

# The Gates of Janus

Serial Killing  
and its Analysis,

By the 'Moors Murderer,'

Ian Brady

Introduction by Colin Wilson

Foreword by Dr. Alan Keightley; Afterword by Peter Sotos

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## Author's Note

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This book was originally intended to be published under a pseudonym, which explains the style adopted throughout to conceal my identity. Unfortunately, when I decided to publish under my own name, I was unable to revise or incorporate additional information in conditions of captivity where all items of interest are sold to the tabloids by officials. The book is not ghostwritten. The polemic is not designed to justify criminal conduct, but rather to exemplify its common legal and socially acceptable usage in respectable society.

Ian Brady

Ashworth Hospital

August, 2001

## Publisher's Note

After Ian Brady agreed to publish this book under his own name, the text was slightly altered to make all third-person references to the 'Moors Murderer' in first person.

*The Gates of Janus* is not consonant with a time in which language is degraded, and meaning is less. Ian Brady's words seethe with menace, despair and possibility, a throwback to Schopenhauer and Oscar Wilde. And when he drifts into memory, Brady's power of description becomes quite powerful. The sights and smells of times past are no doubt far more real to Brady than the banal cesspool he sees today. His book is infused with a feeling of acute memory and acute loss — and apparently very little regret.

Then there are the paragraphs when Ian Brady, the chess player, becomes an Iago whispering comments and questions that gnaw away at the reader's most cherished presumptions. Loss of comfort and belief? Checkmate.

Before I ever saw this book, Peter Sotos informed me of a rumor regarding its existence. I wish to thank Peter for stimulating my interest in Ian Brady and publishing his book.

Without the kind assistance of Colin Wilson, this book would not have been published. Colin's insistence that Ian Brady possesses a human dimension far beyond the extremes promoted by the yellow press has become a welcome antidote to the depressing reductions of capitalist sensationalism. Benedict Birnberg, Ian Brady's solicitor, deserves appreciation for his concern and help.

And most of all, I wish to thank Ian Brady, for allowing us to print his remarkable book.

Adam Parfrey

Feral House

July, 2001

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As soon as I received and began to read this manuscript I knew that I had a remarkable document in my hands.

The author, who did not reveal his name to me, and who I assumed to be a man, seemed to be offering a hunting manual for the tracking down of the serial killer by the use of psychological profiling and a study of his after-image at the scene of the murder. Doing this successfully would be an achievement in itself. I leave others at the knife-edge of forensic investigation to judge its efficacy in the pursuit of what the author calls the greatest and most dangerous game in existence: man.

Expert profilers have, of course, already produced studies of serial killers. FBI detective Robert Ressler wrote the substantial *Whoever Fights Monsters*. His associate at Quantico, John Douglas, produced *Mindhunters*. So, what's new here?

*The Gates of Janus* is a book written by a serial killer about other serial killers, or, as the author himself says, a dissection of what murder is really all about from the point of view of a murderer, for a change. Criminals have written books before — and classically, Dostoevsky and *The House of the Dead*, but the present study has a uniqueness of its own.

This leads me on to the second reason for its special character — the sheer quality and intelligence of the writing and its acute observation of human behaviour. The author investigates the psychology of the serial killer by discussing a number of notorious cases, which fleshes out the bare bones of his general conclusions about profiling. Again, it's true that lay authors have written high-grade books on murder. Joseph Wambaugh, Stephen Michaud and Ann Rule come to mind. They themselves were not killers, although Ann Rule knew Ted Bundy quite well according to her book, *The Stranger Beside Me*. But Bundy remained the *stranger* beside her. A murderer writing on murder possesses a perspective denied crime writers and detectives. As the author of *Gates of Janus* sees it — we are all beyond one another's experience, but, hauntingly, not so far beyond.

Most books, particularly in the true crime genre, are simply books about books. This one is an exception. It is mercifully free of footnotes — or, should we say, footprints? In his own field of disturbing expertise, the author speaks with great authority and originality.

The third reason for the uniqueness of this study is, for me, the most fascinating. Although I have read a great deal in the areas of true crime and criminal psychology, my own field is philosophy and religious studies. I am impressed by the philosophical and spiritual light it sheds on the dark corners of homicide and its occult dimensions. It's apparent that the author has spent a great deal of time reading and reflecting on the world he once knew prior to years monastically shuttered within a prison cell. The result reaches a rare level of philosophical maturity, a 'spiritual' perspective of existential relativism, questioning vital issues in psychology, philosophy and theology.

The author shrewdly observes that psychiatrists rarely stray into the field of philosophy. Psychology, like every other discipline, has hidden metaphysical assumptions regarding human identity and the nature of reality. The poverty of Western academia in the fields of psychology, philosophy and theology is highlighted by their failure to respond radically and passionately to this idea, the assumption, that life is meaningless. Academic philosophy is a nine-to-five job in which intellectuals spend their lives repeating the assumption that life has no ultimate meaning.

Perhaps it requires the aptitude of a highly sensitive and perceptive serial killer to spell out the consequences of this belief. Dostoevsky, whose psychological perceptions are highly valued by the



author of this book, observed that without God, everything is permitted.

~~Since the time of St. Augustine, theologians have addressed the problem of evil with an inherent naïvete. It's a naïvete which this book indirectly but mercilessly exposes to the point of mockery and even of pity. In this universe, everything comes in two's, everything. Wherever there is the light of consciousness there is a shadow. There is a dark force in this universe that will have its way.~~

Western ethical monotheism still speaks touchingly of the eventual advent of the kingdom of God, in which all things shall be well, either in this world or in the bright blue yonder. The writings of Carl Jung were an exception to this monotheism in its recognition of the shadow archetype. Oriental philosophy and religion also share a realism about this world's polarities. Humans think in categories and divide in thought what remains undivided by nature. Western culture, by and large, is a celebration of the illusion that light may exist without darkness, good without evil and pleasure without pain. This book will have none of it. It leaves the challenge on the table: is there really a great gulf between the instincts of a serial killer and the public at large? Wittgenstein said, 'Man can regard all the evil within himself as delusion.' But is there what Kierkegaard would call a 'fatal defect' in everybody? One hopes that the present study goads the philosopher, psychologist and theologian into talking turkey and addressing the real issues.

The author asks us to look through the lace curtain of the conventional world, to wake up from the ontological sleep and see the world in its terrifying grandeur. Most people live and dream enchanted by the social trance of mediocrity, blind to what the Zen teacher Sokei-an Sasaki called the 'shining trance.'

Imprisoned for years with psychopaths, psychotics and schizoids, the author has seen things the rest of us can scarcely dream of. Here we have human nature in all its fascinating devious guises. As Dostoevsky darkly observed, 'If the devil doesn't exist, that man has created him, he has surely created him in his own image and likeness.' In this book we are in a short time introduced to the extremes of behaviour, the psychospiritual quagmire: 'The horrors of hell can be experienced within a single day; that's plenty of time' (Wittgenstein). We are offered observations from personal acquaintance of the likes of the poisoner Graham Young and the ripper Peter Sutcliffe. All of this is done with verve, wit and arresting imagery in a manuscript studded with literary, philosophical and religious allusions.

