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| Richard Francis Cottingham *“The Torso Killer”* | | |  |
| Information researched and summarized by *Jacklyn Cowin, Jenna Leonette, and The Phan*  Department of Psychology  Radford University  Radford, VA 24142-6946 | | | |
| **Date** | **Age** | **Life Event** | |
| 11/25/1946 | 0 | Born in Bronx, NY | |
| 1958 | 12 | Family settled in River Vale, NJ when Richard was still a youngster | |
| 1958 | 12 | Entered in the seventh grade at St. Andrews, a parochial school for boys and girls—had trouble making friends, took an interest in homing pigeons and tinkering around the house and yard with his mother | |
| 1960 | 14 | Entered Pascack Valley High School in Hillsdale-became more accepted by peers, but he was never a star, he just blended in with the crowd. | |
| 1960-1964 | 14-18 | Joined cross country and track team—he picked the event that suited his personality; he chose the solitude and loneliness of the long distance runner. | |
| 1964 | 18 | Graduated from Pascack Valley High School | |
| 1964-1966 | 18-20 | Worked for father’s insurance company Metropolitan Life as a computer operator and took courses to learn more about computers. | |
| 1966 | 20 | Joined Blue Cross Blue Shield of Greater New York as a computer operator | |
| 1967 | 21 | Strangled to death Nancy Schiava Vogel (WF, 29) | |
| 10/03/1969 | 22 | Charged and convicted of intoxicated driving (New York City): 10 days jail & $50 fine | |
| 05/03/1970 | 23 | Married Janet at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Queens Village, NY | |
| 1970-1974 | 23-28 | Lived at the apartments called Ledgewood Terrace in Little Ferry, the site where his first victim Maryann Carr, was later found dead. | |
| 08/21/1972 | 25 | Charged and convicted of shoplifting at Stern’s Department Store in Paramus, NJ. Received a $50 fine | |
| 09/04/1973 | 26 | New York City: Charged with robbery, sodomy, sexual assault, but case was dismissed | |
| 10/15/1973 | 26 | First child, Blair, was born | |
| 02/12/1974 | 27 | New York City: Charged with unlawful imprisonment, robbery, but case was dismissed | |
| February 1975 | 28 | Moved into new rented three-bedroom home at 29 Vreeland Street in Lodi, NJ | |
| 03/28/1975 | 28 | Second child, Scott, was born | |
| 10/13/1976 | 29 | Last child, Jenny, was born | |
| 12/16/1977 | 31 | First victim’s body, Maryann Carr (WF, 26), was found, bound at the hands and feet and strangled with a ligature around her neck. | |
| 1977-1980 | 31-34 | Had extramarital affair with Barbara Lucas | |

