, especially with a deep cut to the throat, is quite loose and will more likely fall to either side when the rest of the body is moved, as for instance when it's submitted to a lot of cutting. This would make it more likely that a staging had been conducted if we'd find the head face up. So what's left are two directions, that's a 50% chance for either side; I'll leave the rest up to you. One could go further by suggesting that her right leg appears a little higher propped than the left on the photo [the whole body photographed, for the other the bed was probably moved]. This could be an effect caused by angle, but the whole of her body – body and legs – appear to be slightly curved in pose, which produces a tendency that corresponds with the direction the head is facing. The rest might very probably be down to what was *under* the head.

So again, not the slightest evidence for this being a conscious staging. Mary Kelly's body was not posed on a chair with one arm over the lean. It was out on the bed, positioned the way one would think with these mutilations.

It is the arm alone that might still make one frown. An arm alone, on this palette of outrages, and given that we don't know the sequence of the mutilations, and this arm showing some as well, it's not enough to go on with in a sense of staging.

All this is not meant to say that staging wasn't possibly involved. Of course we should give this consideration. But we should also consider that the chief factor in the creation of this possibility really is a creation, namely that of our imagination. It can well be that imagination and reality coincide, but until positive evidence is arrived at we must concede that there are things to see and

ways to see.

### *Symbolism*

'No symbols where none intended,' wrote Beckett in the addenda to his 'Watt'. We don't know what the murderer intended, we can only guess. Trying to read the specifics of what he inflicted upon the women he murdered, and we will inevitably read *into* them. Where this is accurate, it is probably often so by chance. And at times the reading is indulging, squeezing itself into the room spontaneously, before we could say a word. And as it is so often with guests who make themselves welcome this way, we rather let them stay. When a heart is taken we instantly connect it with life force, or with the heart we know to ache. A uterus with the creation of life, and with womanhood. When a nose is cut off it must mean something, above it being part of an attacked face, and to us a cut off nose instantly connects with 'nosy', 'nosy, but no more'. We don't like randomness, not even in murders that we call senseless, we like meaning. And on the outset we're probably right, to some extent at least, as more likely than not the killer is as prone to see meaning, too, and what he touched and what he took is of meaning to him. There are also givens, someone is repeatedly attacking the genital area of a corpse, and with repeated victims, and some of this meaning we're getting right away, and we're most probably right.

It has been suggested that the act of extraction was perhaps perfectly random, that he took what he could grab, and since it was the abdomen he opened, he grabbed the uterus. It's a possibility, but highly unlikely, even if one would play along, latest with the 2<sup>nd</sup> uterus it would have *gained* a specific significance to him. Moreover, he didn't grab, he aimed, he cut away this particular organ, not from attacking to opening to extracting, but from attacking right to opening *and* extracting. And knowing what it was he held in his hands, it was a symbolic *it*. Anything beyond that, we're left to speculating, whether the aim was to deprive the woman further by taking what made her a woman, whether the organ itself was a hypnotic center for him, whether he took life and took the thing in which life is created with him, and other possibilities. They all can only seem to us.

The heart. The central life force, if one thinks of it this way, the engine of life, again we have an organ that ranks as central to life itself [symbolically first, you'll equally fail to survive without a liver or your lungs]. When I asked on the message boards what people thought he did with the organs the question was slightly misunderstood, and attempts were made to answer why he chose those particular organs. The heart, in Kelly's case, immediately got this role of principal life-driver, or assumed that of the heart that can break. Maybe, I thought. Maybe he always wanted the heart, and it was just too hard to get to, one has to crush through the chest, while the abdomen is altogether soft. Or maybe the uterus remained in central focus, was still the main object of his attention, and he extended whatever it was he'd done with it before – which might have been better than what he'd been reduced to with it before, but the pay-off was no extending into a later point. So the next best thing was the heart, to some degree a place-holder. And I'm doing the very same thing as the replier on the message boards. Had he done what he did with Kelly's uterus and taken, say, the spleen, both of us would have another idea about it – laden with symbolism we peg for being his.

In a way we're back on the same territory as with the reading of staging. Something is looking back at us, and we want to understand what it says. So we suggest the answers, hoping it will nod. It's staring into the woods, at some point one will see something. And by chance what one will see will even be real.

The facial injuries of Catherine Eddowes sprouted what could be called entire schools of hypothesizing. Lately I came to accept Jon Smyth's theory about how the inverted Vs on her cheeks came to be.(1) That'd be a How. The great diversity concerns the Why. The least burdened with symbolism is the idea that her face had been disfigured in order to make identification difficult, and it's also the least burdened with people buying into it. They're supported by the fact that she was identified pretty soon, sooner than, say, Martha Tabram. And her face still allowed identification,

badly mutilated as it was, one could still recognize Catherine Eddowes' face. Still blessed with having little further to explain are the escalationists: the whole attack on the face signified the ever growing fury by which the whole body of the victim was visited upon, and even the more minute and aimed cuts, for instance the nipping of the eye-lids, do not altogether contradict this view. Most due to the all over impression pays the notion that her face somewhat resembled that of a macabre clown face, the vertical slits to the eye-lids, the mess of the nose seen from above looking like a roundish clown's nose. An interpretation that sits nearest to what we think we see when the image of Mary Kelly looks like a presentation to us, likewise that of Nichols and Chapman. Not to say that it wasn't possible that the killer wanted to create such a morbid clown puppet for our benefit, yet it can still be the proverbial face on Mars, or sitting in a mountain ridge, or other chance formations in nature that look to us from a certain angle like a human face. The debate promises to rage when it's suggested that these injuries had a very personal meaning, that they were addressed both at the dead woman and another party or parties, an answer to what they had been doing: the nose is cut off because Kate had stuck it deep into business that wasn't hers, she had seen what she wasn't supposed to see, she had heard what she shouldn't have, hence the sliced off ear-part, and she'd been told to keep her mouth shut. Makes all the sense in the world, especially as it seems to fit in with the idea that she and John Kelly had been up to some blackmailing.(2) And it can be so. As it can be that some of the injuries had occurred because they would occur when a face is attacked, some others because more attention was paid to the part – a face basically consists of the attacked features, so whether or not you attack aimlessly, they will be injured if you keep at it. Nose and eye-lids were definitely considered with deliberation, but all this might mean is a man concentrated on doing something horrible to that face.

