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Rainford, Adele and Gavin, Helen

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**Impressions of evil: the public and professional view of a female murderer.
Adele Rainford & Helen Gavin,
University of Huddersfield.**

Myra Hindley & Ian Brady, known as the Moors Murderers, abducted, sexually assaulted, tortured and murdered at least five children between July 1963 and October 1965. In her press obituary, Myra Hindley was described as “the most hated woman in Britain”. When Brady was arrested on the 7th October, 1965, Hindley was left alone for five days. There was complete disbelief that a woman could have condoned, let alone participated in such heinous crimes. When this became known, Hindley fell victim to the “doubly deviant” view, that not only did she commit terrible crimes, but she also stepped outside the socially accepted persona associated with appropriate feminine behaviour. Furthermore, she is designated “evil” in a way that Brady never was.

The public view of Hindley is accessible through media reports of her trial and subsequent imprisonment. What has not been analysed before are the impressions of the professionals that surrounded her during that time. The police, the representatives of the legal system and the prison system all have their own views formed of the woman at the centre of this furore. In this paper, we analyse the impressions gained of Hindley by one of the police officers involved in the search for the bodies of the murdered children, and place them in the context of the public view expressed in news reports.