

Mass Murder the American Way



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Dennis Rader

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by Denise Noe



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Table of Contents

Mass Murder the American Way



by J. Patrick O'Connor **Page 3**

The Great Ponzi



by Mark Pulham **Page 5**

The Unsolved Murders of Tupac Shakur and Biggie Smalls



by Cathy Scott **Page 7**

BTK: The Serial Killer Next Door



by Denise Noe **Page 9**

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The count pertaining to the explosives devices stemmed from the booby-trapping of his apartment.

by J. Patrick O'Connor

The midnight premiere of the Batman sequel, *The Dark Knight Rises*, had been playing for about 20 minutes to a sold-out house at the Century 16 movie complex in Aurora, Colo., on July 20, 2012. At 12:38 a.m. a commado figure casually entered through an emergency exit door to the audience's right and took up his position at the front of the theater. Dressed head-to-toe in combat gear that included a helmet,

a throat protector, a bullet-proof vest and leggings, a groin protector, a gas mask, black gloves, and a long black coat, the man said, “I am the Joker.” Some in the audience thought the figure in black was part of the premier's promotion – that it was all just some sort of stunt.

The Dark Knight Rises was the final film in director Christopher Nolan's Batman trilogy that launched with

Batman Begins in 2005 and was followed by *The Dark Knight* in 2008. As USA Today reported on July 23, “Some fans already considered the trilogy cursed because of Heath Ledger's death by accidental overdose. Ledger, who played *The Joker* in *The Dark Knight*, died months before its premiere.”

The erstwhile *Joker* then hurled a smoke canister into the middle of

the 11th row of the theater, striking a woman there. He then fired a single blast from a .12-gauge, pump-action Remington shotgun into the ceiling. As the smoke canister fell to the ground, it began spinning and then exploded, spewing gas into the air and causing panic to grip the stunned audience. Another smoke canister was soon released. As people stood in the middle rows to get away from the noxious gases, the man began rapidly spraying the front rows of the theater with bullets fired from an AR-15 assault rifle equipped with a 100-round barrel magazine capable of firing 50 rounds a minute. This caused most of the audience to huddle on the floor, some using their bodies as human shields to protect loved ones. The gunman then walked up the stairs and began firing into the audience in the middle portion of the theater. As the shooter climbed higher into the theater, some of the people in the front rows attempted to exit the theater up the opposite corridor. The gunman responded by unleashing a hail of bullets that prevented them from getting to the exit and that forced them to retreat back down toward the front of the theater. When the semi-automatic rifle jammed after numerous rounds, the gunman began firing a .40 caliber Glock handgun. Finally, silence engulfed the theater.

A few minutes after the shooting began, the gunman walked out the back exit door. He put his weapons back in his white Hyundai and stood by the car and waited for the police to arrest him, still wearing his combat clothes. Standing there at 12:45 a.m. was 24-year-old James Eagan Holmes, a recent Ph.D. student at the University of Colorado in Denver, and an honors graduate

in neuroscience from the University of California at Riverside. Holmes soon told police he may have booby-trapped his car and his nearby apartment with various explosives. The car was not booby trapped, but the apartment was.

Inside the theater, 10 people were dead, including a 6-year-old girl. Two other victims would soon die at the hospital. Fifty-eight others sustained gunshot wounds of various severities. Several days after the shootings, 22 of those remained in various area hospitals – 10 of them in critical condition. By July 30, 10 victims still remained in hospitals, four of them in critical condition.

The mass murder at the theater was the worst in the country since a lone gunman at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Va., murdered 32 people in 2007, using two semi-automatic pistols.

Booby-Trapped

When police officers arrived at Holmes's apartment building at 2 a.m. they peered in a window to Holmes's third-story apartment to see a wired maze of booby-trapped explosive devices. Police then ordered the entire apartment building vacated as well as four other nearby apartment buildings. Inside the apartment, according to a July 23 article in USA Today, were 30 fireworks canisters known as "artillery shells" filled with smokeless powder and connected to trip wires. Also in the apartment were liter-size soft drink bottles filled with incendiary liquids and rounds of ammunition. Authorities said there was enough explosive power in the apartment to take down the entire, three-story red brick apartment building.

