

# *Sexual Offences*

## *class 2*

*BTK killer*



Aleksandra Polak-Kruszyk

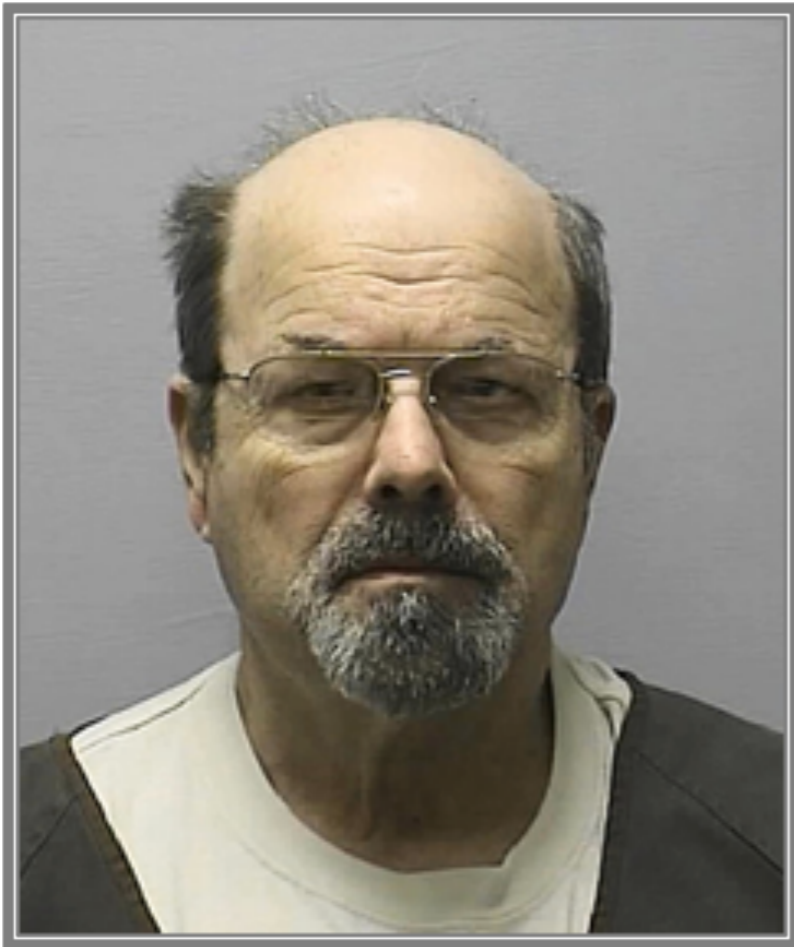


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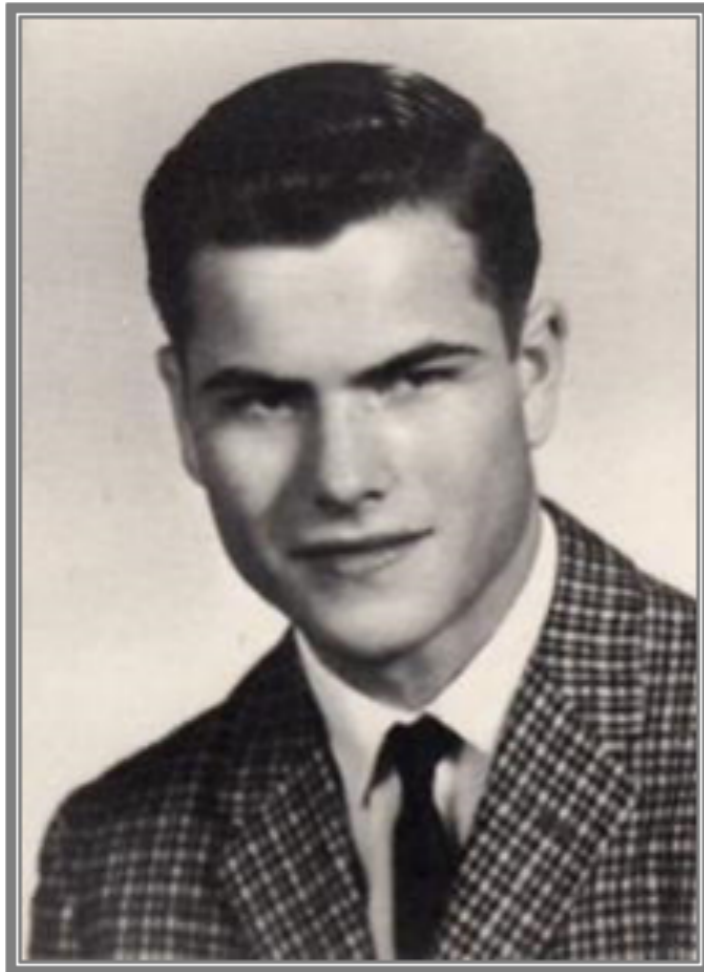
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# *Basic facts*



