

# Jack the ripper – source related study



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1. What can you learn from source A about the murder of Polly Nicholls?

From source A you can learn a considerable amount about the murder of Polly Nicholls. The opening line of the source suggests that the murder was of gruesome content and so much so that it 'startled' most people around London.

It is clear that Polly Nicholls murder was shocking because of many facts, one being that she was extremely 'poor' which indicates to me that there was no clear motive for the murder. Also the murder must have been of unbelievable 'butchery' as the source suggests that a lot of effort has gone into the crime meaning that it was not just a 'mere' stabbing, but a serious of vicious outbursts. A very disturbed and 'demented' human being carried out the crime, also suggested by the source. Surely a human being that has no mental problems could not carry out this brutal murder and as the ripper sager unfolds you see that the murders become even more gruesome, backing up the point of the ripper being demented.

2. Does the evidence of source C support the evidence of sources A and B about the ripper murders? In some ways source C supports the evidence of sources A and B, but in others it differs. For example source A gives good indication that the murder was extremely gruesome, this is strongly supported by both sources. Source B states how the murderer found the 'organs' which indicates that an extraordinary act of butchery has taken place, alike source C. Source C in detail describes the murder of Elizabeth, its revolting contents included. So in this aspect source C supports strongly the evidence of A and B.

There is a strong aspect of source B that differs from the evidence given in source C. Source B describes how several mutilations were made to Polly Nicholls' body yet in source c it is a very different case. Source c just states that a single ' incision..

.. commenced on the left side...' of the neck.

So unlike source B, although Elizabeth Strides' murder was by no means mild, source c's evidence says how NO other wounds or mutilations were apparent. Some seeing this may come to the conclusion that the two murders were not even linked or carried out by the same person. A way in which source A supports source c is that both sources give the impression that there was no clear motive to the murder. I think this due to the fact that source A states '.

.. poorest of the poor..

.' and source C states '...no money..

.' Seeing this shows that the murder was not carried out as a robbery or as a means to benefit the culprit, but as a cold blooded slaughter. A way that the sources differ is that source b strongly suggests that the murder was carried out by someone who had a high level of knowledge concerning the human body, for example a doctor. But source C states how just a single wound to the neck killed Elizabeth Stride. I interpreted this evidence and came to the conclusion that anyone could have carried out the murder.

You do not have to be skilled, just mentally disturbed (source a), to commit such a murder. So taking all the above information into account I have come

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to the conclusion that in some ways source c supports the evidence given by A and B, but in other ways differs. 3. How useful are sources D and E in helping you understand why the ripper was able to avoid capture? Sources D and E are very useful when trying to understand why the ripper was able to avoid capture.

Throughout both texts there are several points that refer to this. From background information it is obvious that the 'ripper' had the ability to evade the authorities and most people within Whitechapel. From source D it is clear that the reason why the ripper managed to avoid capture for long so long was because he was very well disguised. He wore clothes that he knew would make identifying himself difficult. For example, 'dark coat', 'a deerstalker hat.' As you can see the clothes that he wore would ensure he would not stand out too much, he would wear clothes that were regularly worn by many at the time.

Also in source D I believe that there is a huge point made that would work in favour of the ripper. 'He looked like a foreigner.' This statement is one that was used throughout the ripper case. It was clear that in Whitechapel, and all areas of London, there was a definite prejudice against foreigners.

People and newspapers liked to blame them for every crime possible. This helps me understand why the ripper avoided capture because there were many people in Whitechapel and now the police's investigation on the murders would automatically emphasise of foreigners. This for the ripper would be useful because if he wasn't a foreigner then he has a clear path to do what he wanted. There is another point from source D that helps you

understand why the ripper managed to avoid capture. This point is the statement, ' he looked what I should call shabby genteel.' It is a known fact that the people that lived around the Whitechapel area were very poor and had little money.

So as you can see this statement would not exactly narrow down the investigation instead it would put forward nearly every person within the Whitechapel area for the murders that the ripper was carrying out! A point from source E that is useful when understanding how the ripper managed to avoid capture is the statement, ' the police force...should be strengthened.

' It is no hidden fact that the police force around the time of the murders were extremely inadequate. Therefore I am 100% sure that if the ripper murders were carried out in the present day, the culprit would be captured. I believe that a lack of knowledge, technology advances, police numbers and discipline is why the ripper was never captured. The paragraph that starts, ' The main thoroughfares...

' is a big reason why the ripper was never captured. Whitechapel was a very dark and eerie place. It was full of prostitutes and undesirables that lurked in the many alleyways. With this sort of environment the ripper could be unnoticed and once he had committed the murders, hide or scarp quickly.

4. Use sources F and G, and your own knowledge, to explain how the police tried to catch Jack the Ripper. After studying both sources I have found many points that give me an indication into how the police tried to catch the ripper. Source F shows a police notice that was handed out to most people within whitechapel, it concerns the murders of Elizabeth and Kate Eddowes.

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The note is put extremely bluntly and in my mind does not give enough detail in to the murders or their whereabouts. No description of the ripper is found so it would be very difficult for peoples' memories to be jogged.

You make think that this method of policing was good but personally I feel it was one that was very ineffective. For instance most people that lived in Whitechapel could not read, the place was full of foreigners who could not speak fluent English let alone read it. Another reason why I feel this way of catching Jack the ripper is inadequate is because it was a strong possibility that the ripper may not have came from the Whitechapel. So people that was able to look out for suspicious people, were almost certainly looking for the wrong people. The 'suspicious' peoples' names would be put forward to the police, all this meant was that the already snowed-under police force had more work to do.

It is no hidden fact that police within Whitechapel were not exactly 'loved'. In fact they were some what hated by the public. This police notice is basically asking for public help and some people may uneasy at helping the police, even though it is true it would be in their best interest. The police wanted people to be aware of the killer and so thought by notifying everyone was in their best interest to catch him.

