

Coalinga High School  
**The Mysteries of Jeffrey Dahmer**



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Few people in the records of criminal history are as terrifyingly well known as Jeffrey Dahmer, whose name is for the horrific and dark. Dahmer was born on May 21, 1960, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His seemingly normal upbringing hid a dark and unhappy past. His disturbing behaviors, such as a disturbing interest in ripping apart animals, were obvious from a young age. However, Dahmer began to terrorize the public between 1978 and 1991, carrying out several horrific crimes that would eventually lead to him being referred to as a serial killer. His victims were mostly young men from several backgrounds who were tricked into his apartment by him with promises of money or alcohol and then met a horrifying end. Following his murders, a horrifying scene of necrophilia and dismemberment was discovered; Dahmer even attempted to create "zombies." Examining Dahmer's case is not only an investigation into the deepest levels of criminality; it is also an important attempt to understand the elements that lead to such strange behaviors, the challenges faced by criminal investigations, and the disturbing reality of extreme evil in humanity.

Born in Milwaukee on May 21, 1960, Jeffrey Dahmer started out cheerful. His parents are Lionel and Joyce Dahmer. However, at four years old, he had a painful surgery to fix a double hernia, which changed his behavior significantly and marked a turning point in his life. After his younger brother was born and the family moved around a lot, Dahmer began to separate from himself more and more. After Dahmer was old enough to start school, the family finally moved to Ohio. Dahmer's early passions included studying how to clean and maintain animal bones, which led to a fascination with them. In his early years, he gathered large insects and small animal skulls, which he kept in formaldehyde jars, according to Brian Masters' book "The Shrine of Jeffrey Dahmer."

Jeffrey Dahmer had few close friends and grew less social and tense in his early adolescence. Dahmer understood that his disturbing impulses towards necrophilia and killing started at the age of 14. It seems that the splitting of his parent's marriage and their angry divorce a few years later may have been a trigger for turning these ideas into actions. According to Masters, Dahmer began to doubt the reliability of his family life because of continuing conflict and frequent arguments between his parents, which led to an unstable environment. Dahmer began drinking alcohol at the age of 14, and by the time he committed his first murder at the age of 18, his alcohol addiction had gotten out of hand. After just one-quarter of a term at Ohio State, he left the school and, at his recently remarried father's demand, enlisted in the Army in late December 1978, eventually being stationed in Germany.

Early in 1981, he was discharged from the Army due to ongoing issues related to alcohol. Although German authorities performed additional investigations into the possible connection between Dahmer's military service and local killings, there is no proof that he broke any laws while serving. Following his release, Dahmer went back to Ohio. After he was arrested in 1981 for trespassing, his father sent him to live in Wisconsin with his grandmother, Catherine Dahmer. Dahmer's problems with alcohol, however, continued, and the following summer he was arrested for indecent exposure. He was arrested again in 1986 after two boys reported that he was acting inappropriately in their presence. He was sentenced to one year of probation.

Jeffrey Dahmer killed seventeen people between 1978 and 1991, mostly people who were outside of society and frequently either temporarily or involved in questionable behavior. This planned approach was to make their disappearances less noticeable and less likely to result in Dahmer's capture. He used sex or money promises to lure his victims to his house, where he strangled them to death. Due to the graphic nature of his crimes, he went by well-known names

like the "Milwaukee Monster" and the "Milwaukee Cannibal". Shortly after graduating from Revere High School in June 1978, Dahmer picked up Steven Hicks, an 18-year-old hitchhiker, in his first murder. When Hicks tried to flee after being brought to his parent's house, Dahmer drunkened him and killed him by hitting him in the head and strangling him with a barbell. After dismembering Hicks and burying his remains behind the house where his parents lived, Dahmer removed them to get rid of the remaining body parts.

Steven Tuomi was the victim of the second murder, which happened in September 1987. After getting drunk and checking into a hotel room, Dahmer woke up the next morning to discover Tuomi dead and had no memory of the night before. Even though Dahmer's only plan was to drug Tuomi, he expressed shock at the unintentional death. He carried Tuomi's body in a big suitcase to his grandmother's basement, where he committed more creepy actions before getting rid of the body. For weeks, Dahmer kept Tuomi's head in a blanket as a dark souvenir. Dahmer's obsession with murdering people grew after Tuomi was killed, and he went on to kill two more people at his grandmother's house before she forced him to leave in 1988. Masters claims that she evicted him without realizing his crimes, using his habit of bringing young men to her house, excessive drinking, and occasional unpleasant smells coming from the basement.

Sandra Smith, Dahmer's neighbor, reported that an Asian boy was running in the street naked on May 27, 1991, and she called the police. The boy was confused when the police arrived, so they took Dahmer, a white man living in a mainly poor Black neighborhood, word for it that the boy was his 19-year-old lover. Apparently to Dahmer, the 14-year-old boy was actually the younger brother of the Laotian teenager he had sexually assaulted three years before. Dahmer and the boy were taken home by the police. Not wanting to get involved in a homosexual local situation, they just looked around before leaving. Masters claims that Dahmer was told to "take

care" of the boy by the officer, who peeked his head around in the bedroom but didn't take a good look before the officer departed. After they had left the area, Dahmer killed the boy by injecting hydrochloric acid into his brain. Tony Hughes, Dahmer's twelfth victim, was in that apartment, and his body would have been discovered if the police had even performed a basic search.