- ▶ **Date of birth:** March 9, 1945
- ▶ Rader was born on March 9, 1945, as the eldest of four sons to William Elvin Rader, a Kansas Gas & Electricity employee, and Dorothea Mae Cook, a bookkeeper.
- ▶ **Place of birth:** Columbus, Kansas or Pittsburg, Kansas
- ▶ Though he was born in Pittsburgh, Kansas, he was raised in Wichita, Kansas,
- ▶ **Status:** alive
- ▶ **Birth name:** Dennis Lynn Rader
- ▶ **Serial killer name/nickname:** BTK, BTK killer, BTK strangler
- ▶ **Offender type:** serial killer

# *Personal background*



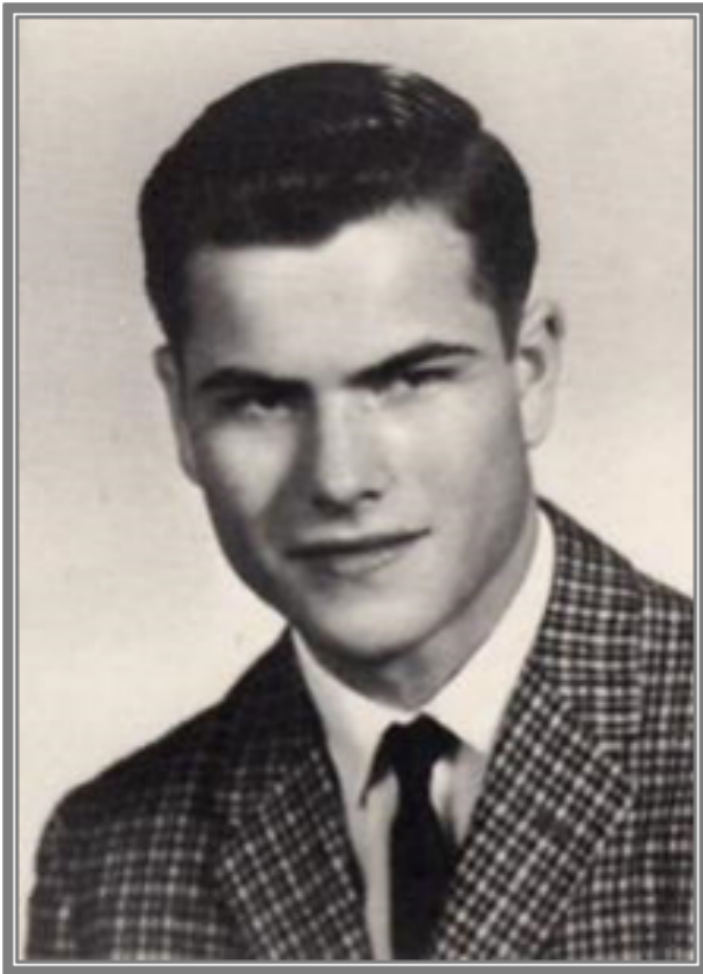
Rader at age 17

- ▶ Grew up and lived in Wichita, Kansas
- ▶ He attended Riverview School and graduated from the Wichita Heights High School.
- ▶ After attending the Kansas Wesleyan University between 1965 and 1966, he was in the U.S. Air Force until 1970, stationed in Texas, Alabama, Okinawa, South Korea, Greece, and Turkey.
- ▶ During the 1970s, he got married, and he and his wife, Paula, had two children, a boy and a girl.

