**AMERICA’S MOST NOTORIOUS SERIAL KILLER- TED BUNDY**

**ABSTRACT**

In the 1970s, the world was shocked when the story of a man was broadcasted throughout news channels. This man, knows as America’s most notorious serial killer brutally committed unspeakable crimes against many women- some which were confirmed and many who weren’t recognised and their stories were silenced. Hundreds of protests and marches were conducted until justice was delivered decades later. The victims of this man, most of them very young, happy women, were forgotten in history. Through this review of how Ted Bundy started and ended has been undertaken to acknowledge all those women who were forgotten between case files and news scripts.

Trigger warning- gore information, murder, rape, homicide, necrophilia

**CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL**

Theodore Robert Bundy, most popularly known as Ted Bundy or *America’s most notorious serial killer* was born to Eleanor Cowell on November 24 in 1946 in the city of Burlington, Vermont. His father’s identity [[1]](#footnote-1) was never verified. According to some reports the identity has been attributed to an Air Force veteran named Lloyd Marshall.

For the first three years of his life, Ted lived with his maternal grandparents in Philadelphia. Young Ted was told that his grandparents were his real parents and his mother was his older sister. He discovered the truth when he located his birth certificate in Vermont in late 1969. He also expressed his lifelong resentment towards his mother. As a kid, Bundy was described as a disturbed child and frequently exhibited irrational [[2]](#footnote-2) behaviour.

In 1950, Louise with Ted left Philadelphia and moved to Tacoma, Washington to live with cousins Alan and Jane Scott. In 1951, Louise met Johnny Culpepper Bundy and married him later that year. Johnny Bundy formally adopted Ted. Louise and Johnny conceived 4 children themselves. Despite attempts to involve Ted in family activities, he remained distant and felt alienated.

Later, in several interviews Ted confessed to having perused through the neighbourhood looking for detective magazines including pictures of dead bodies in the dumpster, deriving obscure satisfaction from them.

As a high school student, Bundy admitted being addicted to heavy amounts of alcohol and even was arrested twice for the suspicion of burglary and auto theft.

**UNIVERSITY YEARS**

After high school graduation in 1965, Ted went to the University of Puget Sound (UPS) for a short period of one year. He then transferred to the University of Washington to study Chinese. In 1967, he got romantically involved with a classmate with a pseudoname- Stephanie Brooks. In 1968, he dropped out of the university and worked in minimal jobs since he was independent[[3]](#footnote-3).

**BRIEF INVOLVEMENT IN POLITICS AND FURTHER EDUCATION**

During the period in which Ted dropped out of college, he worked as the driver and bodyguard of Arthur Fletcher during ongoing campaign for Lieutenant Governor of Washington. In 1968, he also attended the Republic National Convention in Miami as a delegate. It was during this time that Stephanie Brooks ended their relationship because of his lack of ambition and maturity. This time has been described as a pivotal time in Ted’s life which possibly pushed him into committing illicit [[4]](#footnote-4) crimes.

Devastated, Ted drove across states to Colorado and then further to Arkansas and Philadelphia where he attended one semester at Temple University. In 1969, he came back to Washington where he met the receptionist of Washington School of Medicine, a divorcee from Utah- Elizabeth Kloepfer and became romantically involved with her.

In mid-1970, the now goal-oriented Bundy showed improvement and started his education career in psychology, re-enrolling in University of Washington. He became an honours student and was liked by his professors. In 1972, he resumed politics when he joined Governor Daniel J. Evans’ re-election campaign. Later, he was even hired as the Assistant to the Chairman of Washington State Republican Party. On the basis of his scores, he was then accepted into law schools.

During a trip to California, he re-kindled his relationship with Stephanie Brooks who was impressed by how he was now successful career-wise. They even discussed marriage while he was still with Kloepfer. In January 1974, however, he broke off all contact. She concluded that this was his vengeance in relation to her dumping him in 1968. By this time, Bundy started skipping classes at law school and gradually stopped attending classes totally. Women started disappearing in the Pacific Northwest.