The booby-trapping of Holmes's apartment was extremely devious. Shortly after midnight the night of the shootings, electronic music began blaring in an endless loop from a sound system in his apartment. Kaitlyn Fonzi, a 20-year-old woman who lived directly below Holmes's apartment, was preparing to go to bed. She went upstairs to investigate the racket, knocking loudly on Holmes's door, causing it to rattle as though it were unlocked. Fonzi, a biology student, told police she considered entering the apartment but decided not to because she heard no other sounds on the other side of the door except the booming beat of the music. She said the oddness of that put her off.

The door had been left unlocked. Had she opened it she would have most likely triggered a massive explosion that would have added significantly to the mass murder tally. Instead she went back down to her apartment and called the non-emergency line at the police department to report the irritating noise. The music shut itself off about 1 a.m. An hour later, Fonzi and the rest of the residents of the apartment building were awakened by SWAT team members toting assault rifles. All residents were immediately evacuated.

Later that day, police deployed a robot to disarm the triggering devices tied to explosives in Holmes's 800-square-foot, top-floor apartment located not far from the University of Colorado campus in Aurora. Police then spent two days disarming various incendiary devices, including one that was

Continued on Page 11

The Great Ponzi

Charles Ponzi, a poor immigrant from Lugo, Italy, pulled off an amazing investment scam in 1920 that defrauded U.S. investors of \$20 million (\$240 million in today's money). In the process, he perfected the infamous "Ponzi Scheme" that was taken to new heights by the likes of Bernie Madoff, Tom Petters and Allen Stanford.

by Mark Pulham

Recently, on its website, Time Magazine listed its Top Ten Swindlers. They ranged from William Miller in 1899, to the recently convicted Allen Stanford in 2012. All 10 had something in common, apart from being crooks. They decided to steal their money by using a Ponzi scheme.

The Ponzi scheme has now become so common that, seemingly, hardly a month goes by without hearing an incident of another one. The financial pages are always reporting them, and those who run them become criminal superstars.

And we are not talking about amounts that run into the hundreds or thousands, or even hundreds of thousands. These are schemes that bring in millions, and sometimes, in the case of three on the list, billions. Tom Petters took in \$3.65 billion; Allen Stanford \$7 billion; and the man whose name is now synonymous with fiscal immorality, Bernie Madoff, between \$50-\$65 billion.

Surprisingly, there are still some people who don't know what a Ponzi scheme is, or how it works.

A Ponzi scheme is amazingly simple to run. Except for some minor details, it is similar to a pyramid scheme.



Charles Ponzi

It begins when a con man finds someone to invest with him. He will likely talk about financial matters, throwing around buzzwords such as hedge funds and high yield returns, and will present himself as someone very knowledgeable in financial matters and investment strategy. He may even hint that he has insiders giving him tips.

One thing he will do is guarantee that you, the investor, will make a larger than average profit on this investment within a short space of time.

The investor does not have to do anything other than sit back and wait for the money to start rolling in.

It sounds like a great deal. Almost

too good to be true, which should be everyone's first warning.

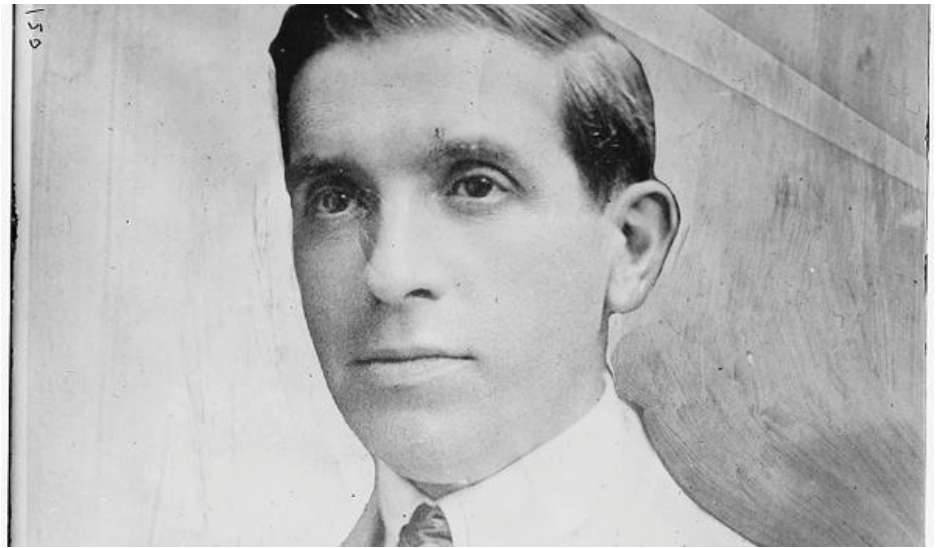
Let's say the investor hands over \$1,000 for a guaranteed return of 50 percent per month. At the end of the first month, the investor receives a statement showing that he has made \$500. The investor can, if he wants, cash in and take his money, in which case the con man hands him \$1,500. But \$500 for doing nothing – that's easy money. Chances are the investor will let the money ride for larger returns each month. And sure enough, each monthly statement shows an increase in profit.

