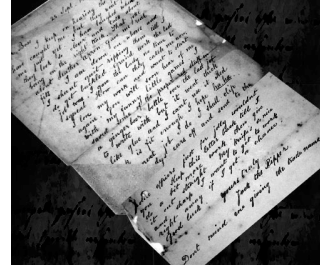


Whitechapel Murderer

The late nineteenth century press loved the 'Ripper' murders. They sold newspapers. It was the nature of the murders that captured the public's attention in 1888, but the one question that remained unanswered was what kind of a person committed this type of mutilation.



In order to try and understand the 'man' behind the killings you have to examine evidence and make deductions. One major piece of evidence that many people believe to be real is the 'Dear Boss' letter sent by the 'Ripper' to the Central News Agency on 25th September 1888. Your task today will be to read the letter and then make some deductions about the type of person who wrote it.



The useful thing about primary sources is that they allow historians to learn key details about past events. The 'Dear Boss' letter is useful because it provides facts about the murders, gives clues about the education of the 'murderer' and even if it was a hoax it can help you to understand why the police had difficulty in arresting a suspect with this type of reoccurring problem.

Think about these questions as you read the letter:

1. What is the 'red stuff' that Jack is referring to?
2. Does the writer have any new details about the crimes that were not in the newspaper?
3. Look at the style of writing - what type of education does it suggest the murderer had?
4. Are there any clues about the ethnic background of the 'Ripper'?
5. Is the murderer male or female?

TASK

Police today use psychological profilers to try and create a profile of serial killers. They look at written evidence and try to establish what the killer might look like, think like, how they would act, their level of education and what kind of profession they would be in. You will read the 'Dear Boss' letter on the next page and then in your exercise books try and create a profile of the 'Ripper' by yourself.

Dear Boss,

I keep on hearing the police have caught me but they wont fix me just yet. I have laughed when they look so clever and talk about being on the right track. That joke about Leather Apron gave me real fits. I am down on whores and I shant quit ripping them till I do get buckled. Grand work the last job was. I gave the lady no time to squeal. How can they catch me now. I love my work and want to start again. You will soon hear of me with my funny little games. I saved some of the proper red stuff in a ginger beer bottle over the last job to write with but it went thick like glue and I cant use it. Red ink is fit enough I hope ha. ha. The next job I do I shall clip the ladys ears off and send to the police officers just for jolly wouldn't you. Keep this letter back till I do a bit more work, then give it out straight. My knife's so nice and sharp I want to get to work right away if I get a chance. Good Luck.

Yours truly

Jack the Ripper

Dont mind me giving the trade name

PS Wasnt good enough to post this before I got all the red ink off my hands curse it No luck yet. They say I 'm a doctor now. ha ha

(Important – spelling mistakes, underlining and grammar have been left the same as the original letter.)