Is there symbolism in the whole series? If we permit ourselves to think of a single killer, and if we give credit to escalation, could it be that the series bears a, perhaps quite conscious, work in progress? This would require the killer to have planned through what he was to do with his victims, an 'engineered escalation', if you will. This is little considered, by me neither really, and I cannot really think of anything that would support the idea. However, it is not *completely* impossible. Mainly, though, it would be an impression formed by the beholder, before one can consider whether it's one that was induced.

One can call details of what the perpetrator revealed about himself – rather vaguely, and not all too 'successfully', watching the amount of theories – symbolizing, but perhaps that would be an abuse of terminology. In the most we have motivation for a detail that might associate with Freudian interpretation. Motivation is what we ask about in any case. The symbolism we find can originate in the perpetrator, and is therefor of definite meaning, or it is born in our interpretation of what appears before us. The faster the latter does that, the more it is an immediate reaction to an appearance the more one should be cautious.

### *The Goulston St. Graffito*

An appearance of different sort is presented by the Goulston St. Graffito, and given the invariably inaccurate depiction in movies and documentary-enactments one is almost tempted to push it into the myth-section. This particular Seems is one created in quite distinguished manners in the eye of the wider public beholder, those who were involved that night of September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1888 and those preoccupied with the case and thus being a little more informed respectively. I'm joyfully biased here for once, as I believe an overwhelming amount of implication can nudge us towards a reasonable decision for once.

The first person things appeared to was PC Alfred Long. It is possible that any other constable finding apron piece and graffito could as well have glanced at it, frowned for a second while trying to figure out whether it was expressing anger about Jews or about the treatment of Jews, before remembering that he was on a job. Thus we can use PC Long as a placeholder and thank him for an ongoing discussion. Bless him. Much was probably due to the state he was in; brutal murder on his

mind, and now a bloodied piece of cloth, perhaps he was about to find another victim. He's making a few paces and finds writing on the wall instead. Close proximity, must be connected.

Only that, of course, it needn't be. First of all, it was with some certainty not the only graffito in London. The thing about message-bearing, venting, political or hate-mongering graffiti in our days is that they're decreasing. The wall we're writing them on now is a virtual, we use Twitter. The people of late Victorian London didn't yet have Twitter, message-graffiti were the Twitter of the age. One of the objections against taking GSG seriously is the very apt question why, if our man wanted to leave messages, he would write *this*. After all, there was another one actually taunting the public with a countdown, and it was taken about as seriously as most of the letters, namely not at all. So it was the apron-piece alone that brought up the possibility. Another question about property-debauching Jack points at four good walls in Mary Kelly's room, and plenty of blood to write with in case he forgot to bring his piece of chalk. Granted, no piece of apron was left to connect any writing, or the lack hereof, with the murder.

With graffiti existing in London to begin with, we have writing concerning Jews not only in an area where many Jews lived, but in an entrance to a house packed with Jewish immigrants. So the apron suggests to some that he had Jews on his mind while making his escape from a murder scene. I'll leave that up to you, in the meantime, is the message really cryptic, as it's described so many times? It certainly is if the murderer of Catherine Eddowes wrote it. It is not at all cryptic if it wasn't him. It only can be read in two different ways, which may or may not have been intended by the author, probably not, but that's not the same as being cryptic. But for me personally one detail about it stands above the others: different from the eye-catching screen-versions that cover a space ranging from office stationary to entire walls, sometimes requiring two policemen laboriously coming after Warren's order with big sponges and buckets of water, the real GSG was written *on a brick*. It was tiny. It was a hit and miss as far as detection is concerned to begin with. You present the size of it accurately in a reenactment, and the audience will giggle. One PC required to wipe it off, with one, perhaps two swipes, the other hand in his pocket.

You take all these facts, and you decide for yourselves. I often have this image in my mind, the killer escaping from a gruesome murder he's just committed, it rains a little, so he seeks shelter. Gets a little bored. Feels a piece of chalk in his pockets. Begins to doodle. 'The Je..., wait, how you spell that again, anyways, ...not be the..., for nothing, ah, it stopped raining...'

I mean, *really*?

20, 30 ft further down or before, and what message would we be debating today?

### *Boldness*

One victim killed out in the open street, discovered very shortly after. Another victim found in a backyard, plenty of windows looking out over it, with even more people behind them, the murder committed at beginning dawn, with people about to wake, with one person visiting the John in the neighbour yard, the victim again discovered shortly after. Yet another victim, if we count her in, killed next to a gathering, witnesses about, discovered almost immediately after the murder. And another one found on a square, within the briefest of times, and we have good reason to believe that the murderer had been seen with her only 10 minutes before.

No question. The killer was a bold one. Daring. Perhaps even arrogant.

