



Mandatory Credit: Photo by Anonymous/AP/REX/Shutterstock (6611994a)Theodore

Bundy, center, is flanked by two unidentified sheriff's deputies during a short recess of his pretrial motions hearing, Tallahassee, Fla. Bundy is accused of murdering two college coeds and will go to trial on June 11 Ted Bundy Trial Miami 1979, Tallahassee, USA

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NEWS AND POLITICS

Ted Bundy: Everything to Know About America's Infamous Serial Killer

He targeted only thin, brunette white women.

By **Taylor Crumpton**

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It was [announced](#) last week that Zac Efron has signed on to play Ted Bundy in a new film, *Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile*. Described by FBI director William S. Sessions in 1992 as ["society's most infamous and](#)



[notorious serial killer](#)," Bundy became a household name after he confessed to the assault, rape, and murder of at least 30 women, [all brunettes](#) whose ages ranged from 12 to 23 years old, in incidents that occurred in the 1970s (though many believe [he committed other crimes](#)). His trial was the [first-ever](#) to be televised nationally.

Theodore Robert Bundy's first documented assault was in January 1974, of a female student named [Karen Sparks](#) at the University of Washington, where Bundy had graduated in 1972. Sparks survived but sustained permanent disabilities from the attack. His first known murder victim was [Lynda Ann Healy](#), a female student at UW who was carried away from the campus and found beaten to death. The murder occurred less than a month after the Sparks attack.



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In the following months, two women were abducted from Lake Sammamish State Park in Washington. Witnesses worked with the King County Police Department to compose a sketch of the abductor, and individuals within the community identified the suspect as Bundy. Yet the police did not believe Bundy was capable of the crime, due to his lack of a criminal record and status as a law student.

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After a year of night classes at the law school at the University of Puget Sound in Washington, Bundy restarted his law school career at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, in the fall of 1974. He then began abducting and murdering women in a new state; Bundy later admitted to committing [eight murders](#) in Utah. [Carol DaRonch](#), a rare survivor of his attacks, escaped from Bundy's car in a mall parking lot after [he had posed as a police officer](#) and told her someone had attempted to break into her car and she needed to go to the station with him to fill out a police report. Later, she testified against him in 1979 during his murder trial.

Bundy was charming, articulate, and [intelligent](#) — he often lured women to his [Volkswagen](#) by feigning [car troubles](#), and wore a [fake cast](#) to gain sympathy. From time

to time, like in DaRonch's case, he impersonated authority figures such as police officers and firefighters. Experts have said his traits are congruent with psychopathic traits, such as superficial charm and "profound absence of guilt and empathy."

Prior to his abductions, Bundy would conduct surveillance and enter homes to gather information on the daily routines of his perspective victims. Once the women were in his car — usually after they'd been struck over the head — he'd force them into the passenger side of the car where the seat had been removed.

His preferred method of murder was mutilation and strangulation. He often raped his victims, sometimes well after they were dead, and has said he severed the heads of about 12 of his victims and personally buried 10 of the

bodies. The remains of many of his victims were never found.

Moving east to [Colorado in 1975](#), Bundy continued abducting women to rape and murder. He returned to Utah, near Salt Lake City, where he was stopped by an [officer](#) on August 16, 1975, after Bundy sped away when the patrol car shined its lights on Bundy's Volkswagen. The officer noticed the modified passenger seat, then he and other officers who had arrived at the scene searched Bundy's car and found a ski mask, pantyhose, crowbar, handcuffs, an ice pick, and rope. The car model and items found inside reminded some detectives of the DaRonch incident from the mall parking lot the year prior. So while Bundy was released from jail after being booked on charges of evading, law enforcement officials were onto him and

kept him under surveillance.

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The police department and FBI seized Bundy's car and found hair samples from missing women in the surrounding areas. Law enforcement called on DaRonch to identify him out of a lineup. Bundy was charged with aggravated kidnapping and attempted criminal assault. His bail was set at \$15,000, which was paid by his parents, and he was kept under close surveillance.

He stood trial for the DaRonch kidnapping in February 1976 and was sentenced to 1 to 15 years in Utah State Prison. While behind bars, he was charged with the murder of Caryn Campbell, a 23-year-old who

had gone missing from Snowmass, a ski resort in Colorado. He was extradited to Colorado for the trial. Bundy elected to represent himself this time in order to gain access to the courthouse library for legal resources. He escaped through a window in the courthouse library and was on the run for six days before being apprehended by local law enforcement.

He was caught by authorities and put back in county jail. While in county, he devised a second escape plan and began to saw through the bars in his cell's ceiling to create a crawl space. He had lost 35 pounds and was able to escape through the hole. Then he stole a car, caught a bus to Denver, and boarded a plane to Chicago. From Chicago, he took a train to Michigan, stole a car and drove to Atlanta, and then boarded a bus to Florida.

On January 15, 1978, Bundy

broke into the [Florida State University](#) Chi Omega sorority house and severely attacked four women, resulting in the deaths of two. One month later, he kidnapped and murdered Kimberly Leach, who was 12 years old. A week later, he was arrested by Pensacola police over a stolen car, and while in custody, the local police connected him to the sorority house murders through the bite marks he left on one of his victims which left evidence for the investigators to conduct a [bite mark analysis](#) that was a match for Bundy.

Bundy stood trial for the murders in June 1979, an event that was covered by [over 250 reporters](#). He refused a plea deal and was [found guilty](#) of the two Chi Omega murders, and was again found guilty for the murder of Kimberly Leach a year later. He was sentenced to death by

electrocution for all three murder convictions. During his final interview, he [said](#) "there are lots of other kids playing in streets around this country today who are going to be dead tomorrow, and the next day, and the next day and month, because other young people are reading the kinds of things and seeing the kinds of things that are available in the media today." He [admitted to more killings](#) two days before his death. On January 24, 1989, at the age of 42, Ted Bundy [died](#) by electric chair in Florida.

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