## **Had several life and academic achievements:**

- ▶ When Rader returned to the U.S., he moved to Park City, a Wichita suburb, and attended the Butler County Community College of El Dorado, earning an associate degree in Electronics in 1973
- ▶ In 1979 he graduated from Wichita State University, where he studied criminal justice.
- ▶ He worked various regular jobs

# *Fantasies background*



Rader at age 17

- ▶ Experienced and acted out sadistic sexual fantasies, zoosadism, various sexual fetishes from a young age

He later claimed that as a youth he had killed animals and developed violent sexual fantasies that involved bondage

- ▶ **His acts included:** hanging cats and dogs,
- ▶ **As a young adult:** stealing women's underwear for his own personal use
- ▶ Hid his abnormal sexual proclivities and was regarded as a normal human being within his community

# *General description and killings*

- ▶ A family man, dedicated worker, church leader and a respectable person on the outside
- ▶ A well-masked killer on the inside
- ▶ **Described as:** "an average-sized guy, bushy mustache, 'psychotic' eyes"

**Murdered 10 people in the Wichita, Kansas area from 1974 to 1991**



# *Modus operandi*

He called himself **BTK** because he **bound**, **tortured**, and **killed** his victims.

- ▶ Method of **B**inding - bondage (fetish)
- ▶ Method of **T**orture - strangulation (sexual sadism)
- ▶ Method of **K**illing - ligature strangulation and stabbing with a knife
- ▶ Manifested an insatiable lust for attention through continuous letters and packages sent to the police, newspapers and television stations



# *Victim selection and motivation*

- ▶ His targets were women of no specific age
- ▶ He usually targeted women, though he did kill or attempt to kill men and children on a few occasions.
- ▶ Motivated by sadistic sexual fantasies
- ▶ Selected women that seemed 'interesting' and accessible to kill

He researches his targets at the local library, cross referencing anything about them, and visiting their workplaces.

Most of his victims are women strangled in their own homes. The exception is the first crime attributed to him.



Joseph Otero Julie Otero Josephine Otero Joseph Otero Jr. Kathryn Bright



Shirley Vian Nancy Fox Mariane Hedge Vicki Wegerle Dolores Davis

# *Victims*

- ▶ **How many victims ?** He had 10 victims
- ▶ **How long he was committing crimes?** 31 years
- ▶ **Where?** Wichita, Kansas
- ▶ **When?** 1974- 2005
- ▶ Rader's killings occurred between 1974 and 1991, during which time he killed a total of 10 people (the first four of whom were killed in one night).
- ▶ Occasionally, he took breaks from killing. Some such periods were around the time that his children were born and he didn't have enough free time to stalk potential victims.

## **FIRST KILL:**

- ▶ His first murder was in 1974 when he strangled family of 4 in their own home (Otero family)



# *Known Victims*

## ▶ 1974:

- **January 15:** The Otero family
  - Joseph Otero, 38 (father; suffocated with a plastic bag over his head and strangled with a clothesline rope)
  - Julie Otero, 33 (mother; strangled with rope twice)
  - Joseph Otero II, 9 (son; suffocated with a plastic bag)
  - Josephine Otero, 11 (daughter; was hanged with rope and her body masturbated on)
- **April 4:** Kathryn Bright and her brother Kevin:
  - Kathryn Doreen Bright, 21 (intended to strangle, but was stabbed three times in the back and lower abdomen with a knife as she struggled too much)