The author surveys the scene in which he once participated. He laconically admits that he is genuinely glad his life is as good as over already, that he is a ghost on the human stage. He feels no sense of betrayed fellowship or breach of loyalty in giving the game away. The murderer knows the dangers anyway. Perhaps it will require another serial killer to recognize the paradoxical wisdom of these pages, as written by an authority situated in the shadows.

Dr Alan Keightley  
King Edward VI College  
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England

Publisher's note: Dr Keightley wrote the Foreword when Ian Brady wanted to publish *The Gates of Janus* under the pseudonym, François Villon.

# Introduction

## **The Moors Murders** by Colin Wilson

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One Saturday morning, soon after Easter 1990, my wife Joy told me that we had had a visitor after I had gone to bed the previous evening. A young lady had knocked at the door asking to see me. She claimed to be a friend of the Moors Murderer Ian Brady, and wanted to ask my advice about a book she intended to write. To prove that she knew Brady, she had left behind one of his letters. It was written in a neat, very readable handwriting, and signed 'Ian' — it certainly looked genuine. Moreover, Brady talked about 'outsiders,' and it was obvious that he knew my work.

We will call her 'Christine', and she told Joy that because of her orphaned background she had identified with Brady and had then been the victim of a press stunt. This rang a bell. I had been going through my press cuttings and had seen a popular tabloid with a headline: AM I IAN BRADY'S DAUGHTER?

I showed my wife the picture of a pretty blonde girl on the front page.

'Yes, that's her.'

The girl was apparently staying at a local hotel, and I rang and arranged to meet her. After explaining why she wanted to write a book, she moved to our house for the rest of the weekend.

She had spent the first six years of her life in a Manchester orphanage, then been fostered by a couple from London. Unfortunately they had returned her to the orphanage when she was ten. And lived ever since then had been miserable and insecure.

That was why she decided to write to Ian Brady. Brady, one of the most notorious murderers in jail in Britain, had been committing his crimes in Manchester at about the time Christine was born. She fantasised that he might be her father. So she wrote to him; he replied, and she went to visit him in jail. A journalist got wind of the story that he was being visited by an attractive blonde, and came to interview her. She told him that she believed she might be Brady's daughter. Hence the tabloid story.

Now she wanted to write an autobiography in which he would feature largely. She identified herself and Brady as 'Outsiders' and she proposed quoting some of his letters. That was what she wanted to ask my advice about.

I told her that Brady's letters remained his copyright, and that she could only quote them with his permission. But this, she explained, was unlikely, for he had recently decided that she was trying to exploit him, and they were now no longer on the best of terms.

In due course, she sent me some of her book, and I was impressed — she was a born writer. I encouraged her, and she found herself an agent who believed he might sell the book for a huge advance, and for months she dreamed of overnight celebrity. Unfortunately, this failed to materialise and the book was finally accepted by a small publisher for a miniscule advance. I wrote an Introduction. And in 1993, *The Devil's Daughter* appeared, and after a minor flurry of publicity, was soon remaindered. The publisher had given it this title to perpetuate the myth that Ian Brady was her father, and I regarded the whole business as exploitative and dishonest.

By that time I had already been corresponding with Ian Brady for more than a year. He had written to me in November 1991, asking me if it was true that Christine intended to write a book about him quoting his letters. I wrote back explaining just what was happening, and that I had told her she was not allowed to use his letters.

We have been corresponding ever since. By this time, I alone have written enough letters to fill twenty-seven disks of files — about the length of a 500-page book, and Ian has probably written about the same.

The Moors case had always interested me. Brady was the first British example of a type I had noted several years earlier: what I called ‘the self-esteem killer.’ The American psychologist Abraham Maslow, about whom I was later to write a book, had made me aware that the psychological evolution of human beings tends to follow a definite pattern, like a flight of steps. If you are poor and starving the only thing you care about is food, and you imagine that if you could just have one square meal a day, you would be ideally happy. But if you achieve this — let us say, by moving into a hostel — the next step is to want your own home — every tramp dreams of a country cottage with roses round the door. And if you achieve this, the next stage is the desire for sexual fulfillment — not just sex, but to be loved and wanted. And if you achieve this, then the next step emerges — the self-esteem level. You want the liking and respect of your fellow men. (This is the stage when men join rotary clubs and women give coffee mornings.) And, according to Maslow, if you have achieved all these things, there is a fifth possible stage, which he calls self-actualisation. This basically means some kind of creative fulfillment, although not necessarily writing poetry or symphonies. It is just doing something you are good at for the sheer fun of it — and it might be as simple as putting ships in bottles.

I had noted that, historically speaking, crime follows the same stages. In the late 18th and early 19th centuries, when most people were poor, crime tended to be motivated simply by the need to stay alive — highway robbery, burglary and so on. Then came the Victorian phase of domestic murder where the motivation was home and security.

Towards the end of the 19th-century, a new type of crime emerged — sex crime. In the previous century, sex was so easy to obtain, with working girls selling themselves for the price of a glass of gin that rape would have been absurd. But 19th century respectability made sex morbidly desirable. The murders of Jack the Ripper are the most notorious sex crimes of the period, and it is significant that most people did not even recognise them as sex crimes; the most popular theory was that he was a religious maniac who hated prostitutes.

In the late 1950s, a jazz musician named Melvin Rees committed a number of sex murders in Maryland, including a family of four, whom he forced off the road with his car. He killed the husband and baby then took the mother and five-year-old girl to a remote location where they were murdered and raped. Rees was finally arrested in Arkansas and sentenced to death. But he had told a friend ‘You can’t say it’s wrong to kill — only individual standards make it right or wrong’ — an argument also advanced by the Marquis de Sade.

It struck me immediately that these were, to some extent, crimes of intellectual rebellion, and therefore could not be classified simply as sex crimes. He was justifying his sex crimes with his intellect, and felt, like Sade, that he had seen through the sham of morality. He saw himself as being above normal morality, and in that sense, could be classified as a self-esteem killer.

This was even more clear in the case of eighteen-year-old Robert Smith, who went into a hairdressing parlour in Arizona, made three women and a child lie on the floor, then shot them all in the back of the head. Asked why he did it, he replied: ‘I wanted to get known — to get myself a name.’

During the Moors trial, extracts were read aloud in court from the journals of Brady’s friend and disciple David Smith. ‘Murder is a hobby and a supreme pleasure,’ ‘People are like maggots, small, blind, worthless fish bait,’ ‘God is a disease, a plague, a weight around man’s neck,’ And when Smith admitted he had absorbed these views from Brady, it was clear once again that the Moors Murders could not be classified simply as sex crimes; they involved Maslow’s fourth level, self-esteem.