What the investor does not know is that the con man is making no investments at all. The official looking statement has been created by the con man himself.

What the con man has done is recruited more investors into the same scheme, giving them the same promises and guarantees, and sending them the same fake statements. If he has recruited 10 new investors, that's \$10,000 added to the con man's account. If the first investor wants to take out his profit, or cash out altogether, the con man simply takes the cash from the new investors' money and pay him off.

To pay the second level of investors, the con man simply pays from a third level of investors, and so on. Each level can have the same number of investors, but generally, the con man would recruit at least double the number of the previous level, just in case that previous level all want to cash out at the same time, which is unlikely, but possible.

It helps the recruitment drive if the



A young Charles Ponzi

con man can point to the earlier investors and show that they made money on the investment, so word of mouth from previous investors bring in more people. As long as there are new investors that the con man can recruit, the plan will continue to be successful, and the profits for the con man can become astronomical.

But it is here that the scheme will begin to collapse. At some point, the con man is not going to be able to recruit new investors. If the con man is getting 10 new investors for every one in the previous level, then by the time he has reached the 10th level, he needs 10 billion investors to cover the last set, an impossible task as the population of the world is only seven billion. Even if he only doubles the number of investors for each level, he reaches beyond the population at level 34.

However, the scheme will collapse long before that point, though the more investors he persuades to roll over their investment, the longer the scheme can last.

There are differences between

the Ponzi scheme and a pyramid scheme. One is that in the Ponzi scheme, the con man does all the recruiting, while the investor does nothing. This means that the investor, even if he was lucky and got out early with all his money and profit, is still technically a victim of the scheme.

In a pyramid scheme, the investor has to do the recruiting, and he knows that his profit comes from the new investor. He may be given something to sell, such as a start up kit, but he knows that he will not make any money unless he brings in new investors. The significance is that when the scheme collapses, which it will for the same reasons a Ponzi fails, the investor is not a victim but a collaborator as he knows where the money is coming from, and could also face jail time if prosecuted.

Another difference is that a Ponzi scheme is always illegal, whereas a pyramid scheme can be legitimate. Mary Kay cosmetics, Tupperware, the Pampered Chef, and Avon are

Continued on Page 14

The Unsolved Murders of Tupac Shakur and Biggie Smalls

While conspiracy theories abound, the murders of two of rap's biggest stars go unsolved.

by Cathy Scott

Just before 3 p.m. on a spring afternoon in May 1998, a car drove up to a crowded car wash on a street corner in Compton, California. An argument broke out between two groups of men and, a minute later, the sound of gunfire erupted. When the smoke cleared, four men were sprawled out, bleeding on the ground. Two were already dead. And a third died early the next morning.

This a nation long hardened to the idea of black-on-black crime. Although a shooting in a white suburban school is cause for a national outcry, a gun battle in a black ghetto barely raises an eyebrow – at least from authorities.

