

What drove ted  
bundy to kill?



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Ted Bundy is widely known as one of the most dangerous serial killers in history. Born on November 4, 1926, in Burlington, Vermont, Bundy eventually killed over one hundred women. He began his streak with multiple murders in the Seattle area around 1969 (Constantakis). Women began to go missing in his famous Volkswagon Bug in Utah, later that year when Bundy began law school. Bundy made his way to Colorado and Florida, all the while evading the authorities. In fact, Bundy escaped custody twice during his reign of terror throughout the United States. During his murderous tirade, Bundy married Carole Boone. They had a daughter, named Rose, together while Carole defended her husband's innocence. After Carole realized Bundy was responsible for the murder of countless innocent young women, Carole stopped bringing her daughter to visit her father. Many people find it difficult to understand how anybody could love a sadistic killer like Ted Bundy, however it is important to note that, to many people during his life, he seemed to be an upstanding guy. He volunteered for political campaigns, earned both a graduate and law degree, and worked for the Department of Justice in the State of Colorado. Ted Bundy was seemingly a regular man, expected by all of his peers in school to be successful beyond the classroom. He surprised everyone, however, when he was on national television for the rape and murder of over one hundred college-aged women. After conducting any amount of research it is clear that Ted Bundy was biologically incapable of feeling emotions like regular people, and his turbulent childhood helped push this emotionless man to rage and aggression, resulting in one of the most dangerous killers in the United States.

During his numerous trials, it is interesting to note, that Bundy served as his own defense. Though he had a law degree, it is generally never advisable to be one's own attorney. Bundy was unusually successful at this job, overturning two of his three death penalty sentences and escaping prison twice. It is impossible to say why Bundy chose to be his own attorney, but it does add intrigue to his story and depth to his psychological profile. Perhaps he genuinely believed that he was the best attorney that could represent him. Or maybe he planned to use his access to courtroom libraries and research equipment to break himself out of prison to return to his murderous ways. Most likely, it was some combination of arrogance and his determination that he would plan his way out of trouble, just as he planned every one of his attacks. Regardless, the fact that Bundy served as his own defense resulted in a loss of information about his personal thought process, as he was quite tactful in choosing what he said. For example, he admitted to his mother that he killed thirty-six women, however, experts believe that it was many more than that. The question of why Ted Bundy chose to be his own attorney is one that may never be answered, however, it helps to begin to peel away at the many layers of his complex and twisted personality.

Ted Bundy was assessed by multiple psychologists during his time in the prison system. He was neither identified as a sexual deviant or as a psychotic during his first arrest (Constantakis). This diagnosis is sure to have changed dramatically over time as Bundy's attacks became more violent and frequent. Bundy began with attacking women sporadically and with little or no plan. As his experience increased, so did his desire to plan his attacks in order to protect himself and gain maximum satisfaction (10). Satisfaction

was one large factor in Ted Bundy's attacks, but for him, it was less about the sexual satisfaction he received and more about control. He lacked much independence, and he reveled in the rush that killing and raping women gave him because it put him in complete control of their bodies and lives. One direct quote from Bundy to one of his victims states, " In any case, let me assure you, my dear lady, that there is absolutely no comparison between the pleasure I might take in eating ham and the pleasure I anticipate in raping and murdering you (Zavaliy)." Here, Bundy literally admits that he sees no comparison between the slaughter of an animal for food and the murder of a person for sexual pleasure – to him, the murder of the woman is much more beneficial. In another reflection of his murders, Bundy makes another comment that makes it clear that he is not mentally sane. He said, " I just liked to kill, I wanted to kill. (10)" Bundy's sociopathic tendencies make little sense to a person of normal mental health, however, there is one of his quotes that helps to explain his animalistic behavior. Bundy said, speaking about his time in middle and high school, " I did not know what made things tick. I did not know what made people want to be friends. I did not know what made people attractive to one another. I did not know what underlay social interactions (10)." One can assume that Ted Bundy was a man motivated by his desire to form relationships, but inability to understand how to do so. Relationships are important in anyone's life, but they were nearly absent from Bundy's.