The Moors Murders always seemed a typical case of *'folie à deux,'* yet there were certain anomalies. I entered into correspondence with Ian Brady hoping to solve some of these riddles, such as why a quiet, normal girl who loved animals and children should take part in child-murder; from the point of view, it proved as intriguing and rewarding as I had hoped.

Even a bare outline of the case is electrifying. A girl of eighteen takes a job in an office in Manchester, and becomes wildly infatuated with a tall, good-looking Scottish clerk in his early twenties, who at first ignores her. Eventually they become lovers, and she is not too shocked to learn that he has been in prison, nor alarmed when he proposes that they embark on a criminal career robbing banks and building societies. In fact, this Bonnie and Clyde collaboration never comes about; instead, they decide on a more sinister agenda — killing children; she lures them into the car, and later helps in the disposal of the violated bodies on Saddleworth Moor.

It was this young girl's involvement in child murder that so shocked the British public, and led to a morbid fascination with the case that is still as strong after forty years. As I write this, in May 2000 the chain-smoking Myra Hindley is known to be in poor health, possibly with only a matter of months to live, and there is still a furious public outcry every time a newspaper even hints that the Home Secretary may be thinking of granting her parole. For some odd reason, she is hated even more than Ian Brady, who was, after all, the instigator of the murders.

Who is Ian Brady? He was born Ian Duncan Stewart on January 2, 1938 in Glasgow. His mother, Margaret Stewart, was a twenty-eight-year-old waitress in a hotel tea room; his father was a journalist who died three months before Ian's birth.

Margaret Stewart did her best to support the child, farming him out to babysitters when she had to work in the evening, but finally advertised for a full-time 'childminder.' Mary and John Sloan took him into 'their warm and friendly home' (to quote Jean Ritchie's book on Myra Hindley), where his mother, who now called herself Peggy, came to visit him every Sunday, bringing him clothes and presents. So it hardly seems that Ian Brady can be regarded as someone who was subjected to childhood neglect and brutality.

Jean Ritchie has one highly significant story to tell: how, at the age of nine, he was taken on a picnic to the shores of Loch Lomond.

'For Ian it was a day of discovery. He discovered in himself a deep affinity with the wild, rugged and empty scenery around the lake. He was moved by the grandeur of the hills, awed by the vastness of the sky. When it was time to go home, the family found him halfway up one of the hills, standing still absorbing something — who knows what? — from the strange, open, inspiring scenery around him. It was an unusual Ian who came down the hill, one who babbled happily about his day out to his foster sisters . . .'

This story, which epitomises the Ian Brady I have come to know, sounds as if it was told to Jean Ritchie by the Sloan family, and it is supported by other comments from those who knew him: for example, Lord Longford, who visited him in prison. The latter is also on record as saying that Brady knew his Tolstoy and Dostoevsky better than anyone he had met.

What most writers on the case seem agreed upon is that Brady was — as Jean Ritchie puts it — 'a loner, an outsider.' He was also a highly dominant child at school, a born leader, who seems to have embarked on burglary at an early age (nine has been quoted) — not, as in the case of Panzram, out of envy of contemporaries from wealthier backgrounds, but simply out of devilment. He tells me that on his first burglary — the house of a naval man — he did not take anything, but simply looked around.

When he was ten, the family were moved from the Gorbals to a new council estate at Pollock with 'indoor bathroom and lavatory, a garden and nearby fields.' At the age of eleven he started

attending Shawlands Academy, a school for above-average pupils, but seems to have taken a certain pleasure in misbehaving, perhaps in reaction against richer schoolmates. But he received high marks for his English essays, and was a natural leader.

At the age of thirteen he came before a juvenile court for burglary but was bound over; nine months later, he was again bound over for the same thing. He left school at sixteen, and worked as a butcher's boy, and then as a tea boy in a Glasgow shipyard. He tells me that it was the feeling of frustration, of being in a dead-end job, that made him feel that he needed to start accumulating 'working capital.'

In that same year he appeared again before a Glasgow court with nine charges against him. This time he was put on probation on condition that he joined his mother in Manchester. Margaret Stewart had moved there when her son was twelve, and had married a meat porter named Patrick Brady, whose name Ian was to take.

His stepfather found him a job in the fruit market. He was still a loner, spending hours in his room reading — including Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* and *The Possessed*. But in November 1951 he was again in court, this time on a charge of aiding and abetting. A driver asked him to load some stolen lead on to his lorry. On being caught, the scrap dealer gave the driver away to the police, and in turn implicated Brady. In court, Brady pleaded guilty, expecting a fine for such a trivial offense — after all, everybody in the market was 'on the fiddle.' But because he was on probation, the judge decided that severity was called for. To his bewilderment — and rage — Brady was remanded to Strangeways jail to await his sentence. Here, I suspect, was the beginning of that resentment that led to the Moors Murders.

In jail he spent three months among professional criminals, and deliberately cultivated fence-cracksmen, even killers. He had made up his mind that society was going to get what it deserved. This reaction is typical of the high-dominance male faced with what he considers outrageous injustice. The two-year Borstal sentence that followed only confirmed the decision — particularly when, in an open Borstal at Hatfield, he found himself in further trouble. He had been selling home-distilled liquor and running a book on horses and dogs. One day, after getting drunk and having a fight with a warder, he was transferred to an altogether tougher Borstal housed in Hull prison. This, says Jean Ritchie, 'was where he prepared himself to become a big-time criminal.' The aim was to become wealthy as quickly as possible, so he could enjoy the freedom he dreamed about. This was why he studied bookkeeping in prison — to learn to handle money.

Three months in Strangeways and two years in Borstal had turned a youth with a minor criminal record and a tendency to bookishness into an anti-social rebel. Even taking into account the fact that he had been on probation, the ineptitude of the law seems incredible.

He was released at the end of two years, but remained on probation for another three. When he was released, he returned home to Manchester, under the terms of the probation. Fred Harrison, the journalist who interviewed Brady in prison, and who wrote a book on the case (*Brady and Hindle: The Genesis of the Moors Murders*, 1986) has an interesting passage that makes it clear that Brady soon became actively involved in crime. He speaks of a Borstal friend named Deare, who delivered a stolen Jaguar to Manchester — not to Brady but to another man. The car was to be used in a 'job.' The other man, says Harrison, made the mistake of not getting rid of the Jaguar after the 'job,' and was arrested. He gave Deare's name to the police. Deare subsequently vanished, and Harrison suggests that Brady might have killed him. But Brady pointed out to me that Gilbert Deare was still around at the time of Brady's arrest for the Moors Murders, and died some time later in a drowning accident. On this matter, Harrison is inaccurate. But he is correct in saying that Brady was involved in crimes that

required a getaway car soon after he returned to Manchester, and that he had at least two accomplices. What is also clear is that Brady spent a great deal of time ‘casing’ banks and building societies watching the transportation of money.