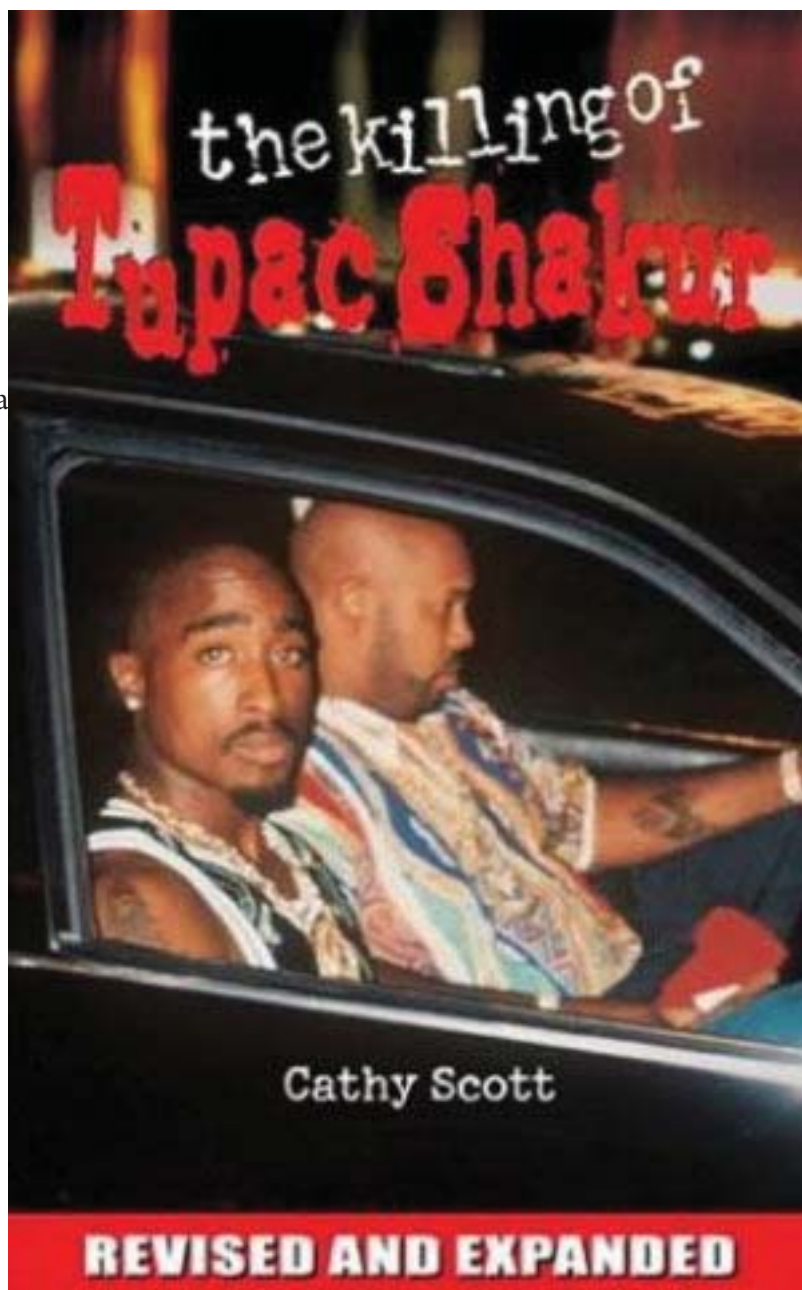
The slaughter at the car wash would have been quickly forgotten but for the notoriety of one of the dead – 23-year-old Orlando “Little Lando” Anderson. A member of a Los Angeles gang known as the Southside Crips, Anderson was the man widely suspected in the murder of rapper Tupac Shakur.

The killing of Anderson was the latest in a string of murders in the 1990s that blighted the reputation of rap culture and the image of young African-American men. Among the most famous victims were two of the biggest names in rap music: Tupac Shakur and Biggie Smalls.

Now, nearly 16 years after the murder of Tupac Shakur, no arrests have been made. The killing raises many questions but provides few official answers. Many fans see a conspiracy to cover up the real facts.

Does the police's failure to solve Tupac's murder simply reflect what investigators consider the randomness of the violence, or is it the result of a troubling reluctance to solve murders in which the victims are black? Have investigators failed because some facts are being concealed? Some Tupac fans believe that a sinister pattern links Tupac's murder to the shooting death of Biggie Smalls six months later with many seeing a conspiracy to cover up the real facts of the cases.

It is perhaps no big surprise that conspiracy theories are alive and well in the African-American community. Such theories are the refuge of the disaffected and the disenfranchised. Those who already perceive themselves



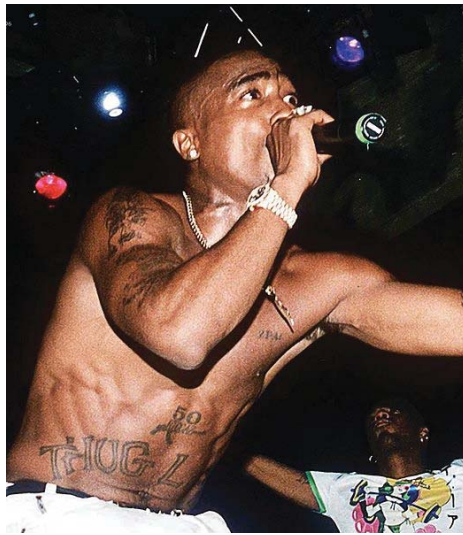
to be disempowered find it easy to believe in obscure forces. The assassinations of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr., continue to be questioned. The theory that the CIA helped flood crack cocaine into the black neighborhoods of Los Angeles has been debated from the streets of South Central all the way to Capitol Hill, brought to light in large part by the late Gary Webb, a reporter who turned a series of investigative stories for the San Jose Mercury News into a book.