**BEGINNING OF MURDERS, DISAPPEARANCES AND RAPES**

1. Evidence also confirmed that he was the murderer of Ann Marie Burr of Tacoma when he was only 14 years old
2. Ted Bundy confessed to having killed two women in Philadelphia in 1969.
3. He also mentioned a murder in 1972 and another one in 1973 of a hitchhiker near Tumwater

**Washington**

1. On January 4, 1974, he entered the basement apartment of 18-year-old Karen Sparks at University of Washington, sexually assaulted her, bludgeoned her. She survived with permanent physical and mental disabilities.
2. In the following month, on February 1, Bundy broke into the basement apartment of another UW (University of Washington) student and she was never seen again.
3. March 12, Donna Gail Manson, a 19-year-old student disappeared while walking to a jazz concert.
4. April 17, Susan Elaine Rancourt disappeared on her way to her dorm room in the evening.
5. Similarly, on May 6, Roberta Kathleen Parks left her dormitory at Oregon State University and never returned.
6. June 1, Carol Ball, 22, disappeared while leaving a Tavern. She was last seen in the parking lot talking to a man with his arm in a sling.
7. June 11, UW student Georgann Hawkins disappeared and Bundy admitted to have murdered her and performed necrophilia as well.

During this time, a pattern in these crimes was realised, which was, a brown-haired man, either with his arm in a sling or with a leg cast asked these women to help him to his 1968 Tan Volkswagen Beetle. These murders took place at night and all of the victims wore slacks or jeans.

He was also working at this time at the Department of Emergency Services, ironically working for rape prevention for women, as well as, searching for missing women.

1. On July 14, two women disappeared from the crowded Lake Sammamish State Park in broad daylight in Issaquah- Janice Ott and Denise Marie Naslund who were never seen again, not alive.

After this, on the basis of description of several suspects, a sketch of the suspected killer was published. Elizabeth Kloepfer and a few others reported Bundy as a possible suspect.

In August 1974, he moved to Salt Lake City, Utah to attend the University of Utah Law School. A new streak of homicides begun.

**Salt Lake City, Utah**

1. On September 2, he raped and killed an unidentified hitchhiker in Idaho
2. On October 2, he kidnapped 16-year-old Nancy Wilcox. Her remains were never found.
3. October 18, Melissa Anne Smith disappeared and her body was found the next month.
4. October 31, Laura Ann Aime was found dead in the American Fork Canyon. Both of the victims were beaten, sodomised, raped, strangled.
5. On November 8, Bundy, as an impostor [[5]](#footnote-5)claimed himself to be “officer Roseland” to Carol DaRonch. She managed to escape unlike most of his other victims.

Elizabeth Kloepfer again approached the King County police after women started disappearing around Salt Lake City. After repeated visits, Bundy’s name was added to the list of suspects. Since no forensic evidence was found against him, he was let go.

**Colorado**

1. January 10 1975, a nurse named, Caryn Eileen Campbell disappeared and her naked body was discovered the next month.
2. March 15, ski instructor, Julie Cunningham vanished while walking home. Her body was dumped in a forest which he revisited several weeks later.
3. Denise Lynn Oliverson, on April 6 disappeared as well.
4. May 6, he inveigled [[6]](#footnote-6)a 12-year-old Lynnette Dawn Culver, sexually assaulted and killed her. Later, he disposed off her body in a river.
5. June 28, Susan Curtis vanished from the Brigham Young University, Provo

During this time, investigators with very limited technology and some inadvertent discoveries[[7]](#footnote-7) put together many lists and compiled suspect lists from all categories. In addition to this, many witnesses and family-friends of Bundy were interrogated[[8]](#footnote-8). Ted appeared on the main suspect list many times. In august 1975, he was arrested for fleeing at high speed after seeing a patrol car. After inspection[[9]](#footnote-9), the cop found a ski mask, handcuffs, crowbar, rope and other suspicious items like an imprescriptible [[10]](#footnote-10)spectacle that he used to impersonate officer Roseland. He was placed on a 24-hour surveillance.

1. CHI OMEGA MURDERS

On January 15th 1978 Bundy intruded [[11]](#footnote-11)the house of Chi Omega Sorority and bludgeoned Margret Bowman in her sleep. He then entered the bedroom of Lisa Levy in the same house, beat her unconscious and bit deeply into her left buttock and murdered her. He further injured [[12]](#footnote-12)Kathy Kleiner, who suffered a concussion and Karen Chandler who also suffered physical damages but both of them survived. On the same night he attacked Cheryl Thomas, she was left with permanent deafness.

1. On February 8th Bundy kidnapped 12-year-old Kimberly Diann Leach. Her dead body was found seven weeks later, she had been raped and stabbed to death.