Apart from one brush with the law for being drunk and disorderly, Brady managed to stay out of trouble. His probation officer obliged him to take a labouring job in a brewery, which he understandably detested. In 1959, at the age of twenty-one, he succeeded in changing this for something less disagreeable; the bookkeeping training led to a job as a stock clerk with Millwards Ltd, a small chemical firm. He was a careful and neat worker, although inclined to be unpunctual, and to slip out of the office to place bets with a local bookmaker.

But he remained a loner, spending the lunch hour alone in the office, reading books, including *Mein Kampf* and other volumes on Nazism. By the time Myra Hindley came to work at Millwards, Brady was a fervent admirer of Hitler and Nazism.

There was another element in Brady that Fred Harrison was the first to point out: a curious black romanticism associated with death. Harrison describes how Brady became an atheist at the age of twelve, when he prayed that his pet dog would not die, and his prayers remained unanswered. Two years later, cycling to a job interview, he felt giddy and halted in the doorway of a newsagent’s shop. There he saw ‘a green, warm radiation, not unattractive to the young man who tried to steady himself. The features were unformed but still recognisable. Ian knew that he was looking at The Face of Death . . . he instantly knew that his salvation was irrevocably bound to its demands. “I’ll do it a favour, and . . . it will do me favours.” The bond with death was fused by the green radiation.’

On the day Myra Hindley came to work at Millwards as a shorthand typist — Monday, January 16, 1961 — Ian Brady dictated her first letter. She was four and a half years his junior, a completely normal working-class girl, not bad looking, with a blonde hair-do and bright lipstick, interested in boys and dancing. She had been born (January 23, 1942) a Catholic, brought up a Protestant, and returned to Catholicism when she was sixteen. When she was four, the birth of a sister made the home too cramped, and she went to live with her grandmother nearby. This was not particularly traumatic since she could spend as much time as she liked at her home around the corner. In fact, since her father was a heavy drinker and inclined to violence when drunk, she preferred her grandmother’s house.

At school she received good marks and wrote poetry and excellent English essays. She played the mouth organ and was known as a high-spirited tomboy.

Myra had been engaged but had broken it off, finding the boy ‘immature.’ This was one of the problems for working-class girls at that time, whose notions of male attractiveness were formed by cinema and television — hard-bitten heroes with strong jaws, or charismatic rebels like James Dean and Elvis Presley. By contrast, the youths they met at dance halls seemed commonplace and boring.

Ian Brady was certainly not that. He had slightly sulky good looks reminiscent of Elvis Presley and a dry and forceful manner. His self-possession was intriguing. So was his total lack of interest in her. Myra’s infatuation blossomed, and she confided it to her red diary. ‘Ian looked at me today. Wonder if Ian is courting. Still feel the same.’ ‘Haven’t spoken to him yet.’ Then: ‘Spoken to him. He smiles as though embarrassed.’ On August 1: ‘Ian’s taking sly looks at me at work.’ But by November: ‘I’ve given up with Ian. He goes out of his way to annoy me . . .’

Just before Christmas 1961, there was an office party; he got drunk and danced with her, then walked her home and kissed her goodnight, saying ‘I’ve been wanting to do this for a long time’. Myra felt she was in heaven. On December 22, she told her diary: ‘Out with Ian!’ They went to see the film *King of Kings*, the life story of Jesus. Just over a week later, on the divan bed in her gran’s front room

Ian Brady and Myra Hindley became lovers. 'I hope Ian and I love each other all our lives and get married and are happy ever after.'

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Many books on the Moors Murder case imply that Brady's attitude towards her was cold and manipulative. In fact, it seems to have been exceptionally close. Myra was over-awed and fascinated by her lover. She declared later: 'Within months he had convinced me there was no God at all: he could have told me the earth was flat, the moon was made of green cheese and the sun rose in the West, I would have believed him.' Ian told me that the relationship was so close that they were virtually telepathic.

They spent every Saturday night together, went on visits to the moors on Ian's second-hand motorbike, taking bottles of German wine, read the same books, and went to see films like *Compulsion* based on the Leopold and Loeb murder case.

Within a fairly short time, Myra had been indoctrinated. She had become an atheist, and accepted what he called 'moral relativism,' the notion that right and wrong are creations of the human mind. She was soon as enthusiastic as he was about the Nazis. From then on, it was only a short step to accepting the ideas of the Marquis de Sade, whose basic notion is that physical pleasure is the only real value, and that all the rest of our moral values have been concocted by the ruling classes to keep the poor in their place.

According to de Sade, nature knows nothing about morality or good and evil; it inflicts pain, pleasure, happiness or misery, ecstasy or death, with utter indifference. Therefore there is no reason why the individual should not follow its example, and do whatever brings pleasure without regard to its effect on other people. In Sade's novels, pity and compassion are regarded as a form of feeble-mindedness.

It follows logically that there is no such thing as crime. Since we owe nothing to other people — in this world it is every man for himself — there is no moral reason why, if crime pays better than honesty, we should not live by crime. Which is why Brady had soon persuaded Myra Hindley that it would be sensible to make a large sum of money from crime, and then retire to somewhere with a better climate than rain-sodden Manchester.

Brady's influence on Myra's personality and outlook was immense. Her sister Maureen would later describe in court how Myra had changed completely, from being a normal girl and a regular churchgoer who loved children and animals, to someone who claimed she hated human beings, including babies and children. Maureen noted that her sister also became hostile and suspicious, keeping all her belongings — books, tape recordings and clothes — under lock and key.

There may have been another reason for this: Myra did not want anyone prying into evidence that would reveal just how much she had changed. For example, she and Brady had taken up photography and bought a time-lapse camera so they could take 'pornographic pictures' to sell. Jean Ritchie pointed out that eighteen months earlier, Myra had been so prudish that she would not even allow her sister to see her undressed. Now she posed for the camera wearing black crotchless panties, and engaged in sexual intercourse. Other photographs show her tied up with whip lashes on her flesh. So her secretiveness is understandable.

What had happened to her is obvious. She had not merely fallen in love; she had experienced something like religious conversion. Brady became her whole life. She must have felt that she had been asleep before she met him, and was now finally awake. She was seeing everything with new eyes.

Given this neo-Sadeian outlook (which Brady claims he held long before reading Sade), it is easy to see that it is only one small step from planning bank robberies to murder. If what is called crime is justifiable, because the individual has the right to do whatever suits him best, without taking other

people into account, then the same certainly applies to sex.

~~Philosophically speaking, this step is the most dangerous of all. It is natural for dominant individuals to enjoy sex, and both Ian Brady and Myra Hindley were dominant. But because nature has designed them as child-bearers, even dominant women tend to look for 'Mr Right.' Every dominant male, on the other hand, wishes he had a slave of the lamp who would use magic to enable him to have sex with every pretty girl he passed in the street. This is why the dominant male finds it difficult to engage in binding relationships.~~

I suspect that, even so, Brady found Myra's devotion and subservience intoxicating, and that he suddenly felt like a starving man who has been invited to a ten-course banquet. There is nothing like an adoring and uncritical girl to fill you with self-confidence. It seemed that life had ceased to trouble him as an outcast, and was inviting him to help himself.