It is common, of course, for rumors of conspiracy and cover-up to accrete around icons like Shakur and Smalls, especially when there was a wall of silence surrounding their deaths. But not solving the murder of Tupac, not to mention Biggie's, might just be the biggest crime of all.

The Brilliant Tupac

Shakur was a modern-day American storyteller. His mix of rhythms and rhymes were a raw and vivid chronicle of the life of young black man, raised in the nation's ghettos. He came of age in a housing project on the outskirts of San Francisco, and he translated his experiences from the street into raps and rhymes.

Brilliantly talented, he turned the poetry he wrote about the mean streets into raps. Arrested eight times between 1991 and '96, he had created a thug image, and those rough-and-tumble lyrics made him a mega star. Shakur went on to record one gold and four platinum albums before his death and gave young America a new voice to relate to.



Tupac Shakur

Shakur was also a rising film star, having appeared in such movies as *Poetic Justice* with Janet Jackson; *Gridlock'd* with Tim Roth; and *Gang Related* with Jim Belushi. *Poetic Justice* director John Singleton praised Shakur's acting at the time, saying, "He's what they call a natural. You know, he's a real actor."

Tupac appeared to have it all. Lots of money, fancy cars, and the company of beautiful women. He had escaped from a life in the projects; he couldn't, however, seem to get the 'hood out of his veins.

As for Biggie Smalls, he grew up on the streets of Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn, raised by a single mother who supported her son by substitute teaching. Then he discovered his natural talent for rap. He quickly rose to prominence by rapping about what he knew best: sex, drugs, and violence. He was a street poet who fashioned himself after a Chicago mobster and shared Shakur's love of the gangsta lifestyle.

"I spoke to Tupac on the phone a lot, but I never met him," says Voletta Wallace, Smalls's mother. Wallace lives in a lavishly furnished

condominium in Teaneck, New Jersey, that she inherited from her son. "It's designed as if it were made for 'Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous,'" she says. Though his fans knew him as Biggie or the Notorious B.I.G. – thanks to his six-foot-three, 300-plus-pound frame – Wallace still calls her only child Christopher. "When Christopher started his music, Tupac was his friend," she says in a steady, confident voice. "They would go to clubs, and they would hang out together. They were very, very close."

The First Attempt on Shakur's Life

Although Smalls and Shakur started out as friends, as their reputations grew, their friendship cooled. And for those who have claimed a connection between their murders, that narrative begins on November 30, 1994, in Manhattan's Times Square. It was the first time someone tried to kill Tupac Shakur.

Just after midnight, Shakur was on his way to a recording session at Quad Studios in Times Square. As he entered the lobby, three men ambushed him. After a scuffle, Shakur was shot five times, taking a bullet to the head, and left for dead. The gunmen fled as Shakur stumbled into the elevator. He went up to the eighth floor, where Smalls was recording with his producer, Combs.

Accounts of what may or may not have happened start here. To the surprise of much of the music industry, an angry Shakur publicly accused Smalls of knowing that Tupac was about to be set up. Smalls denied any involvement in the

Continued on Page 19

BTK: The Serial Killer Next Door

Over a 17-year span that ended in 1991, Dennis Rader, who dubbed himself “BTK,” murdered 10 people. Fourteen years later, in an attempt for lasting notoriety, the psychopath who became the president of his Lutheran congregation, led Wichita police to his front door.

by Denise Noe

For years on end, Wichita, Kansas and its surrounding environs were terrorized by a most peculiar serial murderer. Part of what made him so “peculiar” was that people who knew him in everyday life found him utterly normal. In contrast to the stereotype of the serial murderer as a lonely bachelor, Dennis Rader, who would become infamous as “BTK,” was a pillar of the community. His wife and two children loved him, he was able to rise to the top rung of his Lutheran congregation’s administration, he was active as a Scout leader, and he was able to keep his last job as a glorified dog catcher for 15 years. He literally was the serial killer next door.

