

# Gender Differences in Serial Homicide

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## INTRODUCTION

Serial homicide is a topic of great interest both in popular culture and academics. There has been an abundance of research conducted on the matter from a plethora of perspectives all of which have provided valuable data for progress in the fields of Psychiatry and Forensics. However, there has been limited study on the differences between male and female serial killers. The purpose of this study is to identify variable trends between male and female serial homicide offenders. Data used for this study was extracted from the Radford/Florida Gulf Coast University Serial Killer Database. The database has a total of 2,870 serial killer entries with victim entries totaling 9,064.

## OBJECTIVES

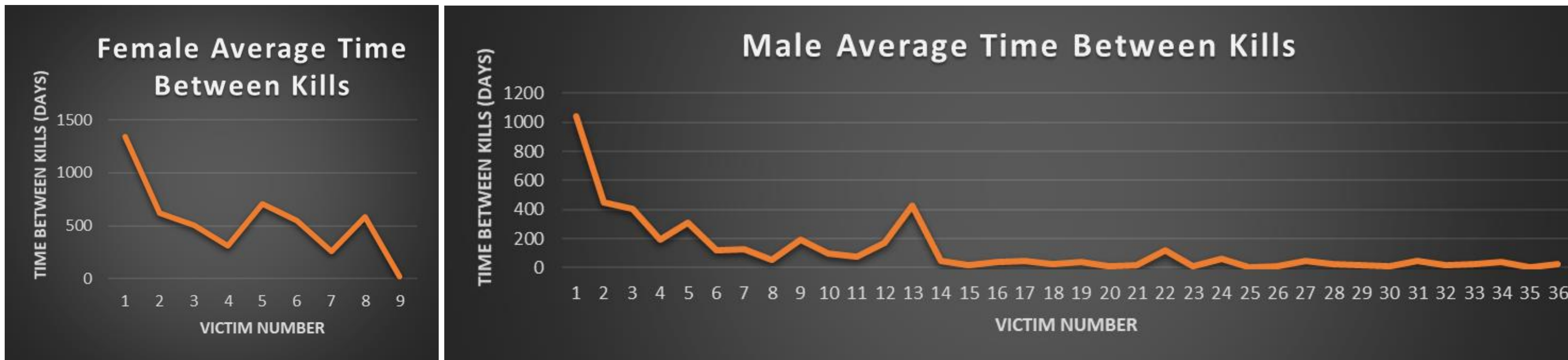
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## METHODS

Data extraction was conducted using Microsoft Excel and included information related to serial killer individuals and teams, name, date of birth, sex, sexual preference, number of victims, and race. For every serial killer, the corresponding victim profiles were entered, in chronological order, by date of attack. The following information was extracted from victim profiles: Name, Date of Attack, Age, Sex, Race, Target, Weapon, Method of Kill, and Treatment. With the data properly filtered and sorted based on timeline, we created separate data sets for male (1,044) and female (71) subjects who committed their murders individually. For each set, we calculated the percentage of subjects within each race (White, Black, Hispanic) and sexual preference (Heterosexual, Homosexual, Bisexual). For the victims of each subject, we calculated the percentages of all first victims, second victims, and so on, based on the following demographics: Age, Sex, Race, Target, Weapon, Method of Kill, and Treatment. Once these percentages were calculated for each victim, the average was calculated across all victims.