Most males, under these circumstances, would decide on sex as a priority. And since his relationship with Myra was one of total dominance, he would certainly not meet any resistance there.

The first 'Moors Murder,' that of Pauline Reade, happened on July 12, 1963, a month after Brady had moved in with Myra at her grandmother's house in Bannock Street, Gorton. The only account we have of the murder is from the confession Myra Hindley made to Detective Chief Superintendent Peter Topping in January 1987, when she finally decided to admit her guilt. According to Myra, she picked up Pauline Reade — who was sixteen, and a friend of her sister Maureen — in a newly purchased mini-van. Pauline was on her way to a dance, but agreed to go and look for an expensive glove which Myra claimed she had lost at a picnic on Saddleworth Moor — Myra offered her a pile of gramophone records in exchange. When they had been on the moor about an hour, Brady arrived on his motorbike, and was introduced as Myra's boyfriend. Brady and Pauline then went off to look for the glove, while, Myra claims, she waited in the car. Later, Brady returned to the car, and took her to Pauline's body. Her throat had been cut and her clothes were in disarray, indicating rape. They then buried the body with the spade that Myra had brought in the back of the van.

In an open letter to the newspapers in 1990, Brady claimed that Myra had been involved in the actual killing, and had also made some kind of sexual assault on Pauline Reade. He says that Myra took the necklace off Pauline, saying: 'Where you're going, you won't need this.' On the whole, his version sounds the more plausible. Myra's accounts of the murders invariably have her elsewhere at the time, and Topping indicates that Myra told the truth only insofar as it suited her.

Although I initially accepted Myra's account when I first read Topping's book, I have since come to feel that it is simply implausible. It seems to me far more likely that Myra had absorbed the Brady/de Sade philosophy to the point where she actively participated in the murders and sexual assaults.

But I can accept one comment that Myra made for the benefit of a television documentary: that Brady complained that Pauline Reade had been too hard to subdue, and that in the future he would prefer children.

In October 1963, three months after the murder of Pauline Reade, Ian Brady made the acquaintance of sixteen-year-old David Smith, the husband of Myra's sister Maureen (who was not also working at Millwards). Smith was a big youth who had been a member of a street gang and had been in trouble with the law. Soon David and Maureen took a trip to Lake District with Ian and Myra where they sailed on Windermere. While not homosexual, Smith experienced an emotional attraction to males; soon he was almost as completely under Brady's spell as Myra.

On Saturday, November 23, 1963, Ian Brady and Myra Hindley drove to the small market town of Ashton-under-Lyne. A twelve-year-old boy named John Kilbride had spent Saturday afternoon at the



cinema, then went to earn a few pence doing odd jobs for stallholders at the market. It began to grow dark and a fog came down from the Pennines. At that moment, a friendly lady approached him and asked if he wanted a lift. It seemed safe enough, so he climbed in. It was the last time he was seen alive. Later, Brady was to take a photograph of Myra kneeling on his grave on the moor.

On June 16, 1964, twelve-year-old Keith Bennett set out to spend the night at his grandmother's house in the Longsight district. When his mother called to collect him the following morning, she learned that he had failed to arrive. Like John Kilbride, Keith Bennett had accepted a lift from a kind lady. His body has never been found.

Meanwhile, David Smith's admiration for his mentor was steadily increasing. Brady took him to Saddleworth Moor and they engaged in pistol practice — Myra had obtained a gun license by the expedient of joining the Cheadle Rifle Club. Myra was not entirely happy about this intimacy; her attitude to Smith had an undertone of hostility; in fact, both of them were getting sick of the Smiths. She was glad when her gran was rehoused in Wardle Brook Avenue, in the suburb of Hattersley, in September 1964, when she and Ian were able to move into the little house at the end of a terrace. Nevertheless, Ian continued to consolidate his influence over David. If he was going to rob banks, a partner would be needed. Soon David Smith was recording in a notebook sentences like the one quoted at the trial: 'Rape is not a crime, it is a state of mind. God is a disease which eats away a man's instincts, murder is a hobby and a supreme pleasure.' Soon he and Brady were 'casing' banks and drawing up elaborate plans.

One day Brady asked him: 'Is there anyone you hate and want out of the way?'

Smith mentioned several names, including an old rival named Tony Latham. After some discussion, they settled on Tony Latham as the murder victim. But first, Brady explained, he would need a photograph. This was no problem. Smith had a Polaroid camera, and he knew the pub where Latham drank. The next evening, Ian and Myra drove him to the pub, then drove away. Unfortunately, Smith had forgotten to insert the film, and when he went into the toilet to develop the photograph, he found the camera empty.

When he went out to Wardle Brook Avenue to confess his failure, Brady seemed to take it casually enough. In reality he did not believe Smith was telling the truth, and was alarmed. Now suddenly, David Smith was a potential risk. If he had participated in the murder of Tony Latham, he would have been bound to Ian and Myra. Now Brady began to think seriously about removing him. Oddly enough, it was Myra who dissuaded him. 'It would hurt Mo' (Maureen).

On December 26, 1964, there was another murder. Like the others, this was planned in advance. Myra had arranged for her grandmother to stay the night with an uncle at Dukinfield. At about 10 o'clock that evening, she picked up ten-year-old Lesley Ann Downey at a fair in Hulme Hall Lane. In Myra's version of what happened to Topping, they took Lesley back to the house in Wardle Brook Avenue, and switched on a tape recorder. Myra claims that she was in the kitchen when she heard the child screaming. Brady was squeezing her neck and ordering her to take off her coat. Lesley was then made to undress, and to assume various 'pornographic' poses, while Brady photographed her. On the tape, Myra can be heard ordering her to 'put it in, put it in tighter,' presumably referring to the gag that appears in the photographs. Lesley screams and asks to be allowed to go home. At this point, Myra claims she was ordered to go and run a bath; she stayed in the bathroom until the water became cold. When she returned, Lesley had been strangled, and there was blood on her thighs. The following day they took the body to the moors and buried it.

In his open letter to the press, Brady declares that Myra 'insisted upon killing Lesley Ann Downey with her own hands, using a two foot length of silk cord, which she later used to enjoy toyin

with in public, in the secret knowledge of what it had been used for.’

~~Brady had killed approximately once every six months since July 1963: Pauline Reade, John Kilbride, Keith Bennett, Lesley Ann Downey. For some reason, July 1965 went by without a further murder. The reason may be found in something Brady said to Fred Harrison, in a prison interview: ‘I felt old at twenty-six. Everything was ashes. I felt there was nothing of interest — nothing to hook myself onto. I had experienced everything.’~~

Harrison tells how Brady suggested to David Smith one evening that they should play Russian roulette. He removed all the bullets from the revolver, then replaced one, and spun the chambers. Then he fired at Smith. There was just a click. Brady laughed. ‘There would have been an awful mess behind you if the bullet had hit you.’