After understanding Bundy's deep psychological issues, one must wonder where it comes from. Clearly, his issues are too severe to have come from anywhere but his own brain. However, there is a chance that his life

experiences impacted his development and ability to cope with his mental health issues. Bundy raped almost every single one of his victims. This shows not only a desire to be in control but also a desire to be in a relationship with another person. After analyzing his childhood, this search for connection makes sense. He was born as his mother's biggest shame, as she was unwed and devoutly Catholic. This meant Ted would be raised by his maternal grandparents, living his first years thinking his mother was really his sister. After his mother married his stepfather, they moved away from their friends and family in order to keep Ted's birth a secret (10). Mrs. Bundy was not close to her son, and neither was Ted's stepfather. The Bundy's never noticed their son's early antisocial behavior and they did not pay much attention to his delinquent habits, such as petty theft (Ted). They also failed to notice his early attraction to pornography, which Bundy claims is solely to blame for his desire to rape and murder (Catholic). Not only did Bundy struggle to find solace in his home and family relationships, but he also experienced major heartbreak in college. Ted Bundy, while at school in Utah, fell in love with a beautiful, smart, wealthy woman. She entertained the idea of dating for a few months, but then she decided they should not be together. Bundy took this to heart, however at the time he did not show serious signs that he was struggling with his first failed attempt at real love. For Ted Bundy, relationships and love were not real, they were simply things that one tried to do but could never achieve. Love and deep connectivity with another person were as real to him as Jesus is to a Buddhist. Nonetheless, Bundy craved connection, as all humans have since the dawn of time. The combination of being raised in a lie during his formative years, having a nearly non-existent relationship with his parents, and experiencing <https://assignbuster.com/what-drove-ted-bundy-to-kill/>

major heartbreak in college might have pushed Bundy to rape and murder women, because, to Ted Bundy, relationships held no meaning. Therefore, people had no worth to him.

It seems incomprehensible that emotional stress as Ted Bundy endured could be severe enough to drive a man to commit over one hundred murders in several states. Most people experience challenges with their family relationships in their youth, heartbreak in adolescence, and feel like they do not belong at least once in their life. Perhaps the level that Ted Bundy felt these common feelings was much greater than that for most other people, however, it seems that there is a more likely explanation. After all, many children in the United States grow up in homes with only one parent or none at all. And many of these children are able to become successful individuals of their own right. Ted Bundy, however, was the host of at least one nearly debilitating mental illness. After many psycho-analyses, psychologists have determined Ted Bundy to be a sociopath – a person who commits wrongdoings, and knows they're wrong, but does not care. In fact, Ted Bundy understands that killing people is unacceptable behavior, so much so he was able to represent himself in front of multiple courts appropriately enough to overturn two death penalties. Bundy is clearly aware of what he does, as he explains to one of his victims why he is about to kill her. His reasoning is logical, it follows a clear set of steps in order to achieve the final conclusion that her life is not worth more than Bundy's personal enjoyment. Bundy first observes that moral judgments are made on value judgments, which are completely subjective. He then claims that his values are not the same as those of "the law" because, "the greatest block and limitation to it

[freedom], consists in the insupportable ‘ value judgment’ that I was bound to respect the rights of others (Zavaliy).” Here, he claims that respecting other people is, in fact, a limitation on himself. Bundy’s logical thought process continues, as he explains that if he were to respect the rights of a pig, he would never get to eat ham. Just as if he were to respect the rights of his victims, he would not get the satisfaction he derived from their rape and murder. As twisted as this thought process is, it is clear and precise, it simply lacks morality. Because of this, Professor Andrei G. Zavaliy claims that Bundy must have been a completely amoral person (Zavaliy). Assuming Ted Bundy had no morals, then it makes sense that he would struggle to function in relationships, or even form them, to begin with. However, all humans harbor a desire to form communities, which comes from a primal need to stick together in order to survive. This turns Ted Bundy into a walking contradiction. He is unable to understand why people would like being together because he has never experienced morality. He does not fit into society for this same reason. However, he craves community and he needs to be in relationship with other people so much that he justifies their deaths. Ted Bundy was certainly “ born with” some serious mental struggles, however, these might have gone unnoticed for his early life because they had not been ignited yet. Perhaps his collegiate heartbreak was enough to drive Bundy over the edge and into a mental space where other people were meaningless and all that mattered was his own ability to survive and thrive. After analyzing the personality of Ted Bundy, the consistencies in his murders become clearer and more meaningful. For example, Bundy targeted women with dark long hair, worn down with a middle part. This seems oddly