Or actually, there is question. Both those who lived through that autumn and viewers of the case today are tempted to jump into this conclusion, because it naturally *appears* to us, that the circumstances dictate a killer perhaps even fueled by the thrill as we imagine ourselves in his position, feeling the risk of discovery being too much on our nerves. Besides the fallacy involved when placing ourselves in the perp's place, which creates this feeling, ours, we don't know anything about his, there are two objections to be made speaking against the certainty of a bold killer. One should take into account, that boldness is not the factor that made him choose the location. There's nothing to indicate a choice between the street and perhaps a lair at his hands. Any other reason for

these locations, and the risk would always be there. It is safer to assume that it was a matter of priority: either don't kill at all or accept the risk. The other option refers to the possibility of a less organized perp. That it wasn't too much on his mind at all. The drive, the want to kill was much bigger than this, and what we have wasn't a bold, but a plainly careless killer.

All three possibilities are valid. It's the *certainty* of the bold killer the image and timing of the locations create we should put into question.

### *Victimology – hunting for prostitutes?*

When the victims are described one word we keep hearing attributed to them is 'prostitutes.' That's what is in the general bulk of people's mind when reading about the case or when watching the movies, 'Jack the Ripper' killed prostitutes. But was he? The question has to be looked at from two angles, from what occupation these women came after and from what type of victim the killer sought – the latter being what we now call victimology, a killer's victims' profile, as relating directly to whom he's seeking. If we can establish a common denominator among the victims we learn something about him. It was noted that Ted Bundy's victims all looked somewhat similar, for example, had their long hair parted the same way [which would exclude those in the dormitory, whom he hadn't been able to see from outside].

So first of all, were these women prostitutes? Prostitution in the East End at that time wasn't at all the same as what we see today with more or less professional prostitutes, a full time occupation, involving flashy, revealing, seductive clothing. The cleavage didn't bulge out like balloons, as at least one 'Ripper'-movie wants us to believe. Each of these women did just about anything else, selling flowers and trinkets, going hop-picking, before having to bend to this very last resort of selling their bodies for 4 pence, the prize of a place for the night, or a stump of old bread. Sheerest, most cruel economic desperation drove them, and only if there was no other odd job they could get their hands on. We don't even know for sure that Catherine Eddowes did resort to prostitution. The two most regularly resorting to it, it appears, were Liz Stride and Mary Kelly, and both would rather do something else, and did, whenever they could. If I call someone a policeman, a firefighter, a soldier, a clerk or a teacher, I'm defining them by their professional occupation which takes up much of their day's time, and possibly, if they feel passionately about their jobs, their minds as well. I can define a number of modern days' prostitutes that way as well, if I wish. That's not the same as with women who'd rather hold a steady job, but can't for various reasons, who'd rather sell things than their body, but have no other choice if they don't want to starve or spend the night wandering the streets, nor is it accurate to define the whole personality of someone, who out of hunger and desperation nicks an orange, as a thief. Hence I sternly believe we shouldn't call these women prostitutes.

But how is it in terms of victimology? However we define these women, who are they in their killer's mind? Is the label 'prostitute' featuring in his mind, is he specifically out for prostitutes? Once again, we don't know enough about him. All we can tell in all sobriety is that his victims were: women, poor and out in the streets at the respective times.

We could add they were all habit-drinkers, but that already would necessitate the killer observing them for a time ahead – not to mention how widespread habitual drinking was. So that's it, they were women, poor and out in the streets, except Kelly. We have absolutely no reason to believe he would have spared a poorly dressed nanny crossing over to her mother's. It is reasonable to assume that he acted at night for a reason. All we can see is a woman who is out and crosses paths with him. It is notable that Polly Nichols and Annie Chapman were outside for exactly the same reason, they didn't have their doss-money. Which is in my opinion the more accurate way of stating it, not 'they were outside because they were looking for clients', but 'they were out in the streets in order to find clients because they didn't have their doss-dough.'

People might disagree with my reluctance of calling the victims prostitutes, but I pretty much demand that 'prostitutes' should be taken out of the victimology. It's not a criteria we have enough

on to support.

### *Escalation*

When first reading through the casebook literature, the essays and the message board, and listening to some of the podcasts, I was astonished to learn that what appeared obvious to me, the series of killings representing an escalation, was not a notion shared by everyone. That it *appeared* obvious to me is enough to warrant a re-examination of the hypothesis, and to closely listen to what its opponents have to say.

By and large, we can divide the camp of opponents into 2 sub-camps: those who find a single perpetrator being responsible the likely scenario, but refuse escalation in favour of other hypotheses explaining the specifics of the killings, and those who arrive at the preliminary conclusion that different persons were responsible for the respective killings, some as having been committed by the same man and others by a different one, or all killings by different hands, a scenario that would have the escalation hypothesis collapse. Interestingly, as we shall see, while the opponents present the propagators with a problem, the same opponents will be presented with the very same problem, though viewed from the other side. The first camp, it appears, could be further divided into quite a legion, people simply not buying the idea; I've yet to find a satisfying answer as to why not, as they look upon one man whose atrocities increase in violence upon the dead body. Invariably, though, the common theme appears to be the perpetrator in full control over himself. Perfectly conscious about the entirety of his motives and how he's going about in order to meet them. To which I'd want to reply that there is no such person, including you and me. If we have a single perp, progressing over a steadily rising amount of mutilations, and this being the 'plan', to start with relatively small stab wounds to the genital area and to end with a total annihilation of the whole body, we might indeed deduce all this to happen, at least in part, for the benefit of the public, otherwise it'd be quite a leap to suggesting that such a mapped out build-up serves only him – for whatever mysterious reason. In the end, if we compare the idea of this build-up being a rather inevitable illustration of the man's inner workings to that of a conscious plan we'll have to decide which is the more likely, the more similar to what we were able to observe later with other serial murders, which offers a more inclusive set of explanations, and which is in need of clarifying something near ineffable. All in all, and I might be unfair here, the rejection by the single perp-propagators is asking for elaboration. The 'planning' is an extension I helplessly drew myself, it's not a model forwarded by this camp. There is the special sub-camp of those suggesting an *agenda*, and while those are usually of the far-fetched, if not even outright ridiculous kind, at least they offer some alternative to a purely pathologic drive. Examples here for are the Royal/Masonic conspiracy and Stan Russo's mastermind criminals (3), having in common that we're dealing with team-ups. Tandem- or group efforts, we can see with the Hill Side Strangler(s), don't seem to necessitate an increase of post mortem mutilations, so that question still remains unanswered. It is different with torture, but torture hasn't taken place in this case.