But if the bullet hit Smith, Brady would have been arrested on a manslaughter charge. The fact that he took such a risk reveals his self-control was being eroded.

Then, in September 1965, Brady decided to kill out of sequence. The aim seems to have been to cement David Smith’s membership with the ‘gang.’ According to Smith, during a drinking session on September 25, Brady asked him: ‘Have you ever killed anybody? I have — three or four. The bodies are buried up on the moors.’

Two weeks later, on October 6, Smith turned up at Wardle Brook Avenue hoping to borrow some money, but they were all broke. Brady had already suggested that they should rob an Electricity Board showroom, and the robbery had been planned for two days later. Smith’s urgent need for money to pay the rent suggested that now was the time to ‘cement’ him beyond all possibility of withdrawal.

Towards midnight, Myra called at her sister’s flat with a message for their mother, then asked David Smith to walk her home. As he stood waiting in the kitchen — expecting to be offered a drink — there was a scream from the sitting room, and Myra called, ‘Dave, help him!’ As Smith ran in, he found Brady was hacking at the head of a youth who was lying on the floor. In spite of blow after blow, the youth continued to twist and scream. Finally, when he lay still, Brady pressed a cushion over his face and tied a cord around the throat to stop the gurgling noises. Brady handed Smith the hatchet. ‘Feel the weight of that.’ Smith’s fingers left bloodstained prints on the handle.

Gran called down to ask what the noise was about, and Myra shouted that she had dropped a tape recorder on her foot.

When the room had been cleaned up, the body was carried upstairs between them. Brady commented: ‘Eddie’s a dead weight,’ and he and Myra laughed. The victim was seventeen-year-old Edward Evans, a homosexual who had been picked up in a pub that evening.

They all drank tea while Myra reminisced about a policeman who had stopped to talk to her while Brady was burying a body Smith agreed to return with an old pram the next day, and help in the disposal of Edward Evans.

When he arrived home Smith was violently sick. And when he told Maureen what happened, she was she who decided to go to the police.

At eight o’clock the next morning, a man dressed as a baker’s roundsman knocked on the door at 16 Wardle Brook Avenue. Myra answered the door, still rubbing the sleep out of her eyes. The man identified himself as a police officer, and said he had reason to believe there was a body in the house. Brady was on the divan bed in the living room in his undervest, writing a note to explain why he was not going to work that day. Upstairs, the police demanded to see into a locked room. When Myra said the key was at work, a policeman offered to go and fetch it. At this, Brady said: ‘You’d better tell him there was a row here last night. It’s in there.’ Under the window in the bedroom there was a plastic wrapped bundle.

In a letter to me, Ian described how, when the police came in, and told him to dress, he had ~~cautiously felt under the settee, where he kept the loaded gun — he had made up his mind to shoot the policemen, then himself. But it was not there. Then he remembered: the previous evening, as they had been carrying the body upstairs, the revolver in its shoulder holster had been banging against his ribs and he had taken it out and left it upstairs.~~

Myra was not arrested at the same time as Brady. The police probably accepted that Evans had been killed in the course of a quarrel, and Brady's bad limp — due to a kick on the shin from Evans — seemed to support this. So for the next five days, Myra remained free, going to see Brady every day.

But David Smith told the police that Brady had stored two suitcases in the left luggage at Manchester Central Station, and these were recovered. (The cloakroom ticket was later found where Brady had described it — in the spine of a prayer book.) These proved to contain pornographic photographs — including nine of Lesley Ann Downey — photographs of Ian and Myra on the moors, the tape of Lesley Ann pleading to be allowed to leave, various books on sex and torture, and wig coshes and notes on robbing banks. The police decided to dig on the moors, using the photographs as a guide, and the bodies of Lesley Ann Downey and John Kilbride were recovered.

On May 6, 1966, Ian Brady and Myra Hindley were both sentenced to life imprisonment. (On the abolition of the death penalty a month after their arrest saved them from the hangman.) There had been no confession — at the trial, Brady maintained that Lesley had been brought to the house by two men, who had taken her away after taking the photographs.

Myra was sent to Holloway, Brady to Durham, where he opted for solitary confinement, and studied German. He and Myra wrote constantly, and he began a campaign to try to secure her visiting rights, insisting that they were, in effect, man and wife. When this came to nothing he went on hunger strike. But although Myra had his photograph on her cell wall, she was embarking on a lesbian affair with a teenager called Rita; it was the first of many. She was gradually drawing apart from Ian, who was irritated to learn that she was in the process of returning to Catholicism — here the Catholic peer Lord Longford seems to have been instrumental.

Fred Harrison has an interesting anecdote. In 1967, a child killer named Raymond Morris was sent to Durham; he had murdered and raped three little girls, aged five, six and seven. Brady loathed him; on one occasion he threw boiling tea in his face — for which he received twenty-eight days confined to his cell — and subsequently punched him in the face as he was walking upstairs, knocking him down again. Brady told Harrison: 'Years later . . . I realised that, in a way, I was attacking myself. I could see myself in the Cannock Chase killer.' He was, in other words, beginning to feel remorse about killing children. And when Mrs Ann West, the mother of Lesley Ann Downey, tried to get permission to see him in prison in 1986, but was refused because of his 'mental condition', Brady told a correspondent: 'Re: letters from Mrs West and the mother of Keith Bennett.\* Although I have been given them I have not been able to bring myself to read them. I have been afraid to read them. Understand? I have to keep mental blocks tightly shut and keep control. The authorities have refused Mrs West's requests to visit me . . . I can't say how it would have worked out if the meeting had taken place. Remorse for my part in this and other matters is axiomatic, painfully deep.'

Brady knew from the beginning that he would never be released from jail. Myra, on the other hand, felt there was a good chance of parole, and in the 1970s, newspapers began carrying reports that she now claimed that Brady was totally responsible for the murders and she was innocent. It was at this point that Brady began to hate her.

In 1973, a singer named Janie Jones was sentenced to seven years for controlling prostitutes and was sent to Holloway. She heard that the Moors Murderess admired her, but refused to be introduced.

because she was revolted by the case. But when they finally met, she felt sorry for Myra, who looked like a bag of bones. Far from being hard-faced and brutal, as she looked in the trial photographs, she struck Janie Jones as shy and rather pathetic. Myra told her about the murders, and insisted that she had never been involved. She had helped pick up the children, but had no idea that Brady had killed them.

Janie Jones was completely taken in, and sympathy for Myra turned to pity when she saw her being attacked by a fellow prisoner. Myra stayed passive as a boot smashed her nose, and blood spurted on the floor. Janie finally intervened to prevent Myra from being thrown over the top floor balcony railing to certain death.

Janie Jones soon became convinced that Myra was suffering a great injustice, and when she was released in 1977, she joined Lord Longford in campaigning for her release.