specific, however, it makes sense once one realizes that was the typical hairstyle of his first big love and heartbreak in college. Also, many of the women he attacked were wearing pants at the time and were of college age. Bundy only attacked women, and he raped all of his victims either immediately before or immediately after killing them. It seems that he was trying to replicate the relationship that did not work out for him in college by forcing it on hundreds of women. Bundy murdered every woman the same way, so much so that it seemed to be ritualistic for him. He would use the acting and costume skills he acquired when he was interested in theater in high school to convince women that he was injured and needed help (Ted). In one case, he pretended to be a police officer, convincing Carol DaRonch, Bundy's only surviving victim, to enter his car after telling her that someone had tried to break into her car (Carlson). He would generally handcuff the women after they entered his car and strike them over the head to render them unable to resist. Then he would beat or strangle them to death, take them to his body dumps or his apartment, and proceeded to rape them. He kept dead bodies for companionship and sexual gratification for as long as they would stay intact, at which point he would remove the heads of the victims and discard their bodies. Bundy, like other serial killers before him, kept the heads of his victims as trophies of his work. In his own words, "When you work hard to do something right, you don't want to forget it," explaining why he sometimes revisited the bodies of his victims and took special care of their clothes and jewelry (10). Some of his victims he even groomed before raping them. This ritualistic care of the women he ruthlessly raped and murdered is better understood after realizing his deep desire to



have meaningful connections with people and the void that his lack of interpersonal relationships left in his character.

It is always possible that Ted Bundy's family life was solely responsible for his unusual character and violent rape/murders. He was certainly a neglected child, raised for many years under the lie that his mother was his sister. As the child and grandchild of conservative Catholics, the earliest moments of his life were filled with regret and remorse aimed towards his life. This was because his family's political views clashed with his mother's premarital pregnancy. Spending his formative years in such a negative, unloving environment, it is no wonder that Ted Bundy felt the need to force women to be affectionate with him as an adult. When he was still just a child, his mother married Johnny Bundy. Finally, Ted was able to be raised by his real mother and new father. The cold feelings from Ted's mother towards him continued for the rest of his life, even when she regained custody of him as her son. These feelings were amplified by Johnny, Ted's step-father, making the family dynamic even more unpleasant. Many children that are raised by step-parents struggle with family relationships later in life, especially kids that don't enjoy a peaceful, positive environment at home. Because of the struggles, Ted Bundy experienced with his parental relationships during his developmental years, it is plausible that his many murders were the outcome of a man determined to get love and gain a connection to another person by any means necessary.

In the 1970s, Ted Bundy was a common name. Young women around the country stayed vigilant for old Volkswagon Beetles with attractive, charismatic, intelligent looking men inside. Ted Bundy frightened the nation

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as he escaped law enforcement officers twice. He received a total of three death sentences, however, he was successful in removing two of them. As his own attorney, Ted Bundy fought fervently to preserve his life, even going as far as to marry and have a child with a woman to create sympathy for his cause. All of his efforts, however, were in vain, as Bundy was put to death on the electric chair in 1989. His last request was nearly as sadistic as all of his murders, as he asked that his ashes be spread in the woods of Washington state, specifically in places where he had raped and murdered countless women. Shortly before his death, Bundy admitted to 36 murders of women in the United States, including two women from Colorado, two college students from Florida, and one 12 year old girl from Florida. During his estimated decade long string of murders, over one hundred women went missing in or near the areas in which Bundy was living. Many were tied to him but law enforcement was unable to find explicit proof. After evading death by the law for over a decade, psychologists, detectives, and citizens alike have questioned what drove the handsome, intelligent, charismatic Ted Bundy to commit such heinous crimes. It has become clear that the combination of his serious mental health issues and traumatically failed relationship in college lead Bundy down a path of the systematic destruction of women and selfish disregard for the rights of his victims.

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