On the other hand, he was totally without compassion or empathy for any of his victims, not even small children victims. He was a remorseless serial killer who aspired in his later years to treat his killings as if they were a motion picture and live in infamy after his death, his family be damned.

His background offers frustratingly few clues to what led to the warping of his personality – but warped it most assuredly was. Although he



Dennis Rader

did not want the homicidal desires that obsessed him, enacting them did not leave him tormented. He could torment and murder, then return home or attend church with not the slightest sign of guilt or distress. What remains mysterious is how such extreme abnormality co-existed with a façade of perfect normalcy.

In many ways one of the most amazing aspects about Dennis Rader is that he was able to carry on as a serial killer for as long as he did. As serial killers go, he was extremely inept at his craft. Had he not virtually turned himself into the police years after he had actu-

ally stopped murdering people, the identity of BTK would most likely still not be known. One of the reasons he eluded capture for so long was that there was nothing “signature” about his modus operandi during the 17 active years of his killing spree. His murders and victims were so dissimilar that the police didn’t even know they were dealing with a serial killer until Rader himself informed them and gave himself the name “BTK.” Even then, when the police knew they were dealing with a serial killer, Rader could continue to murder his victims without the police knowing it was him – until he told them

himself.

Rader's murders were intended to have a signature. His goal was to slowly choke to death a woman or a young girl and then masturbate on them. Even though he would stalk his prey for weeks ahead of time, Rader's best laid plans often went up in smoke at the outset. Sometimes, out of frustration at his own ineptitude in stalking his prey, he killed impulsively to quiet his urge. Only in the cases of four of the 10 people he murdered did events go anywhere near as planned and even then his full plans for a crime were often thwarted because he had not made adequate allowance for the time that it might take.

Birth and Upbringing of a Monster: Dennis the Divided

Although the identity of the BTK murderer would remain unknown to the public for three decades, he was Dennis Lynn Rader, born March 9, 1945 in Columbus, Kansas, not far from Pittsburg, in southeastern Kansas. He was the first child of the four sons of William and Dorothea Rader. Shortly after Dennis's birth, the family moved to Park City, a suburb located six miles from downtown Wichita.

William Rader worked at a Wichita power plant and Dorothea Rader worked for a grocery store as a bookkeeper. Conservative Republicans, the Raders were also devout, church-going Lutherans.

Everyone around Dennis, both adults and peers, believed he was a good child. It is harder to notice things that are absent than things that are present. In retrospect, what

stood out about young Dennis was the absence of the sort of activities usually found in a growing child's life. Dennis played no musical instrument, did not participate in sports, had no collections, and belonged to no clubs. He did not read books or build model cars or airplanes. People would recall him as often appearing lost in thought, doing nothing at all.

Decades later, childhood friends could not recall anything unusual about him or about his family. The boy who would grow up to abuse so many innocent people stoutly denied he had ever been abused.

However, he readily acknowledges that he was often deeply confused during his childhood. When very little, he visited his grandparents' farm and witnessed his grandmother wringing the necks of chickens. He found this sight exciting. One day he accidentally killed a cat. The death somehow made him feel powerful. He wanted to experience something similar again. He began taking cats, then a bird, and then small dogs to barns. There he would tie the animal up, choke it, release it, choke it again, repeating this cruelty several times before killing. The terrified eyes and whining sounds sent a rush of pleasure through the young boy.

He wondered what it might be like to do the same to humans who, unlike animals, could verbally beg for their lives and weep tears.

Despite his love of killing animals, he could also have tender relationships with them. He had a pet dog he loved.

William Rader was a distant father,

leaving most childrearing to his wife.

Dorothea Rader disciplined the children by spanking them with a belt. The spankings hurt badly but in young Dennis's case they also aroused excitement and pleasure. Dennis dreaded yet yearned for them. He often dwelled on the opposite feelings spankings caused, feelings he desperately wanted to understand but could not.

During his childhood, he never told anyone about the excitement he felt watching animals choked or the baffling pleasure he experienced when spanked. He did not want to be considered "weird" or, worse, "bad" in any respect. It was not until his adulthood and arrest for multiple murders that he would finally tell someone of the childhood feelings that had so bothered him. He wanted to be viewed as a "good kid." Indeed, family and friends viewed him as the responsible oldest brother.