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| 09/23/1978 | 31 | Abducted Karen Schilt in New York City, drugged, and sexually assaulted her, and dumped her in a sewer at the apartment complex in Little Ferry, NJ. |
| 10/13/1978 | 31 | Picked up a pregnant prostitute named Susan Geiger. Drugged, beat, and raped her and left her in a motel room in South Hackensack, NJ. |
| April 1979 | 32 | Wife Janet filed for divorce |
| 12/02/1979 | 33 | Second victim Deedeh Goodarzi’s (WF, 23) body and third victim “Jane Doe’s” (WF) body were found with the hands and heads removed. The mutilated bodies were found in a burned room at the Travel Inn Motor Hotel at 515 West 42d Street |
| 1980 | 33 | Had extramarital affair with Jean Connelly from early 1980 to just before his arrest in May 1980. |
| 05/04/1980 | 33 | Body of fourth victim, Valerie Ann Street (WF, 19), was found naked, beaten, and bleeding from one of her breasts, at the Quality Inn Motel in Hasbrouck Heights, NJ |
| 05/12/1980 | 33 | Drugged, beat, and savagely bit Pamela Weisenfeld and dumped her in a parking lot in Teaneck, NJ. |
| 05/15/1980 | 33 | Body of fifth victim, Jean Reyner (WF, 25) wasfound stabbed, mutilated, and strangled in the Hotel Seville at 22 East 29th Street, near Fifth Avenue |
| 05/22/1980 | 33 | Assaulted, raped, and attempted to kill 18 year-old prostitute Leslie O’Dell in a motel room in Hasbrouck Heights, NJ.  Arrested while attempting to flee a Hasbrouck Heights, NJ motel, with Leslie Ann O’Dell inside, badly beaten. |
| June 1980 | 33 | Wife withdrew divorce and moved to Poughkeepsie, New York with her three children. |
| 08/14/1980 | 33 | New York City: Charged with triple homicide-Mary Ann Jean Reyner (May 15, 1980); Deedeh Goodarzi and “Jane Doe” (December 2, 1979): pending trial |
| 09/15/1980 | 33 | Identified in police lineup by victims Susan Geiger and Karen Schilt |
| 09/17/1980 | 33 | Bergen County: 21-count indictment |
| 06//06/1981 | 34 | Testified in his own defense at his murder trial. Included details of his  fascination with bondage ever since he was a child, but denied that he was into hurting others. Denied that he knew any of the women who claimed to be his victims except for Leslie O’Dell, for which he was caught. |
| 06/11/1981 | 34 | Bergen County: convicted of 15 of 20 counts |
| 06/14/1981 | 34 | Attempted suicide by drinking six ounces of a liquid antidepressant in his cell at the Bergen County jail |
| 07/25/1981 | 34 | Sentenced to 173-197 years in state prison; prison term after applying concurrent terms for multiple kidnap and assault convictions is 60-95 years for 1981 sentence; also fined $2,350. |
| 02/25/1982 | 35 | Collapsed while being escorted to jail cell while awaiting Maryann Carr trial and was diagnosed with a duodenal ulcer. This resulted in a mistrial for the Carr case. |
| 10/04/1982 | 35 | Attempted to escape during Carr trial, but was quickly recaptured by authorities. |
| 10/12/1982 | 35 | Convicted of second degree murder of Maryann Carr in a nonjury trial in Bergen County, NJ. |
| 10/15/1982 | 35 | Sentenced to 25 years to life for the Carr murder, with a minimum term of 30 years to be served consecutively with the 1980 sentence. |
| 03/30/1983 | 36 | Removed from maximum security state prison in Trenton and transferred to the men’s house of detention in Manhattan, NY for trial on the August 1980 charges of murdering Deedeh Goodarzi, “Jane Doe,” and Jean Reyner. |
| 07/05/1984 | 37 | Attempted suicide by slashing his left forearm with a razor before startled jurors |
| 07/09/1984 | 37 | Convicted in New York for the August 1980 charges of murdering Goodarzi, “Jane Doe,” and Reyner. |
| 08/28/1984 | 37 | Sentenced in Manhattan to an additional 75 years to life for the murders of Goodarzi, “Jane Doe,” and Reyner. |

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| 09/18/2010 | 63 | Cottingham pleads guilty to the 1967 murder of Nancy Schiava Vogel (WF, 29) | |
| **General Information** | | | |
| Sex | | | Male |
| Race | | | White |
| Number of victims | | | Suspected and convicted of 6, confessed to one (Nancy Vogel) |
| Country where killing occurred | | | United States |
| States where killing occurred | | | New York & New Jersey |
| Cities where killing occurred | | | New York City & Hasbrouck Heights |
| Type of killer | | | Mixed lust |
| Height | | | 5’10” |
| **Childhood Information** | | | |
| Date of birth | | | November 25, 1946 |
| Location | | | Bronx, NY |
| Birth order | | | 1st of 3 |
| Number of siblings | | | 2 |
| XYY? | | |  |
| Raised by | | | Both parents |
| Birth category | | | Oldest |
| Parent’s marital status | | | Married |
| Family event | | | None |
| Age of family event | | | N/A |
| Problems in school? | | | Had trouble making friends at St. Andrews because he was new to the area and because h e was a commuting school child.  He also did not get to know many other kids in his  neighborhood around the family’s home in Cleveland Avenue in River Vale.  Not an athletic child and his poor eyesight made sports difficult, but he did join the track team in high school. |
| Teased while in school? | | | No |
| Physically attractive? | | | He was a handsome boy and an average looking adult |
| Physical defect? | | | No |
| Speech defect? | | | No |
| Head injury? | | | No |
| Physically abused? | | | No |
| Psychologically abused? | | | No |
| Sexually abused? | | | No |
| Father’s occupation | | | Executive at Metropolitan Life Insurance Company in NY |
| Age of first sexual experience | | |  |
| Age when first had intercourse | | |  |
| Mother’s occupation | | | Housewife |
| Father abused drugs/alcohol | | | No |
| Mother abused drugs/alcohol | | | No |
| **Cognitive Ability** | | | |
| Highest grade in school | | | 12, Graduated from high school |
| Highest degree | | | High School Diploma |
| Grades in school | | | Average |
| IQ | | | Average |
| Source of IQ information | | | Leith (1983, page 67) |
| **Work History** | | | |
| Served in the military? | | | No |
| Branch | | | N/A |
| Type of discharge | | | N/A |