Scared of jeopardy[[13]](#footnote-13), Bundy sold his car off. FBI seized it and got it examined by the forensic technicians who found hair strands similar to those of some of the murder and rape victims. He was then put on a line-up from which he was identified [[14]](#footnote-14) by runaway victim Carol DaRonch as “officer Roseland” which he had impersonated[[15]](#footnote-15). He was arrested but freed on bail.

After several trials and many inquiries[[16]](#footnote-16), he was convicted with attempted murder of DaRonch and of Caryn Campbell. He was indicted [[17]](#footnote-17)of first-degree murder in both the cases.

**ESCAPES**

On June 7th 1977, Bundy was transported to a county jail in Aspen, Colorado. He chose to serve as his own attorney and hence, was excused from wearing handcuffs. During recess, he visited the law library of the court house. While he was doing his research, shielded by a bookshelf, he opened a window and jumped from the second floor thereby, escaping. However, after being a fugitive for six days, he was caught by the police. Instead of staying out of problems for the following period of time he planned another escape.

For this, he sawed a one square foot hole in the ceiling and having lost about 16 kgs, he was able to fit through it and into the crawl space above while other inmates [[18]](#footnote-18)had gone for showering. He changed clothes and walked out of the prison door freely in front of the jailer.

Then having escaped again, he got a bus to Denver and boarded a morning flight to Chicago. Until the jail crew inferred [[19]](#footnote-19)that he had escaped, 17 hour later, he had fled the jurisdiction [[20]](#footnote-20)and was already in Chicago.

**FLORIDA**

From Chicago, Bundy travelled to Florida where he tried to get a job, but failed. Without any income[[21]](#footnote-21), he started shoplifting and stealing money, reviving his old habits. A few days later he was stopped by an officer for auto theft after Bundy was informed that he was under arrest, he tried to run away bit the officer was able to tackle him. The vehicle had sufficient evidence that connected him to a couple murders in Florida. It was then that the Florida police realised that they had caught one of the ten-most wanted criminals for FBI.

When Bundy stood trial for the CHI OMEGA Homicides in June 1979 in Miami, the trial was broadcasted by 250 reporters from 5 continents and was the first televised trial in the history of United States. After months of trials, physical incriminating [[22]](#footnote-22) evidence including impressions of bite wounds on Levy’s left buttock which matched the castings of Bundy’s teeth confirmed that he was the killer that shook the American history.

Rulings of death sentences were announced against him. After a couple years of penalty trials and requested reviews to considered whether he was a patient of insanity[[23]](#footnote-23), Bundy was finally sentenced for electrocution by the judge [[24]](#footnote-24)on January 24th 1989.

On the day of his death, hundreds gathered outside the location and celebrated this occasion with dancing and fireworks. They cheered as finally justice was delivered with the end of a monster who performed inflammatory [[25]](#footnote-25)crimes in the 1960-70s.

1. Identity- distinguishing character of an individual [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Irrational- not governed by reason, mental clarity or understanding [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Independent- not dependent on others for livelihood [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Illicit- unlawful [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Impostor- one that assumes a false identity or title for the purpose of deception [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Inveigle- to lure by false representations [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Inadvertent discovery- unexpected finding of incriminating evidence in plain view by the police [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Interrogate- to question formally and systematically [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Inspection- a careful and critical examination [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Imprescriptible- not subject to prescription [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Intrude- to enter by intrusion [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Injure- to harm the physical, emotional or mental well-being of [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Jeopardy- the danger of conviction that an accused person is subjected to when on trial for a criminal offence [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Identify- to establish the identity of [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Impersonate- to assume (another’s or a fictious identity) without authority and with fraudulent intent [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Inquiry- a request for information [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Indict- to charge with a crime by the finding or presentment of a grand jury in due form of law [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Inmate- a person confined on an institution [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Infer- to derive as conclusion as a conclusion from facts or premises [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Jurisdiction- the limits or territory within which authority may be exercised [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Income- the amount of such gain received in a period of time [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Incriminating- showing or suggesting involvement in a crime [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Insanity- unsoundness of mind or lack of the ability to comprehend whether something is lawful or not [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Judge- a public official vested with the authority to hear, determine, and preside over legal matters brought in court [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Inflammatory- tending to cause anger, animosity or indignation [↑](#footnote-ref-25)