Dahmer's capture on July 22, 1991, put an end to his horrific spree. His infamous killing spree was exposed with the human remains found in his refrigerator and the Polaroid photos of his victims. After getting hold of Tracy Edwards, a 32-year-old Black man who was found wandering with handcuffs on his wrist, two Milwaukee police officers came across Jeffrey Dahmer. After learning that Edwards had been drugged and handcuffed by a "weird dude," the police went to Dahmer's apartment. Dahmer politely offered to get the handcuff keys there. Tracy Edwards mentioned that Dahmer had threatened him in the bedroom with the knife. When an officer went in to confirm the report, they found Polaroid pictures all over the place that showed dismembered bodies. Masters claims that after Dahmer was taken down by the officers, he muttered, "For what I did, I should be dead." Further searches turned up a head in the fridge, three more in the freezer, and several horrors, such as jars containing genitalia, kept skulls, and a disturbing collection of Polaroid pictures of his victims. Later on, Dahmer stated his intention to construct a personal altar out of the skulls of his victims, complete with globe lights and incense sticks, to make it "a place where I could feel at home," according to Masters.

Given that most of Dahmer's victims were Black, there were increased racial tensions when his trial began in January 1992. Strict safety measures were put in place to keep him and the other visitors apart, including an eight-foot bulletproof glass barrier. Although there was some controversy at first over the jury's choice of a single Black member, it was eventually

contained and brief. Lionel Dahmer and his second wife were present for the entire trial. Dahmer admitted during his police interrogation, but he first entered a not-guilty plea to all charges. Later, he changed his plea to guilty because of insanity. The graphic details of his actions were presented in his defense, which contended that only a mentally ill person could carry out such horrible deeds. However, the jury agreed with the prosecution's position that Dahmer intentionally carried out his crimes while being fully aware of their evil nature. On February 15, 1992, after about ten hours of deliberation, they found those charged guilty but sane on every charge. Dahmer was given 15 consecutive life sentences in prison, with an extra term added in May. "I know society will never be able to forgive me. I know the families of the victims will never be able to forgive me for what I have done. I promise I will pray each day to ask for their forgiveness when the hurt goes away, if ever. I have seen their tears, and if I could give my life right now to bring their loved ones back, I would do it." Jeffrey Dahmer said this day of his trial.

Jeffrey Dahmer was killed in prison on November 28, 1994, by fellow prisoner Christopher Scarver. Dahmer was put to work with two other convicted killers, Scarver and Jesse Anderson, as part of regular work details. Guards were left to finish their work alone, and when they returned, they saw an awful scene. Scarver had brutally beaten both men with a metal bar from the prison weight room. Anderson died from his wounds in the days that followed, while Dahmer was pronounced dead about an hour later. Shortly after the killings, a prison guard stated that Scarver, who was thought to have schizophrenia, said, "God told me to do it." Scarver stated in a 2015 interview with the New York Post that Dahmer's disturbing practice of creating broken limbs from prison food to anger other prisoners was a driving force behind his decision to kill him in addition to his horrific crimes.

The difficult scene investigation and autopsy report were important in helping determine Jeffrey Dahmer's intentions, methods, and psychological condition in the months before his capture. In this particular case, Dahmer freely provided law enforcement with information regarding his involvement in the killings, making him a valuable asset for working with forensic pathologists, forensic psychiatrists, and law enforcement officers to bring together autopsy results, studies in anthropology, and scene analysis. The attorneys got full proof from the autopsy and scene investigation that provided information on Dahmer's mental state and motivations during the nine-month killing spree. According to a psychological profile created by a forensic psychiatrist, Dahmer's collection of fetishistic objects was an expression of his conflicted feelings and deep confusion toward his victims. Satisfied with his sexual immaturity and ongoing rejection, Dahmer channeled his dislike into violent sexual acts, which are consistent with the mental illness of a serial killer. Dahmer showed every characteristic of an organized and controlled serial killer, going through all the stages of such behavior. He chose his victims carefully from neighborhood bars, looked at them before, during, and following their deaths, and kept souvenirs in the shape of pictures and body parts as souvenirs. The number of killings growing, the number of bodies piling up, and the need for more storage units all pointed to Dahmer's growing psychological disorder in his methods of murder and disposal.

The case of Jeffrey Dahmer is a horrifying chapter in the history of crime. Dahmer's crimes shocked the world and forever changed the way people thought. He had a difficult childhood and went down into darkness. Dahmer's case serves as a chilling reminder of the possibility of evil that exists within the human mind, from his early disturbing behaviors to the horrific evolution of his way of life. Investigating the life and actions of Jeffrey Dahmer is not simply an act of disturbing fascination, it is an important factor for psychological research and

prevention. Early warning signs of unusual conduct, the escalation of violence, and the complicated relationships between environmental factors all shape our understanding of possible dangers in society. The case of Dahmer shows the importance of prevention and the need for a solid understanding of the psychological factors that influence criminal behavior. There is more to Jeffrey Dahmer's legacy than the graphic details of his crimes against humanity. It is now used as a case study in criminal psychology, adding to the continuing conversation about the complicated nature of the human mind and the causes of strange behaviors. The knowledge gained from his case continues to influence criminological theories, forensic methods, and the public's view of the value of mental health and action. In summary, the Jeffrey Dahmer case serves as an unsettling reminder of the possibility of evil in human nature. We learn important information from exploring the complicated nature of his life, his crimes, and the court cases that followed that can help prevent tragedies in the future. We must continue to be watchful in identifying, resolving, and preventing the conditions that can push people toward acts of violence and chaos as we consider Dahmer's lasting legacy.



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