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| Saw combat duty | N/A |
| Killed enemy during service? | N/A |
| Applied for job as a cop? | No |
| Worked in law enforcement? | No |
| Fired from jobs? | No |
| Types of jobs worked | Worked as computer operator at father’s insurance company, Metropolitan Life, and then worked as a computer operator at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Greater New York |
| Employment status during series | Employed as a computer operator |
| **Relationships** |  |
| Sexual preference | Heterosexual |
| Marital status | Married |
| Number of children | 3 |
| Lives with his children | Yes |
| Living with | Spouse (Janet) & three children (Blair, Scott, & Jenny) |
| **Triad** | |
| Animal torture | No |
| Fire setting | No |
| Bed wetting | No |
| **Killer Psychological Information** | |
| Abused drugs? | No |
| Abused alcohol? | No |
| Been to a psychologist? | No |
| Time in forensic hospital? | No |
| Diagnosis | No |
| **Killer Criminal History** | |
| Committed previous crimes? | Yes |
| Spend time in jail? | Yes |
| Spend time in prison? | No |
| Killed prior to series? Age? | No |
| **Serial Killing** | |
| Number of victims | 6 |
| Victim type | Four prostitutes and one medical technician |
| Killer age at start of series | 21 |
| Date of first kill in series | 1967 |
| Date of final kill in series | May 15, 1980 |
| Gender of victims | Female |
| Race of victims | Five were White and one was Kuwaiti |
| Age of victims | 19, 23, 25, 26, 29 |
| Type of victim | Four prostitutes and one medical technician |
| Method of killing | Strangulation |
| Weapon | Used knife to torture the victims, and to mutilate the bodies after the killing |
| Was gun used? | No |
| Type | N/A |
| Did killer have a partner? | No |
| Name of partner | N/A |
| Sex of partner | N/A |
| Type of serial killer | Mixed lust |
| How close did killer live? | Drove to crime |

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| Location of first contact | Maryann Carr = her apartment; Prostitutes = street or bar |
| Location of killing | Maryann Carr = parking lot of motel; Prostitutes = motel room |
| Killing occurred in home of victim? | No |
| Killing occurred in home of killer? | No |
| Victim abducted or killed at contact? | Abducted and drugged |
| Behavior During Crimes | |
| Rape? | Yes |
| Tortured victims? | Yes |
| Stalked victims? | Yes in the case of Maryann Carr, but no in the cases of the prostitutes |
| Overkill? | Yes |
| Quick & efficient? | No |
| Used blindfold? | No |
| Bound the victims? | Yes |
| After Death Behavior | |
| Sex with the body? | No |
| Mutilated body? | Yes |
| Ate part of the body? | No |
| Drank victim’s blood? | No |
| Posed the body? | No |
| Took totem – body part | No |
| Took totem – personal item | Yes |
| Robbed victim or location | No |
| Disposal of Body | |
| Left at scene, no attempt to hide | Yes; attempted to set fire to two of victims |
| Left at scene, hidden | No |
| Left at scene, buried | No |
| Moved, no attempt to hide | No |
| Moved, buried | No |
| Cut-up and disposed of | No |
| Moved, to home | No |
| Sentencing |  |
| Date killer arrested | May 22, 1980 |
| Date convicted | \*June 11, 1981 for murder of Valorie Street and assault of Karen Schilt, Susan Geiger, and Leslie O’Dell  \*October 12, 1982 for murder of Maryann Carr  \*July 9, 1984 for murder of Deedeh Goodarzi, “Jane Doe,” and Jean Reyner |
| Sentence | \*173-197 years for June 11th conviction  \*25 years to life, with a minimum term of 30 years to be served consecutively with June 11th conviction for October 12th  conviction  \*75 years to life for July 9th conviction |
| Killer executed? | No |
| Did killer plead NGRI? | No |
| Was the NGRI plea successful? | N/A |
| Name and state of prison | Trenton State Prison in New Jersey |
| Killer committed suicide? | Attempted twice |
| Killer killed in prison? |  |
| Date of death |  |

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| **References**  Leith, R. (1993). *The torso killer*. New York, NY: Pinnacle Books.  Richard Cottingham of Lodi (NJ) is sentenced to 173-179 years in prison. (1981, June 25). *TheNew York Times*, p. 26. Retrieved April 2nd, 2007, from Factiva database.  Richard Cottingham, convicted of murdering prostitute and kidnapping three. (1981, June 16). *TheNew York Times*, p. 2. Retrieved April 2nd, 2007, from Factiva database.  The City: The police blotter. (1984, July 6). *The New York Times*. Retrieved April 2nd,  2007, from Factiva database.  The Region: Convicted killer in suicide attempt. (1981, June 16). *The New York Times*. Retrieved April 2nd, 2007, from Factiva database. |