Conscious considerations of increasing mutilations on behalf of the killer is sometimes part of the theories developed by some from the 2<sup>nd</sup> camp, but diversity in theme is much greater here. The common thread is still that of the agenda mostly, at least as it concerns some of the murders, and so for a very specific reason, it seems. To first look at some of the models, and some of them can make a whole lot of sense, at least in regards to the respective murders, much of the reasoning has to do with the tantalizing problem of none of those who have a single killer in mind being able to put a definite number to the victims. In other words, it has to do with differences among the murders. It is no wonder that those involved with the crimes back then were helpless to a great extent, as, outside DNA-testing, we often even can't tell for sure about victim numbers today with our murderers. So while single-perp propagators often try to involve as many victims as possible, reaching back to Emma Smith and forward to murder victims of 1891, perhaps also to try and explain what they see as almost an 'outbreak' of gruesome murders in those years, the opponents do the opposite and chop

the line up, no pun intended. One theory, for example, makes a pretty good case of Jacob Isenschmid as being responsible for the killings of Polly Nichols and Annie Chapman, which necessarily means that someone else was responsible for Stride, Eddowes and Kelly, since Isenschmid had by then been incarcerated in an asylum.(4) It is indeed quite a solidly built case against Isenschmid, good enough to make a single-perp prop pause. For Stride numerous objections are already in circulation, but Eddowes needs to be explained further. Which is where agenda sets in, as suggested by several hypotheses, and she was mutilated 'Ripper-style' in order to deflect from the real killer, masking it as the work of the Whitechapel fiend. Again, one author of this idea finds a good set of circumstantial evidence for something fishy going on in Eddowes and Kelly's behaviour prior to the murder and what appears to be contradictions in John Kelly's statements after. (5) Mary Kelly, meanwhile, has then to be the victim of yet another party.

Taking her out of the realm of the 'canonical 5' is a feature of a number of theories, mostly prompted by the apparent differences. As she provides the most haunting legacy, explanations provided for her as not being a 'Ripper'-victim are without fail as extraordinary. What was found at 13 Miller's Court was the cover-up of a botched abortion. She'd been involved with Fenian operators, killed within this context. And, of course, she was the main witness to Catholic-Or-Rather-Not Annie Crook's marriage and child-birth.

If you take a step back and look at the string of killings again within this mirror chamber of explanation attempts the impression you might get, even if perfectly unbiased, is that what might be going on here is an excess of constructing. Mind you, that is not to say that such a thing is impossible, the world would be a far more curious one without coincidences, and even those coincidences are explained away by means of the camouflaging of murders. Hence the argument that it is quite striking that a number of unconnected people had the same idea of using a frenzy to distort their murderous actions is rendered academic. Be it so, it might still nag on you. Overall, we have one or two murders committed by the same person, which warrants the search for reasons for the others, and whether we'll be right with our answer or not, it is in our nature that we *will* find some for sure. The difference between the first murders and those that are detached from a series that now no longer is one is that those first are of a relatively simple kind – complicated it becomes where the mind of the killer is concerned – while the others are quite complicated. Two exceptions, one notable, the other, to my mind, not, Liz Stride's murder and the botched abortion, stand aside from what are once more conspiracy theories, be it collusions on side of the victim [Eddowes] or the perpetrators [Kelly]. And the question must be asked: are they discovered as what indeed transpires to have been, or are they constructed *in order* to explain away the similarities while emphasizing the differences? Are they developed, even by means of extremely well researched and thus established facts, because they are now, after having separated those victims, *needed*?

In the end, if we look at all the murders in the light of similarities, the least to say is that a big question mark is left. If we'd ever find to only one conclusive prove that leaves no room beside accepting the imperative of an escalation, those hypotheses would be blown a serious crack. One other aspect of all these alternatives is the ease by which we can follow the perp's/perps' reasoning – I have elaborated in length on it in my previous effort 'Getting Pathological' [→ thread of the same name in the 'Method and Madness'-section, if you feel like it please read the updated version towards the end of the thread that includes the brief attempt of exonerating Tumblety from the swamp of myths created around his person]. So just briefly, what impresses about the various hypotheses explaining the killings as not committed by a serial killer is calculation, calculation deep into the motive: cover-ups, removal of threats, of blackmail, punishments not originating in delusions or expanded hatred but for an actual deed committed by the victim, or as a signal to others. In other words, motivations we can comprehend with relative ease. They're not only known, but quite familiar to us. Meanwhile a pathological killer is more difficult to access, and whether this is partly a reason for developing these hypotheses or not, they also help over the other extent of the alternative to them: if we're dealing with unconnected murders that do *not* have those 'sane' agendas behind them, it'd mean that we're having 3, if not even 4 pathological killers murdering in succession. For those to whom this alone seems a little improbable, add that each of them would

have killed once or max twice, and then no more.