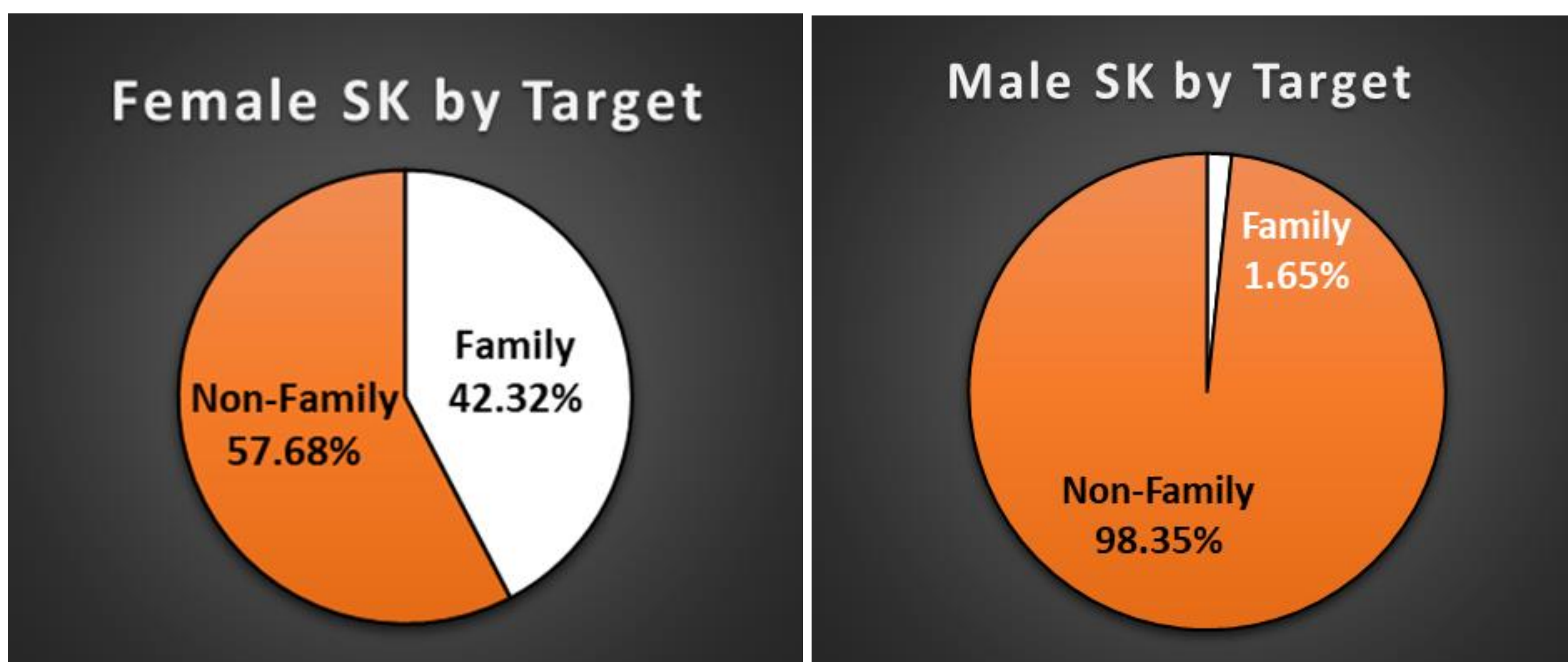
## RESULTS

### Time Between Kills – Measure of Escalation



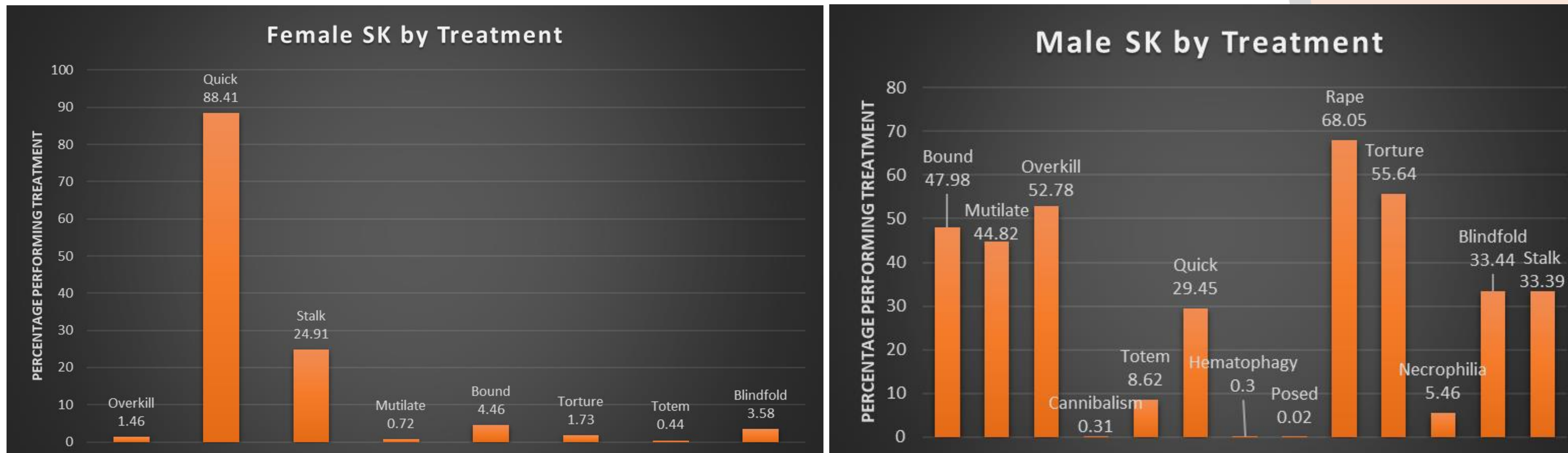
Both male and female serial killers show steady escalation with victims 1-4 and then de-escalate between 4 and 5 with escalation returning between victims 5-7 and de-escalating again between 7 and 8.