They were definitely helped by the media coverage in 'promoting' the ripper murders. By doing this they ensured that everyone knew where the ripper was likely to be and where he was to commit murders. There was one way how the police tried catching the ripper that many people found amusing.

The ripper was targeting prostitutes as his victims and so logic would tell you to catch him you had to be in and around prostitutes.

This is fair enough but there were little if any women in the police at this time and so males within the police had to dress up as prostitutes. Although there was optimism at this tactic from the police, unsurprisingly it came to no avail. Source G is a letter from the home secretary basically stating that there would be no reward given for people who had information that would lead to the capture of the ripper. Some may feel it is unbelievable that no reward was to be given, but personally I back the home secretary in their decision.

Most people in Whitechapel were extremely poor so at the news of a reward being given there would be floods of hoaxes and timewasters that were just drooling at the thought of a money reward. This would mean that it was near enough impossible for the police force, who were already inadequate, to plough through various peoples' claims. There is a definite down side of not given a reward however. This is linked with both sources F and G.

Source F clearly states that the ripper is thought to be in the 'immediate neighbourhood.' If people had information on who the ripper was then they may feel scared to put forward this information as if the person who, was in the immediate neighbourhood, as they may feel that the person may see them as his next victim. Without having a money reward these people with the vital information may think that it would not be worth risking their life to shop in the suspect. At least if there was a money reward the people may put their information forward in anticipation of the reward. This shows that

the police wanted to keep the workload down to a minimum in order to catch the ripper.

At the same time they wanted to people of Whitechapel to be aware of murderer. 5. ' The police were to blame for not capturing Jack the Ripper.' Use the sources and your own knowledge to explain whether you agree with this view. There is no doubt in my mind that the police were PARTLY to blame for the ripper not being captured.

But there are also a number of other factors that are to blame for him not being captured. The police, during the times that the ripper murders occurred, had a huge lack of resources. There was no money for the police to invest in more officers or bring in any more recruits. This meant that the police were stretched to the limits when trying to capture the ripper. They simple did not have the men or resources to do this successfully. Another aspect that has to be questioned is how well trained were the members of the police force? Many of the officers during the ripper case were simply not up to the job.

They had never come across such a case and not received the right training to deal with enquiry. This resulted in certain parts of the ripper case not being conducted properly. There was a huge problem for the police force that maybe meant why the ripper was not captured. The community within Whitechapel were not behind their police force.

The people made it clear that they were not, by any means, happy with the service the police were providing. With this in mind it is understandable that many people would feel the need not to help the police, and so maybe some <https://assignbuster.com/jack-the-ripper-source-related-study/>



vital information was withheld and never put forward to the police. Another reason why the police may be held responsible for the ripper not being captured is that they clearly made some horrendous blunders. For example, the case of Catherine Eddowes. There was a dialogue above the deceased apron, it was written in the ripper's handwriting, this could have lead to the arrest of someone instead the police decided to obliterate it! Surely you can't afford to do such a thing and this is only one of the blunders that the police were responsible for.

In general I feel that the police went about things in the wrong way. When it came to analysing evidence and witness statements they did not make as much use of these resources. Also some of there methods are certainly questionable. An example of this would be the police notice given out to everyone in Whitechapel.

This, in my mind, is a very inadequate form of policing and it is no wonder the ripper was never caught. It is no secret that the police did not think much of prostitutes. They were everywhere in Whitechapel and were thought of as the lowest of low. Putting this into consideration the police may have dealt with the case in a different way, I believe that if the ripper were preying on the rich then police input would have been of much higher standard.

They would have felt the need to capture the ripper with more motivation and ambition. I also believe that the people who the police employed were at times inadequate and not reliable. An example of this would be the doctors. At times in ripper case at least one doctor was way out in their estimations

for death. This then casts doubt on all the other decisions made by the many doctors employed.

Again I feel this is wrong because you are getting input from many whereas I feel in this situation, the same person would be a much more reliable source. As you can see there are many reasons why I feel the police are partly to blame for the ripper murders but I also think there are other reasons why the ripper was never captured. One of these is the forensic evidence, or lack of it. In the times of the murders there was little if any forensic evidence so it meant it was impossible to conjure up clues if, and in this case he was, the person who was committing the murders was intelligent.

I have no doubt in my mind at all that if the murders were carried out in the present day then the ripper would have been captured. Another reason why the ripper was never caught was because of the media coverage of the horrendous killings. They at times hyped up the case and put unnecessary fear into the public who were already scared of the going ons in Whitechapel. The newspapers also dabbled with the little evidence that was available. For example the media twisted the descriptions given by the few witnesses and the result of this was the targeting of a specific group that in this case was the Jews.

This inevitably influenced the public and apparently the police. The public were also somewhat to blame for the ripper not being captured. They were very apprehensive in coming forward with evidence, this maybe due to the fact the ripper was, well the police said, from the whitechapel area. Also

many hoax letters were sent in by the public which made it hard for the police to decide many things.

These being; did the actual ripper send in letters and whether or not to take the letters seriously. This lead to police, maybe, carrying out work that did not need to be done. Another huge thing to blame for the ripper not being caught was Whitechapel itself. Whitechapel was full of undesirables and prostitutes, this made easy prey for the ripper.

There were many alleyways and dark places for the ripper to carry out his work without being caught or seen. The ripper himself has to be credited for not being caught. He was obviously intelligent and careful how he went about his murders. There is no real evidence against him that would result in him being captured. All in all I feel the statement ‘ the police were to blame for not capturing Jack the ripper’ is in some ways true and in others is not. There is no doubt that the police had a huge part to play in the ripper getting away with the murders but as you can see there were many other factors.