Which is quite a factor. Hence, if the chain isn't a chain we need a different kind of motive. And suddenly we stand before a problem. Again, it is by no means impossible that we have 4 different parties killing for different purposes, and at least 3 of them driven by agendas that in themselves, though cruel, don't smack of the insane. And if evidence is there in support of this it must be seen and heard. If this evidence is overwhelming then it has to rank high. First, though, it has to be heaved out of the purely, and very, circumstantial. Mary Kelly a victim of Fenian operations because – she was Irish? This would be appearances within the respective hypotheses. Yes, she was Irish, and so were thousands of others living in the East End, and they were *not* all involved in Fenian activities. The RIC is alleged to have visited the crime scene. That might very well be, but so what? An Irish woman had been torn to pieces, within the atmosphere of threats that necessitated the RIC its agents might have gotten the same idea as our odd conspiracy theorist, gotten it, looked into it, and left. Mary Kelly was most probably not Mary Kelly's real name. Yes, there is good reason to assume that she'd wanted to start a new life under an assumed name. I'd wanted that a couple of times, and if I'd be living in a time and place where identifying yourself meant simply stating your name, that's what I'd be doing. We have no records of her, don't know anything about her but what she'd told her lover. Of course not, she was living under an assumed name.

We need a little more than that, especially, and that's half the introduced problem, if we end up with a series of unconnected murders that bear similarities but are performed by different parties, most of which are driven by an agenda – altogether this needs a hell of a lot more explaining than a mind that is simply sick.

So the similarities are explained, with the whoosh of a swipe, by the crimes being masked as 'Ripper'-murders. At least twice, each not only mandating a perpetrator knowing how to do this [the lament-inducing question of skill not to mention], but also the mental capacities, which in itself imply some malady to the respective mind – again twice. *And*, importantly, the introspection into what will result – pretty much so – in an appearance of escalation; the killings are not merely copied, their violence is stepped up. That's killers quite ahead of their times, one might be tempted to think.

Which is finally the other half of the problem, one which presents itself to both opponents and propagators in reverse to another. For the 'escalationist' the promoting of several perpetrators of several crimes leaves the whole theory of escalation to collapse. For the opponent it means s/he has to explain how a killer can go from 0 to 60, as phrased by Ally Ryder [Chapman](6), or from 0 to 500, as in Kelly's case. 'Sane' agendas and masking seem to do that – but only to the point where one begins asking about the specifics of mutilations and extractions, of the arrangement of organs. A slight comparison urges itself into the line of thoughts in respect of the Maybrink diary, which, on the surface, offers yet again an explanation. As of these days we can say with some certainty that the diary is a forgery. Prof. David Canter with the Center for Investigative Psychology at the University of Liverpool ascribed its author an insight into a mind's pathology that would, if the thing was a hoax, itself implying the same author as probably being, well, troubled(7). Actually and personally, I'd follow him there only for a distance, I can imagine a more subtle while yet sicker manuscript. Anyway, that's pretty much what I mean when asking about a perp's mental capacity for not only thinking out the specifics but then actually carrying them out. With one vital difference. Namely that between imagining and carrying it out. Imagining, in thought and then writing, is one thing. Novelists do it all the time. It's their trade. It's a mandatory skill to be able and dive into abysses that would normally sicken the heart, to be able to give these abysses words that'll transport them before your eyes and make them 'real'. Don't believe for a second that this means all those authors are somewhat sick in their heads. One *can* go there, to come back unscathed. It is quite another thing to actually *perform* these acts. From there one will *not* come back unscathed, and with all probability one wasn't quite alright before it.

Which brings up yet another question, that of skill and experience. Skill is debated ad near nausea on the boards, but the debates should not only be concerned with abdominal mutilations and throat-cutting, they should also ask about the entirety of the act itself. Comparing the mutilations on

Eddowes with the two previous murders has led some to the conclusion that a *less skilled* copycat was at work, while others explain those apparently shrewder cuts with the short time in which the murder and the mutilations were done, as well as with a perhaps growing fury. If you take the whole crime, separated from the others, and look at the speed in which it was, for what reason ever, committed, then calling it the work of an amateur seems out of place. And with the whole I mean the whole, all the components combined, and the very fact of killing and mutilating another person. The likelihood of someone killing Catherine Eddowes and doing the things to her body that had been done, and all of it with this speed, as being someone who'd never killed before is vanishingly small. If he was such a person, and the killing of her was an agenda-driven first-timer, then he was indeed inhumanly skilled, not to mention nerves. Even without that kidney.

Which means that anyone saying that she was killed by another person than Nichols and Chapman were needs to establish a time-span covering an adult life that crosses that of Eddowes and look at all the unsolved murders that fall into this period [perhaps also the solved ones, justice is at times *too* blind]: what other murder might have been committed by the same hand? Which will be a lot more difficult if the speaker is right – an experienced murderer who has no connection with the victim and is able to mask it as the deed of another killer, a Victorian hitman, so to speak, would probably not be identifiable. If there was a connection, on the other hand, we could still speak of a somewhat disturbed mind with some certainty. With the experience at display you should be led to murders. If you don't find *any* other murders that could possibly have been committed by the same man then, where else do we see equal murders? An equal display of experience?

So all in all, theories diverting from the lone serial killer create an abundance of new problems.

What signifies those ideas is that the appearances that lend them credibility, some more than others, have to be *sought*. Depending on the model in question, this might either be supportive or discrediting. How about the appearance of escalation, which is one that rather jumps the eye?

Imagine a detective from another planet, coming to ours and looking at the case of 'Jack the Ripper' for the first time, unburdened by bias, looking at all the details, and also looking at 126 years of confusion, and an *incredible* number of suspects – he might lean back, collect his thoughts and go – '*waaaait* a minute...' For as well-accepted the idea of a single lone killer is, as much sense the serial killer and the escalation hypothesis seem to make, the ever mounting mass of suspects and theories just might imply that a fundamental mistake is being made, supporting the value of thinking away from it.

