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Serial Killers: Human or Monster?

Our group's goal consists of finding the line that separates serial killers from the rest of humanity. We will consider how the separation of serial killers from society challenges the conception of humanity. For example, even though serial murderers have a human appearance, society generally considers them monstrous. We will try to consider if it constitutes only their actions when we create categories of "we" and "them" or if there may be other factors at play. While researching serial killer's characteristics, we will look at these questions. Based on these evidences, we will further expand upon our research's implications about society and social norms.

Today, mass murderers and serial killers signify a highly discussed topic. We chose to examine the viewing of serial killers as monstrous because they play a large role in our culture, the media, and society. We hope that this study will not only help us understand serial killers better but also humanity and society; the more we know about serial killers separation from bearing the title "human", the more we learn about the value and specifications placed on that term.

We will explore a variety of sources to form a list of similarities between serial killers in the United States from 1980-2014. Our main research will come from books about serial killers in the media, historical and FBI records, and academic journals associated with mass murders within our timeframe and place. We will make a list of

these personality traits and mental disorders associated with mass murderers. Our stipulations for a murderer qualifying as a “serial killer” consist of having made three or more murders within a month. Once we narrow down our possible subjects, we will do multiple case studies on the selected few to explore them further. We will explore media reaction, conceptualization, and influence. We will not only research these factors based on others observations but our own personal reactions to the murderous stories.

We attempt to find the line society draws to separate themselves from serial killers. We will do a simple compare and contrast chart to show biological, psychological, and environmental differences serial killers portray from the rest of society. Focusing on certain aspects serial killers have or lack versus the rest of the human population makes our data qualitative. We will also study the norms of American society to explore the creation of this separation. Our goal encompasses finding the line serial killers cross that makes them considered “monstrous” and to explore the implications of society based on those facts.

We will bring all of our information together with a vivid and interesting visualization; we will take the traits we have discovered consistently characterize serial killers and attach them to a mannequins. Further findings will be presented on a PowerPoint presentation. We hope that this presentation and analysis will help grow the understanding of society’s workings in a creative and interesting way.