In 1979, Myra wrote a 20,000-word document for the Home Secretary, begging for release. This completed the alienation between the former lovers, for Myra insisted that Brady alone was guilty of the murders, and that she was merely his dupe. And Ian, who had made every effort at the trial to establish Myra's innocence, now took every opportunity to state that she was as guilty as he was.

In November 1986, a policeman who had been born in her area, Gorton, went to see her at Cookham Wood prison, where Myra had been transferred in 1983. Detective Chief Superintendent Peter Topping wanted her help in finding the two unrecovered bodies: Keith Bennett and Pauline Reade. Myra, undoubtedly seeing this as a step towards parole, promised to help. Besides, Brady was showing signs of mental stress, and his weight had dropped to a hundred pounds. That was why, in 1985, he was moved to the Park Lane Hospital, a mental institution (later Ashworth Hospital) in Liverpool. In that state, he might well confess to the murders, and implicate Myra. She considered that her best defense against this was to make the first move. She agreed to help in the search for missing bodies.

The search began on December 16, 1986, a freezing day, and snow was falling by lunch time. Predictably, the search failed to find anything, although it went on — without Myra — all week. David Smith came to the moor one day, but the snow was now too deep to see anything but the vague contours of the moor; he was only able to indicate the spot where he and Myra and Brady sometimes parked the car and drank German wine. Myra was not present on that occasion, which was just as well since both she and Brady continued to regard Smith with hatred. (Paradoxically, Smith had been forced to move from Manchester because of the detestation with which he was regarded. Maureen had died of a brain haemorrhage in 1977.)

Myra was still maintaining that she was not involved in the actual murders, but in late January 1987 she dropped this pretense, and began to confess to Topping. As she talked, she chain-smoked and on two occasions became so tense that she had to be given tranquilisers.

Myra's version was that Brady blackmailed her into helping with the murders. One night, she claimed, he had given her wine with a gritty deposit and she lost consciousness; later he admitted that he had drugged her with sleeping tablets. When he began to talk to her about his desire to commit the perfect murder, and she was appalled, he showed her pornographic pictures he had taken of her while she was drugged, and told her he would show them to her family if she refused to help. Topping disbelieved this story — as he disbelieved much of her 'confession' — feeling that she was simply trying to excuse herself.

Myra continued to claim that she had never been present when the victims were killed — Brady sent her away. And when she returned, the victim (John Kilbride, Keith Bennett, Lesley Ann Downey) was already dead. After the first murder of Pauline Reade, Myra claimed of being so sickened that she

decided to take the van and go to the police, but she was deterred because Brady had the key. From then on, she insisted, she was terrified that he would kill her too if she resisted. She even claimed that he had threatened to kill her grandmother by pushing her downstairs.

Describing the final killing, of Edward Evans, Myra told Topping that Brady and David Smith had planned it together. Clearly, she was still determined to involve Smith.

Although Myra had gone to so much trouble to emphasise that she was in the last analysis blameless, former supporters like Janie Jones and Lord Longford were upset to learn how far she had deceived them.

In March 1987, Topping went to the Park Lane Hospital to interview Brady. He had been told that he would not understand what Brady was saying, and would be incapable of answering; this proved to be untrue. In fact, Topping felt that Brady was perfectly lucid, and obsessed by a need to feel 'in control' of situations.

Brady agreed to confess if he could be given the means of killing himself. Topping explained that this was impossible 'Talking to him was like playing chess,' said Topping, 'He was always thinking three moves ahead.' When — at a later meeting — Topping had finally made it clear that he had no power to offer 'a deal,' Brady offered to locate bodies on the moor if he could be granted what he called his 'human week' — a week of normal life, eating the food he chose, drinking Drambuie and watching old films. He felt deprived of these things after twenty years, and felt it was not much to ask again, Topping had to refuse.

Topping was with Brady on July 1, 1987 when Pauline Reade's body was finally located. It was lying on its side, fully clothed, and the throat had been cut. The clothes had obviously been pushed up and then carelessly pulled down. The following day, Brady agreed to go on to the moor and try and find the body of Keith Bennett. On July 3, Brady was allowed back on to the moor, the first time in twenty-two years. But by mid-afternoon, he had lost his bearings; the moor had changed a great deal since the 1960s. By that time, so many reporters and news cameramen were following that Topping decided to call it a day. And although Brady offered to go back to the moor to try again, the Home Office refused to allow it.

During many visits to Park Lane, Topping and Brady talked a great deal about the topography of the moor, but Brady would not discuss the murders themselves — except to say that Myra's accounts were thoroughly untrustworthy.

During one of these conversations, Brady talked about other murders (as he had, in fact, with Fred Harrison). He claimed that, in Glasgow, he had seen a man mistreating an old woman, and had followed him and stabbed him with a sheath knife. Near Manchester station he had quarrelled with a man on a piece of waste ground and 'bricked him,' leaving him on the ground. Again, in Manchester after getting into an argument with a woman, he picked her up and threw her over the parapet wall into the canal. He told Topping that the body of a youth he had killed was buried near one of the markers on the A635, but declined to elaborate.

I have no idea whether these 'murders' actually happened — although something Ian said in one of his letters to me inclines me to think not.

After Topping's book came out in 1989, Ian was indignant that he had, while still a serving police officer, been allowed to publish his account of his Moors investigation, when the police, like the armed forces and the Civil Service, have to sign a confidentiality agreement. Brady's protests led to the book being withdrawn.

During our early exchanges of letters, Ian would put two parallel red lines across every page, with the words: 'Personal and confidential. Not for publication.' Finally, as he came to trust me, he stopped

bothering to do it.

~~His letters often contained personal anecdotes that threw an interesting light on his personality~~ like the following (dated December 12, 1992):

Another absurd insight. I always liked the best seats in the cinema. But, when there was a full house and we had to queue, and the doorman would come walking along the queue declaring that two of the best seats (also the most expensive) were available, I hated having to walk past the queue in order to accept them; I felt that I was deliberately snubbing or insulting them by my action: 'I can afford the most expensive; you can't.' Not very flattering to my 'demon' image. But I can laugh at such paradoxes.

Now, to even the account, I'll give you the other side of the coin. In *Inside the Mind of a Murderer*, M [Myra] refers to a true crime incident. We had come out of a cinema and gone for a late night drink in a town-centre bar in Manchester. As we were drinking, a group of five or six men came in together and sat at right angles to us. The one nearest kept staring at M with a stupid grin on his face. I gave him a few warning glances, but he continued. I fumed silently for some minutes, and then suddenly I took a decision, and the 'black light' began to operate. Casually I slipped my hand into my overcoat pocket and, with thumb and forefinger, opened the lock-back knife I always carried, made entirely of stainless steel, devoid of ornament and with the functional purity of scalpel. I glanced at the bottles on the table in front of me, selecting which ones to choose as additional weapons. I felt marvellous, delighted, and ready to hack the halfwits. I turned towards them. 'Who the fuck are you staring at? You looking for trouble?' Words to that effect. I waited for the first move, and intended to deal with the starrer first. His grin had disappeared and his mouth hung slack in a white face. His mouth gave me the idea of sticking the knife into it and expanding the sliced grin up to his ear. During all this I hadn't said a word to M, and my hand was still in my overcoat pocket. I just sat patiently. Suddenly, apologies were coming from the men, including the starrer. I felt a mixture of disappointment and relief. Afterwards I castigated myself for making such a stupid move — stupid, not from a moral viewpoint, but because of the certainty of being caught. I referred to it as 'the danger of audience potential,' of being pushed into a situation I would have avoided had I been alone. After that I never took M into the Gorbals at night; I wandered the area alone, loving the atmosphere of cobbled alleys and gaslit streets I'd known so well as a child.