Very well.

However.

Imagine a 2<sup>nd</sup> detective from yet another planet, also visiting us and reviewing the case, but at a time after the 1<sup>st</sup>, when, perhaps partly due to the observations of her stellar colleague, general opinion has established the idea of disconnected murders and multiple culprits as the new tradition. She also leans back, cocks her head, and says – 'hang *on* there a sec... Have you guys considered the possibility of a single perpetrator?'

When we think of the single disturbed mind as being responsible, we're not making it necessarily easier for us, but it is a simpler explanation. It is not easy to comprehend such a mind, but we have since collected experience with such minds. We know they exist, and we know what they do, the first cursory look at these murders bear all the trademarks, so perhaps the first cursory impression is being the right one? We're not spared, though, the same demand for explaining the differences. One of those that scream loudest is the increasing mutilations. And we say, yes, escalation. An escalation not in terms of number of victims or decreasing pauses between murders, but in terms of aggressions against the bodies, with each victim it's getting worse, until we see a giant leap into totally massacring, completely obliterating the body as an indoor location provides unprecedented time and security.

Such escalation theory makes perfect sense. Slavoj Zizek once said that we have a perfect name for *fantasy realized*, and that name is *nightmare*.(9) One might also argue that it is near impossible.

That one never reaches the absolutely fulfilled realization. A dream of perpetual frustration. Perhaps the very nightmare scenario of a fantasy made true prevents us from tasting it to the last extent.

Polly Nichols and Annie Chapman are the two victims basically everybody agree upon as being killed by the same hand. Either their murderer had been prevented from committing the same acts on Nichols' body he had with Chapman, or the desire to perform them had reached image after Nichols. If the latter is the case, then this already is escalation. What he had done to Polly Nichols was not enough. And what he was subsequently to do to Annie Chapman wasn't enough either. The notion that a serial killer might *discover* desires while he's living them out by means of committing murders is not easily accepted by some, although this process is something we know in regards to numerous much more common activities. 'I wrote this book in order to find out why I had to write it,' is something I heard, in variations, from several authors. Most common this is with sex, both in terms of the learning adolescent and of the grown up learning about what is best with a new regular partner. And even though it's very uncomfortable to think it, but murders such as these do have strong sexual aspects. Add to this the possibility that much of what the killer is *about* might not be absolutely clear to *himself*, and a series of murders being to some extent a journey of discovery becomes actually a pretty likely one.

This is also a possible answer to the question why the same killer switched to an indoor location this late. He might indeed not have considered it before. Killing Polly Nichols swiftly in the open street compares lightly to having to find a way into a house, and if we at all permit the discovery idea and thus a killer at the beginning of a progress, then the objective of killing, attacking the abdomen and escape is easier done out there. Following this line of thought, two things would make it increasingly difficult – the gradually found to, growing activities concerning the bodies and the equally growing police presence. When we wonder, 'why so late, the move indoors,' we should keep in mind that the entire length entailing these murders wasn't actually that long.

Apart from discovery there's also anger. With anger most people usually refer to anger against women, and yes, that needs to be considered, is most likely and corresponds with what we see at the hand of mutilated bodies and attacks on the genital area. And it should be mentioned that what hurts us also preoccupies us; theories might vary about the role of the uteri, but the general direction, I assume, is agreed on. There is, though, also the issue of anger about not reaching the satisfaction sought. It'd work very much like the discovery. Both in themselves can present us with escalation, not to mention when combined.

There's much discussion about change of MO, about the murders differing, I don't want to add too much here, only the perhaps teasing question whether with a single murderer being active within this relatively short span of time and with the actions done to the bodies such changes aren't, in the light of the three paragraphs above, perhaps mandatory. Us escalationists have to confront each of them, though. The strangulating applied only to Nichols and Chapman. And it had served the killer well. Could it really be that he simply dropped it? Yes, why not? Strangling your victim has the advantage of silencing them fast with the most immediate and reliable tools you have, your hands, and it also renders her unconscious if it doesn't kill her. So you're able to apply the perfect cut to her throat. On the other hand, it costs energy and time. Yes, you're much stronger than her, but it still requires quite some force, something many people tend to overlook. And she won't pass out right away, it can take, which is also overlooked. So try without the strangling. Try cutting the throat right away. After all, this will also silence her, she cannot scream with her throat cut. One step omitted, time saved, energy saved. Of course, it might not work as well as when she's stretched out and unconscious or even dead on the ground, it's a risk, and it might also result in rather messy handiwork, a messy cut, but who will complain, except for a bunch of fussy Ripperologists 120 odd years later? Which is my favourite answer to the difference of the cuts to the throat: if we neglect Liz Stride, we only have Eddowes until the murder of Mary Kelly, so even if the trial of throat-cutting without strangling was unsatisfactory to the killer, we have no other street victims to compare this any further with, to see whether he might have returned to strangling due to a possibly struggling Eddowes. And even if we include Stride, the difference of the cut can be explained in the same manner, and what might have mattered most to him in the end was that he got the job done this way.

So yes, I don't see how he cannot possibly have stopped strangulating. Neither do I find objection

regarding the different disembowelment, comparing Chapman and Eddowes, absolutely compelling. Such more ragged, more extensive, more violent, and thus completely different looking tearing I'd absolutely expect when following the escalation hypothesis. The attack on the face, which must have been a shocking development for the people at the time, is, soberly regarded, not too surprising either. If hatred against women is part of it, and if we're talking escalation, at some point one might actually begin to wonder when the face will be attacked. Some say that mutilating the face signifies the murderer as having been acquainted with the victim. That might very well be so, but does that necessarily mean he was therefor not responsible for the previous victims? Moreover, I'd ask, are you positive about this? Does it really, without exception, positively, inevitably signify this?

