

# Serial killer profile



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Analysis of Ted Bundy Serial Killer Monique Victoria Leston John Jay College  
Of Criminal Justice Abstract This paper will be an analysis of Theodore Robert Bundy a famous serial murderer who killed over a span of 4 years in the 70's. This paper will discuss some of the developmental and situational factors that might have contributed to his reign of terror. It will also discuss the early years of his life as well as touch base on some of his crimes. Introduction Theodore Robert Bundy was born on November 24, 1946 to Eleanor Louise Cowell, he was born at the Elizabeth Lund Home for unwed mothers.

He was conceived out of wedlock, his father was unknown but it was listed on his birth certificate it was a sailor by the name of Jack Worthington. Who his mother supposedly had a fling with but that could never be proven(Sullivan, 2009). Since Bundy was born out of wedlock and his mother did not want to be the talk of the town, she led everyone to believe that Ted was her brother and her parents were his parents and she lived this way for 4 years in Burlington Vermont with her parents until she decided to leave town and take Ted with her.

After about 4 years Ted and his mother moved out of Burlington Vermont and they settled in Tacoma Washington where his mother legally changed his last name to Nelson, for reasons which is still not clear. But within a year Louise Cowell met a young man by the name of Johnny Culpepper Bundy and they were married, and that's when Ted's last name was changed again for good to Bundy(Sullivan, 2009). Bundy grew up in Tacoma Washington and he graduated from Woodrow Wilson Highschool.

He was not very popular, kept pretty much to himself. He was quoted as saying he really did not know how to interact in a group. He would mimic people's actions and responses in order to appear in a social setting (Aynesworth, 2000). It is not known how early in life Ted Bundy began killing, but there was an early sign of abnormalities in his personality. As a young child his own family saw a difference in his behavior.

One minute he was fine and then the next he would morph into this whole other person. His aunt recounted an incident when she had awoken from a nap her nephew Ted was standing over her with many knives around her body and he stood there with a complacent look on his face (Sullivan, 2009). Ted would go on to graduate from high school and attend college at Washington State, where he would meet the woman that is rumored to be the cause of his killing rampage, her name is Stephanie Brooks.

They dated for about a year, but as their relationship progressed Ted's Personality and sexual inadequacies got in the way of their relationship blossoming (Aynesworth, 2000). It was not long after his break up with Stephanie Brooks that young women were starting to disappear from campuses around Washington State. When some of the bodies were found they were brutally beaten about the head, strangled, raped and orchered. Some were missing their heads completely. Bundys victims ranged from the age of 18 to 24, they all had dark hair and a part down the middle (Sullivan, 2009).

Ted's reign of terror lasted over a four year period from 1974 to 1978, he killed over a span of six states (Washington, Utah, Colorado, Florida, Idaho and Oregon). He had a total of 36 victims, there was speculation there might

have been more and Ted himself had hinted there was, but that was never proven (Sullivan, 2009). When Ted was caught people were labeling him as a psychopath. The definition of psychopath is a person who is impulsive, grandiose, callous and has not empathy what so ever, and that definition fit Ted perfectly.

He was very grandiose, when he decided to defend himself at trial instead of having a lawyer. He never showed empathy for his victims, even when he was denying his part in their deaths, and his callousness toward his victims, was proven when the bodies were found they were so brutally murdered (Harenski, 2010) Now this paper will touch base on some of the situational factors that may have played a part in him becoming the man he was, and what signs were evident in his early years that probably could have prevented his outcome.

Situational Some situational factors that might have contributed to Ted Bundy's disturbing behavior, was his obsession with pornography and his upbringing with his grandfather in his early years. His grandfather Sam Cowell was known to be a drunk and violent and also had a obsession with pornography (Sullivan, 2009). Ted at a very young age was not really given much affection. His mother was not the comforting type.

He was not able to develop that bond that a child has with a parent because a good part of his life he thought his mother was his sister, so that's the way he interacted with her (Sullivan, 2009). According to the attachment theory, when a child is born they are supposed to form attachments with their parents. They depend on their parents for love and affection they also depend on

them to teach them how to love and feel empathy for others, but if a child never receives that affection, they will have a difficult time interacting with others outside their comfort zone (pearce, 2010).

Bundy had a negative attachment representation which could have contributed to his personality deficiencies, he mostly likely had what is called a maladaptive perception of others (pearce, 2010). Research has shown that a child who has negative attachment representation they develop certain dynamics in their personality which may include lack of empathy, habitual mistrust, superficial charm and avoidance of engagement or intimacy. They can also be controlling, demanding very manipulative, charming and deceitful.

All the characteristics that have been associated with Ted Bundy, he said to be very charming, manipulative and he lacked empathy for his crimes (pearce, 2010). **Developmental Factors** Some developmental factors that probably contributed to Ted Bundy's personality disorder, he witnessed his grandfather be violent and abusive towards the women in the household, but he always considered his grandfather to be an upstanding individual, he does not remember his grandfather in that manner, but everyone else does.