# *Known Victims*

## ► 1977:

- Kevin Bright, 19 (incidental; shot twice in the head with a .22; survived)
- **March 17:** The Relford family
  - Shirley Vian Relford, 24 (mother; strangled with rope and suffocated with a plastic bag over her head)
  - Bud Relford, 8 (eldest son; forced into a bathroom, tied up, and intended to kill along with the two below)
  - Steven Relford, 5 (youngest son)
  - Stephanie Relford (daughter)
- **December 8:** Nancy Fox, 25 (was tied up and strangled repeatedly with a belt and her body masturbated)

# *Known Victims*

- **April 28, 1979:** Anna Williams, 53 (intended; Rader gave up as she came home much later than he expected)
- **April 27, 1985:** Marine Hedge (was manually strangled)
- **September 16, 1986:** Vicki Lynn Wegerle, 28 (was tied up, strangled to the point of fatal injury with a nylon stocking and left for dead)
- **January 19, 1991:** Dolores E. Davis, 62 (strangled with pantyhose)

# ***Did he had a method or a signature?***

- ▶ BTK stands for „Bind Torture Kill” which was how he handled his victims
- ▶ He used to bind them with: rope or tape, torture them, than strangle to death
- ▶ He created a signature which resembles the initials of his method of killing (BTK)



# *Did he had a method or a signature?*

- ▶ Another thing about him was he portraited the crime scene and took pictures of the scene.
- ▶ He also used to photograph himself wearing his victims clothes
- ▶ In various selfies, Rader hung himself from a tree with elaborate bondage
- ▶ By recreating his crime scenes, Rader was able to continue his fantasies
- ▶ Rader admitted to setting up his tripod and camera in hotel rooms and taking photographs of himself, and he would often experiment with "auto-erotic activity," which involved Rader limiting his own oxygen supply to experience "a heightened feeling of euphoria' during sexual



# *Which category of serial killer does he represent?*

## **Organized? Sociopath?**

- ▶ **Dennis Rader** was **organized**, non-social and a sociopath. It was also concluded by the psychologist that BTK was psychopath - This was concluded based on
- ▶ He was extremely **organized** besides the fact that he would apprehend and kill the person at the same location
- ▶ He was very methodical about studying and learning about his victims
- ▶ He wouldn't ever leave the evidence that could be directly traced back to him

## **What traits did they exhibit him as a „serial killer“?**

- ▶ He tortured animals as a child
- ▶ He used to steal women's underwear wear them after
- ▶ He carefully studied his future victims and not leave any evidence that could lead back to him

# *Did the media follow him?*

## **Yes!**

- ▶ He loved the attention he got from the local news and police
- ▶ He was known for sending pictures, letters and puzzles to the news stations and local police
- ▶ This is mainly what led to his demise and apprehension in 2005
- ▶ **Throughout his serial killing career, Rader sent several taunting letters to the police and media in which he graphically described his murders.**
- ▶ He liked to share details of his crimes
- ▶ He sent 19 letters overall

# *How he was apprehended?*

- ▶ Rader asked Police whether he could communicate with them *via* floppy disk without being traced to a specific computer
- ▶ Police responded through a newspaper article saying saying „**It will be OK**”
- ▶ A few weeks later a local news station received the floppy disk
- ▶ The disk was quickly traced back to Rader through a computer at his church
- ▶ DNA testing later confirmed that BTK was Rader
- ▶ Within days Rader was in custody



Two of the envelopes from the letters Rader sent to TV stations and newspapers.

Package #11, sent to the Fox News affiliate in Wichita, containing the disk that linked Rader to the BTK crimes and proof of one of them.





# *He trusted Police*

- ▶ He displayed such an infatuation with himself that he seemed to believe the police were his friends.
- ▶ Rader got so comfortable during the interview that at one point he told a police officer to “put ‘BTK’ on the lid” of his drinking cup before putting it in the refrigerator
- ▶ "He felt particularly betrayed by the police"
- ▶ Digital forensics has come a long way since BTK's case. A criminal's fingerprints and DNA aren't only on physical objects anymore; they're on data and metadata, too. Every email, every photo, and every device connected to a network is now a possible smoking gun.