Finally, after Liz Stride it's Mary Kelly who is named most often as the next possible non-'Ripper' victim. In a nutshell, this is really so different from anything that has happened before.

Really?

Of course it's different, it's a different sort of location, seclude, providing time and privacy. If we already allowed ourselves to follow the possibility *that* he moved indoors, what would you expect? That's not to say that the results we see in Kelly's room are The Expectable as such. But I most certainly *would* expect something far more gruesome than what had been done to Eddowes' body. But he didn't take the uterus with him, apparently so significant to him.

No, he didn't. But importantly, he did something *with* it. Perhaps something 'better' than what he did with the other uteri. He did, it seems, take the heart with him. A new development. But as I said... Consider also that in order to get to the heart one has to break bones. Anything taken away from the other victims belonged to the abdomen, no bones.

What the murder of Mary Kelly *does* seem to imply has been expressed by Martin Fido on numerous occasions: such a thing requires a build-up. I'd go further, as detailed above, and say the same thing about the murder of Catherine Eddowes. In fact, I'd say it about Polly Nichols. None of these murders look like first-timers to me. When looking along a timeline one needs to look backwards as well.

Having reached the end of this section I feel I haven't been as critical about the escalation hypothesis, which I tend to find the most promising, as I promised. Which might explain why I find it the most promising. I do have to keep in mind, of course, that it, too, seems and appears. One of the things that very much *seems* to me, is that someone escalating to a degree of what was found at Miller's Court would have a hard time coming back from it, which would cancel out any subsequent murder victims – and since lately I wonder what had me being so positive about it.

### *Myth-creation*

We're looking back at the 126 years old Whitechapel murders, and in fact at the East End of late Victorian London, through a lens distorted by an abundance of myths. Many of which are marked by the stamp of cliché, some of which can be traced to a single, unconnected event – the ubiquitous Gladstone has its origin in the hand of a guiltless carrier observed with it, who would come forward later and explain his presence to satisfaction. It was there, however, and would never leave, becoming a trademark of the classical, and somewhat annoying, cliché. There's that sort, but apart from the cape-, top hat- and Gladstone myths there's also those that were fully developed back in the days out of a more profound misconception, and I'd only like to example Francis Tumblety, both because the myths created around him have contemporary conceptions and also discrimination at their basis, and because they last into our days and indeed had me fell for them – seeing them all together had created an *appearance* that was quite convincing.

I don't feel *too* bad because I'm in somewhat Royal company, as one of the most sober minds in the field, Stewart Evans, had fallen into the same trap. And who could blame him – he was looking at documents authored by contemporary senior police figures, corroborating other material of genuine providence and a large number of American newspaper articles from back then, all of which

condemned the man, describing a character that indeed seemed not merely odd but dangerous, and giving credence to Littlechild's choice of him as a prime suspect. All the circumstances around only seemed to support this line of investigation. When finally a man was found who'd given a statement to a reporter that told of Tumblety as a woman-hating collector of uteri, presented in jars at a male-only dinner, it was almost too good to be true. Timelines seem to fit, and the suspect was constantly on the run, arrested, bailed, fleeing. The revelations about his life prior to his presence in London were of no help, or of good help, depending. A quack doctor who'd been in conflict with the law for attempting an illegal abortion and, notably, for poisoning a patient, killing him. Hell's bells, in other words.

Until, that is, someone like Tim Riordan comes along and poops the party.<sup>(9)</sup> What a wonderful suspect we had, for as long as we didn't know anything about him. We thought we did. We did what we're reduced to 126 years later, not being able to interview him and the various witnesses, sit in on trials and look at evidence other than what survived. We listened to what Mr. Dunham had to say about him, we read what Littlechild wrote about him, we saw that Tumblety was in London at the time of the murders, had been arrested for what didn't look good to us, and that he was fleeing England, coinciding with the murders apparently stopping. And the overall image we were able to create was that of a very odd bird indeed. Riordan approached him differently. The look he took was purely that of a historian, unburdened by the bias of treating him like a suspect, and the murders became the mere background for one period in the subject's life. One might add that what transpired should reopen the discussion about what approach of the whole case is more reliable, that of the sleuth or that of the historian; ultimately it'd be a blend: a historian *is* a detective, and a good detective needs the context of history.

So Tim Riordan had another, extensive look, and something rather miraculous happened: the same events, with the very, *very* likely exception of those uteri-jars, the same story is repeated, but its meaning, its implications, the truth beneath it appears an *entirely* different one. We suddenly look an example of how history can become distorted in the books by nothing else than the standards of individuals, here mostly those alive back then – and thus most probably very often *is*. It is easy to forget occasionally that history is written in the moment, and that the hands writing are human, and that those humans are both tied in their own private mindsets as well as the doctrines of their time. And the way it rhymes and repeats itself happens no later than at any time we condemn a person by no other source of information at hand than mainstream media. The convicted murderer on death row is *bad*. That's all *I* need to know.

