celebrity magazine also chose Dahmer as one of its “100 Most Intriguing People of the 20th Century.”

During the 1970s, only one killer was featured on People’s cover. By the 1990s, in contrast, the incredibly popular celebrity magazine printed more than two dozen different cover stories about vicious criminals, including Dahmer, David Koresh, Laurie Dann, and Theodore Kaczynski (see Levin, Fox, & Mazaic, 2002).

The public’s taste and tolerance for front cover attention afforded multiple murder reached a limit when Rolling Stone magazine gave star treatment to one of the men suspected of setting off bombs at the 2013 Boston Marathon that had killed three spectators and seriously injured hundreds of others. The August 2013 issue featured 20-year-old suspected terrorist Dzhokhar Tsarnaev on the front cover in a photograph that had been touched up considerably. With his youthful face and wavy hair, Tsarnaev’s image was reminiscent of rock stars that over the years have made it big when gracing the cover of Rolling Stone. Whether it was the recency of the bombing, the apparent anti-American sentiment behind the attack, or the photo editing toward glamour that struck a raw nerve, the magazine came under intense criticism for its approach. Numerous newsstands and stores refused to sell the controversial issue. Yet despite a grassroots campaign to mount a boycott, the magazine flew off the shelves wherever available, giving Rolling Stone double its usual street sales for the issue.

Television has also helped to turn criminals—real ones like Florida’s Aileen Wuornos and fictional ones like Showtime’s Dexter Morgan—into celebrities. In fact, some observers have characterized serial killing as a chiefly media event (Gibson, 2006) that allows people to obtain close knowledge of the essential characteristics of serial killing and the propensities peculiar to specific offenders (Jenkins, 1994). This is a particularly salient by-product of the media-saturated nature of serial killing, given that it is statistically one of the least common types of crime (Haggerty, 2009). Media, at their worst, have catered to public hunger for gripping topics, financially exploiting gruesome