# *Trial*

- ▶ His confession was 30 hours long
  - During his confession he said he believes the Otero family will serve him in the afterlife as slaves.
  - He believes the same will happen to Shirley Relford.
  - He also adds that he would have killed her daughter and the other children if the phone hadn't rung and hastened his exit.
- ▶ Criminal Charges- 10 counts of first-degree murder
- ▶ The sentence – 10 life sentences

## **Status- incarcerated**

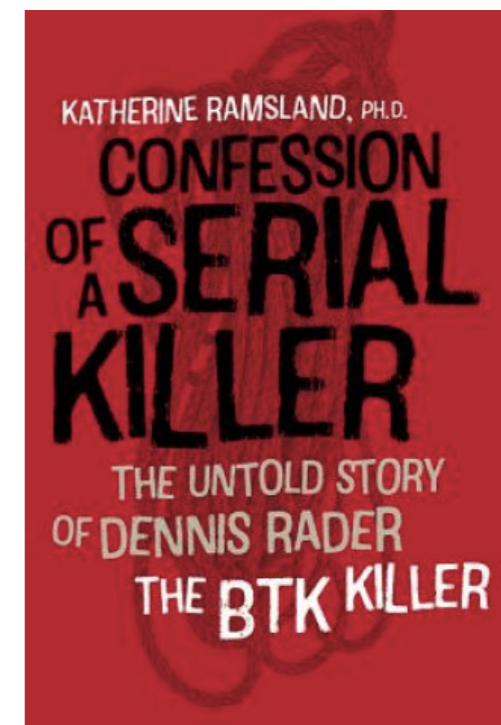
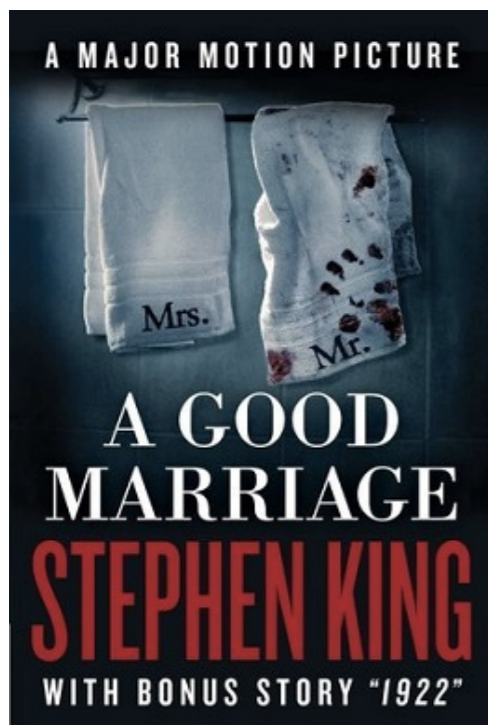
- ▶ He is currently serving this time in the El Dorado Correctional Facility and is not eligible for release before February 26, 2180.
- ▶ He is held in solitary confinement 23 hours a day, only being released one hour a day for yard exercise and is allowed three showers a week. Through good behavior, he has been allowed a few privileges such as access to television, radio, and magazines.
- ▶ He is currently 76 years of age.

# *Interesting facts*

**His persona has appeared in TV shows, movies and books.**

## **Some examples:**

- ▶ Widely recognized Netflix series - "Mindhunter" - introduces a character based on BTK and recreates some elements of his life
- ▶ He also became an inspiration for Stephen King's novella - "A Good Marriage"
- ▶ An episode of "Catching Killers" is dedicated to introducing his murders
- ▶ Katherine Ramsland wrote a book "Confession of a Serial Killer: The Untold Story of Dennis Rader, the BTK Killer"



## More info:

- ▶ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dennis\\_Rader](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dennis_Rader)
- ▶ <https://www.biography.com/crime/dennis-rader>
- ▶ [https://criminalminds.fandom.com/wiki/Dennis\\_Rader](https://criminalminds.fandom.com/wiki/Dennis_Rader)