In a nutshell, Riordan makes a compelling case for most of Tumblety's troubles arising with the problems others had with his sexual orientation. Quite *a lot* is explained this way to an extent for us, who don't share late Victorian standards on sexuality, to exonerate him, and not only in regards of him being a suspect for these murders. We learn that the 'pornography' he sold as a young chap were in fact sexual education literature penned by his mentor. We learn that the charges brought against him for medical malpractice that led to a patient of his dying were probably unfounded. I'm the first to caution against a variety of alternative medicine, but one should, again, see the whole subject within context. Apart from people's proneness for gullibility, what really set off the popularity of all kinds of deviations from conventional medicine, including the rise of homeopathy, was the stage of what was then this conventional medicine, which was by far much more brute and naturally more uninformed than what we have at our disposal today [try and image what people in 100 years will think about *our* medical practices]. People experienced conventions often not working. And although the quackery didn't work either, at least it didn't inflict further harm mostly when nothing too poisonous was used. Since much of what we can suffer from can be taken care of by the body itself the illusion that what you've been given actually cured you was prominent, because nothing else was done, such as bleeding, that interfered with the healing process. Thus it is not unlikely that at least some of the quacks actually believed in their remedies themselves. As for the dead patient of Tumblety's, Riordan reveals that he had, unsatisfied with Tumblety, returned to his old doctor and that man's more conventional treatment prior to his death. The 'medicine' Tumblety had given him was actually analyzed after the man had died, and was found to be completely harmless, so it

couldn't have been the cause of that man's death.

Same story, a few additional pieces of information, and the whole picture changes.

The same when we look at certain terms. Tumblety was arrested, both in America and in London, a number of times for 'indecent conduct.' The first time I read about his London arrest the term 'indecent assault' was used. Doesn't that tie in nicely with a suspected murderer of women? Well, no, it doesn't. The 'indecent' bit we can easily understand if we already learned about Tumblety's sexual relations with men. Homosexuality was a social No No, it was deemed 'indecent'.

Discrimination of gays is still abundant *today*, back then it was the accepted norm. More so, it was a shadow business of some to entrap men in a delicate moment of tenderness to then blackmail them, and there's reason to believe that Tumblety fell victim to this practice at least once. And you better paid; the 'indecent' of homosexuality could destroy you when turned into a criminal charge. It did destroy Oscar Wilde – charge and imprisonment, that is, not his sexual orientation itself. That it *was* a criminal offense warranted a description that left no doubt about it. Hence 'indecent *assault*' should not be willfully understood as rape just yet. It didn't mean that Tumblety fell over young men and forcibly sodomized them. It means he was caught sexually engaging with consenting [or blackmailing] men.

This in itself has a somewhat disqualifying note to it where it concerns a serial killer of women.

Earlier after the discovery of the Littlechild letter, researcher helped themselves by calling Tumblety's sexual orientation bisexuality. This was probably based on the report of him once having been in a partnership with a woman, whom he had allegedly found to be a prostitute, sparking a hatred of women, all again fitting nicely, expanded to an actually heterosexual man who gave up women except where it concerned hate, and had sex with men solely because he didn't want to engage with women anymore, or couldn't. Had Tumblety a female sexual companion once? If yes, so what? A decisively gay female friend of mine experimented with a boy in her youth, and Oscar Wilde was married, albeit for social reasons. That Tumblety was frankly gay doesn't fit in with what we know about serial killers murdering members of the sex of their desire, but if we describe him as bisexual, or a heterosexual who went with men because he hated women, then that one is solved. With this solution in mind we open our arms wide to Mr. Dunham and his account of Tumblety's rant about women and prostitutes in particular, before conducting a tour of his uteri-collection – my, oh my, simply *perfect!* An account that was brought forward right in time with the American press falling over each other in naming Tumblety as the 'Ripper', by a source that provides no proof for the event ever having taken place. Literally too good to be true when you pegged 'Dr. T.' for the murderer, and by all accounts it wasn't.

Outside the understanding of the terminology reserved for homosexual 'offenders' we read Littlechild's description of Tumblety as a 'sexual sadist', and we make a mental note of that also being one way of describing Ted Bundy. But for men like Littlechild that term also meant 'homosexual' – the connection between a serial killer and his victims being of the desired sex wasn't made then. Anyone of a comparable position to Littlechild's today, and, outside the tea party, the respective person using such a term for describing a gay man can as well grab a carton box on his way back to the desk. Back then that was the way. Another example would be Macnaghten's thinking of Druitt as a homosexual – there it was 'sexually insane', equally potent to conjure up the image of a women-killer.

Tumblety skipped bail and the country. Yes, wouldn't you? He was tracked to New York where he disappeared. For a while he lay low, yes, then to come out to publicly tell his point of view to a reporter. Not something I'd expect the 'Ripper' to do. He was arrested for wearing uniforms he wasn't entitled to – gee, how far have we moved now from anything still to do with the Whitechapel murders? I'm sure that was a horrible offense back then, can we move on?

After the Littlechild letter was discovered Tumblety was immediately promoted to 'Scotland Yard's Prime Suspect.' No. He wasn't. He was Littlechild's 'very likely suspect.' He was one man's very likely suspect. And that man already didn't like him because he was a 'sexual sadist', i.e. a homosexual, at a time when the relationship between a serial killer and his victims as it concerns gender was not understood. He certainly wasn't high profile in the British newspapers, only in the

American press, which he eventually faced. And there's nothing astonishing in this; likely the British press simply didn't take him as serious.

So what transpires is perpetual prejudice and injustice against a man for his sexual orientation that had morphed into accusations covering a much broader range by means of associations, and it has continued into our times, and it still continues as a persistent myth, persistent enough for still not having been removed or at least shaded by additional comment on casebook.org's suspect page, which is bound to further mislead countless newcomers to the case.

This in mind makes one wonder how many of the stories about individuals counting to the Cast of Thousands, as Chris Scott called it,(10) that lead us to form an image about them are faulty, distorted by prejudices or plainly opinions of those testifying about them, viewed by us across the gap of 126 years.

We should remind ourselves that we're tapping in the dark with a blind man's cane. The cane is a means for the blind to see. But he won't see colours.

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*Thanks to Lynn Cates for a very fruitful and challenging communication about the case(s?).*

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