### Victim Selection



Females are more likely to target non-family members. However, they are much more likely to target family members than are male serial killers.

### Treatment of Victims

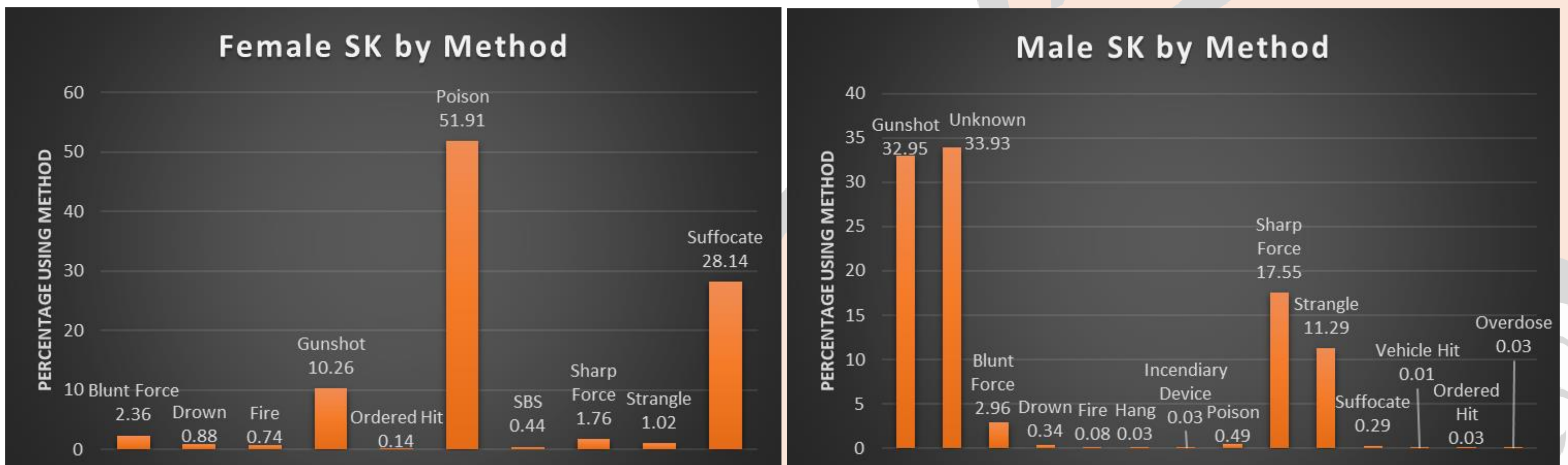


It appears that the primary treatment goal in female serial killers is that their crimes be executed quickly with 20% of the subjects stalking their victims prior to killing. Females were much less likely than males to collect totems from their victims/crimes. It appears that homicide is more a means to an end for female serial killers. It should also be noted that for our filtered data set there were no instances of rape among female serial killers. Male serial killers, on the other hand, are much more varied and inventive in the treatment of their victims. Torture and overkill were also much more widely used by male serial killers. Acts of necrophilia, cannibalism and hematophagy were also carried out on male serial killers' victims, none of which was seen with the victims of females.

## CONCLUSION

Our study was successful in identifying areas of notable similarity and difference in male and female offenders. However, even with access to the RFGCU Database, there is still a great deal of data to be gathered and analyzed on the subject of serial homicide, specifically in gender comparison. The identified trends provide a basis for potential areas of in-depth Psychiatric and Forensic research on gender differences in serial homicide offenders.

### Method of Kill



Females are much more likely to utilize poison as their weapon of choice, while only one percent of male victims were poisoned.

## REFERENCES OR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Radford/FGCU Serial Killer Database