Letters like this made me aware of Ian as a human being, and I could understand why he hated journalism — and books — that stereotyped the two of them as 'The Moors Murderers' or 'The Monsters of the Moors.'

Anecdotes like this also made me aware that Ian is what zoologists call a 'king rat.' It has been known for more than a century that five percent of any animal group is 'dominant' — that it possesses drive and enterprise. Shaw once asked the explorer Stanley: 'If you were injured and unable to lead the party, how many people in the group could take over from you?', and Stanley replied without hesitation: 'Five percent — one in twenty.' This applies to all animals, birds and fishes.

But there are in any large group a very small proportion of 'king rats,' individuals of such high dominance that they dominate even the dominant. These are the Napoleons and Hitlers. Beethoven and Wagner were 'king rats.' But they were fortunate because they were king rats who had found a way of

expressing their dominance in a socially acceptable manner.

~~And this, of course, is the major problem for such men — in fact, for all members of the dominant five percent. For before the dominant individual has found a way of expressing the dominance, he is bound to feel irritable and frustrated — a misfit or ‘outsider.’ Shaw’s Undershaft — the ‘armament king’ in *Major Barbara* — says: ‘I moralised and starved until one day I swore that I would be a full-fed free man at all costs; that nothing should stop me except a bullet, neither reason nor morals nor the lives of other men. . . . I was a dangerous man until I had my will: now I am a useful, beneficent, kindly person.’~~

The reason that I soon came to feel a great deal of sympathy for Ian was that I felt that he was a frustrated king rat. In one letter he expresses his basic aim:

To shed the boring, accepted realities that suffocate the majority, and embrace or confront what lies beyond. I always had the sense of seeing far and deep, and had contempt for those who couldn’t. Sometimes I felt weary, as though being dragged down into a mire by others, but I always threw them off successfully, as if an inner generator was simply biding its time to save me, expanding the spirit in tune with a vast gestalt. Confronting a sea, a moor, or standing on a mountain, you can almost hear the unknown, invisible presences; you know they are there, almost within touch, speaking an arcane language, and you feel the power rise up within as you become a receiver. No religious twaddle involved, just a pantheistic and atavistic surge of ultimate energy and power, and it makes you laugh with pure delight or cry with gratitude.

What struck me about this passage — also from a letter of December 1992 — is that what he is saying would normally be called mysticism. In fact, in my reply I quoted the famous passage from Wordsworth’s ‘Prelude,’ in which he describes finding a boat moored by Windermere in the moonlight, and climbing in and rowing into the middle of the lake, until a huge black peak towered above him like a living creature. He writes that for days afterwards:

My brain  
Worked with a dim and undetermined sense  
Of unknown modes of being . . .

I have also noted again and again how much Ian enjoys travel. We all do, of course (although I, as a typical Cancer, easily become bored with it). But for some people, it undoubtedly means more than for others — Ernest Hemingway, for example. And the reason, I think, is that Hemingway’s childhood in Michigan was rather claustrophobic, so that travelling — first to Chicago, then to Paris, produced an almost dizzying sense of freedom, of ‘escape from personality.’ Ian’s letters make it clear that it was the same for him. Even his latest letter, which arrived today (May 31, 2001) has a typical passage

Under Brooklyn Bridge, on the Brooklyn side, there’s a little place called Grimaldi’s among the warehouses; it still had coal-fired ovens like the shops in the Gorbals . . . and did pizzas and pies hot from the oven; so New York likes to hold on to old traditions more than this country. I prefer the old to the new.

And he goes on to reminisce:

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The few times I used long-distance buses, I used to like the half-hour stopovers in little slumbering places in the middle of the night, with only a diner remaining open for the bus passengers and I'd go for a stroll along the sleeping streets and dark shops, enjoying the experience of being awake and alert, living while the world slept, having confidential conversations with nocturnal cats and dogs . . .

His point is underlined by another passage in the same letter:

We are never more truly ourselves than when we are briefly someone else — as on travels, for instance, free of the conditioning of our normal surroundings. . . . The theory that we only use a fraction of the power the brain commands, but have not the knowledge to access it — I've experienced times of increased conscious awareness . . . a sensation of cerebral, as opposed to physical dizziness, as though from the vibrations of an awakened dynamo slowly gathering speed . . . Switching the dynamo on seemed to be preceded by an unusually long period of sustained mental exertion and concentration, rather like the degree required to get through the initial inertia of the sleep barrier in order to remain awake for days with little subsequent effort.

All this, I believe, has to be taken into account in order to fully understand the Moors Murder. Here, at least, I am in a position to sympathise, since I hated the claustrophobia of my home town Leicester — a Midlands manufacturing city, devoted (in my childhood) to hosiery and shoe factories. I hated it and dreamed of escape, which is why I taught myself to type, then poured out thousands of words a week — plays, stories, essays — with that same dream of freedom that drove Ian. My frustration became so intense that at one point I seriously contemplated suicide. And this was not out of self-pity as much as a desire to 'spite God,' who seemed to have condemned me to a life of futility. And I can easily believe that if I had felt that the only chance of escape was crime, I would have taken to crime with enthusiasm.

But would I have committed murder? I doubt it. But that is simply a matter of the degree of frustration. I was born into a normal family situation, the first born among siblings and cousins, and since I was an attractive and intelligent child, also received a great deal of admiration and affection. Now I look at my own grandchildren, I can see how important it is to have the feeling of being loved and admired unconditionally. I have no doubt that Ian's mother did her best to give him the kind of affection that a child needs; but without a husband, this must have been difficult.

What I do remember clearly is how, in my mid-teens, I had the feeling that I had to dispense with love and understanding; there seemed no chance that my mother and father could provide it: they already regarded me as a cuckoo in the nest. I had the feeling that I had to face up to the reality, and that reality was that I had to get used to living without love. At that stage, working in factories (because my parents felt it was time I earned some money) I first read *A Farewell to Arms*, and the pessimism of Hemingway spoke to me. ' . . . they killed you in the end. You could count on that. Stay around and they would kill you.'

I was lucky; a period of National Service in the RAF gave me a chance to recover my optimism. Ian spent the same period of his life in prison. So by the time he came out, the hardness born of innate pessimism was endemic; he had learned to live 'without appeal.' And in the



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