Thus began the division that would define his life: the outer Dennis that everyone saw, a trustworthy boy responsibly following rules and the inner Dennis, dwelling obsessively on the eerie excitement of spankings and animal deaths, yearning to talk about these feelings but unable to.

Tongue-tied, he had difficulty articulating thoughts. He was poor in spelling and grammar.

At 8 or 9, he came across photographs in a detective magazine of women tied up, apparently terrified. The images lingered in his mind.

Continued on Page 23

American Dream Cont.

rigged up to 10 gallons of gasoline. The 30 aerial shells commonly used in commercial fireworks had to be defused. USA Today quoted an unidentified official as saying the aerial shells “had been cannibalized, reconstructed and set up in the living room, where a stream of wires connected them to a ‘control box’ in the unit’s kitchen.” Aurora Police Chief Dan Oates told reporters there was no question the booby traps were “designed to kill” and that most likely they were meant to kill arriving police officers.

For many Coloradans, the senseless Century 16 shooting was all-too reminiscent of the 1999 Columbine High School massacre when two heavily armed students gunned down 12 students and a teacher before committing suicide. Columbine is about 16 miles from Aurora.

A Killing Arsenal

For the academically gifted James Holmes, who spent a good portion of his free time online participating in role-playing games, a great deal of planning allegedly went into the mass-murder assault in Aurora. During the five weeks after he unexpectedly dropped out of an elite graduate program on June 10, 2012 – after failing part of his first-year oral exam – he amassed a major arsenal of weapons, ammunition, combat gear, and explosive booby traps. USA Today estimated that within the 60 days leading up to the Aurora disaster, Holmes spent \$2,248 on the four guns he purchased from local gun dealers; \$2,870 on the 6,300 rounds of ammunition he purchased online;

\$970 on body gear online; and \$300 for booby traps placed in his apartment. He apparently tapped the \$21,000 a year graduate student grant he received from the National Institute for Health and the \$5,000 stipend he received as a graduate student from the University of Colorado to pay the more than \$6,350 expended on armaments and gear – material that arrived in some 90 packages for him at the university and at his apartment.

Everything Holmes bought, he bought legally. As a person with no felony record, no state or federal background checks or government oversight at any level was required for any of his purchases. Not even the Department of Homeland Security – an organization provided with vast powers to protect U.S. citizens from terrorist attacks like this one – got a whiff of what the young man was up to. Unlike in California, Massachusetts and New Jersey where there are restrictions on ammunition sales – requiring permits for buyers or licenses for sellers – Colorado, like the vast majority of states, has no such regulation. Holmes could have bought 50,000 or 500,000 rounds of ammunition without setting off one red flag. At the federal level there is no statute restricting the Internet sales of ammunition. As Dudley Brown, the executive director of Rocky Mountain Gun Owners, told The New York Times, “I call 6,000 rounds of ammunition running low.”

On July 23, Holmes appeared in state district court in Centennial, Colo., for a preliminary hearing that dealt with such issues as informing the suspect of his constitutional rights as well as a motion



James Holmes

to limit pretrial publicity advanced by one Holmes’s public defenders. In response to the defense motion, Judge William Sylvester issued a gag order to limit the information law enforcement may release about the shooting. The suspect did not speak during the 12-minute hearing, not to the judge or to either of his public defenders. One of his attorneys had to nudge him to stand when Judge Sylvester entered the courtroom. Various news accounts reported that Holmes, his hair dyed a reddish orange, seemed to fade in and out. The Wall Street Journal reported that he “looked alternately sleepy and wide-eyed, bobbing his head as the judge and the lawyers spoke.”

Arapahoe County District Attorney Carol Chambers told reporters after the preliminary hearing that the state may seek the death penalty, but would wait on deciding that until she had discussed it with the wounded and families of those killed in the theater. Pursuing the death penalty is “a very long process that impacts their [victim’s] lives for years,” D.A. Chambers said. Since capital punishment was



President Barack Obama
visiting shooting victims

reinstated in Colorado in 1976, there has only been one execution – that in 1997. Currently there are three people on Colorado’s death row.

Police authorities reported that Holmes has refused to discuss anything about the mass murder at the theater.

News of the latest mass murder in the United States brought condolences to the victims and their families from around the world. Pope Benedict XVI expressed his regrets during his Sunday morning blessing from St. Peter’s Square.

Across the street from the movie multiplex in Aurora, a makeshift memorial took shape where hundreds of people congregated throughout the weekend. Teddy bears, flowers, candles and handwritten notes dotted the site. On a hill overlooking the impromptu memorial, 12 white crosses were placed in honor of each of the dead.

Charges Filed

Shackled around his waist and ankles, Holmes was back in district court on July 30. Prosecutors formally charged him with 142 criminal counts, including 24 counts of first-degree murder, 116 counts of attempted murder, one count of felony possession of explosives

devices, and one count for use of assault weapons during the shooting at the Century 16 theater. On the murder and attempted murder counts, Holmes was charged twice for each of the 12 murder victims and for the 58 persons wounded. One count was for “showing deliberation” and the other was for “showing extreme indifference to human life.”

The count pertaining to the explosives devices stemmed from the booby-trapping of his apartment.

The 120-seat courtroom was packed. Victims and family members of victims occupied about half of the seats; the proceedings also were piped into a satellite room outside the courtroom that overflowed with spectators.

Various media outlets reported that Holmes, his hair dyed orange and matted down on top, showed no emotion while the charges against him were being recited or when the judge informed him that he could face the death penalty. Instead, throughout the 45-minute hearing, he stared “blankly” at the judge’s bench, the ceiling lights and the floor and spoke only one word. When Judge Sylvester asked him if he understood why his defense attorneys were asking for additional time to prepare for his preliminary



Rebecca Ann Wingo



Petty Officer Third Class
John Thomas Larimer

hearing, he quietly stated, “Yes.”

The judge informed the prosecution and defense that hearings would be held on August 9 and 16 and that during the week of November 12 to plan on both a preliminary hearing and an evidence hearing that will include several days of testimony.

The first hearing will concern the high level of secrecy in the prosecution’s case file against Holmes that has been kept under seal by court order. A consortium of news organizations had petitioned the court to open those files to the public.

A primary purpose of the August 16 hearing will be to consider a defense motion filed July 27 with the district court to suppress the contents of a package Holmes mailed to his psychiatrist, Dr. Lynne Fenton, at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. When the package arrived at the university’s mailroom on Monday, July 23, university officials notified law enforcement. A search warrant was issued and the package was collected by Aurora police without Dr. Fenton seeing it.

Dr. Fenton is the medical director of student mental health services at the university, where Holmes had been a student until resigning from the program in early July. She has

held that position since 2009. She is also a member of the university's faculty. The New York Times reported that Dr. Fenton's research interests include "psychotherapy and the neurobiology of schizophrenia."

News reports soon quoted unnamed police officials saying the package contained a notebook that detailed Holmes's plan for the assault on the theater that included "violent drawings." Lawyers for Holmes objected in their motion that information about the contents of the package was being leaked to the news media despite the gag order Judge Sylvester imposed at the initial hearing on July 23 and that leaking the contents of the communication with Dr. Fenton violated the doctor/patient relationship.

In the motion, Holmes's public defenders asserted that "Mr. Holmes was a psychiatric patient of Dr. Fenton and his communications with her are protected" under the doctor/patient relationship.

Prosecutors responded to the motion by asking the judge to deny the defense request. D. A. Chambers wrote in rebuttal that the contents of the package had not been examined and had been retained for later inspection. In her court filing, D.A. Chambers stated, "The media is getting information from hoaxers, fraudsters, or maybe from nobody at all."

The Victims

Three of the 12 mass-murder victims died in the theater attempting to save the lives of others. As shots rained down on the audience, Matt McQuinn, 27, pulled his girlfriend, Samantha Yowler, to the floor and



Veronica Moser-Sullivan

shielded her with his body. Three bullets hit McQuinn – one in the chest, one in the back, and one in his leg. One bullet hit Yowler in the knee. She underwent surgery and is recovering. The couple had been dating for three years and worked at Target.

Jonathan Blunk, a 26-year-old Navy veteran and father of two, covered his girlfriend's body by lying on top of her. Jansen Young was not hit. Blunk was planning to re-enlist in the Navy.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Jesse Childress, 29, died trying to shield a friend, a woman stationed with him at Buckley Air Force Base in Aurora.

The youngest victim was 6-year-old Veronica Moser-Sullivan, the daughter of Ashley Moser, who was shot in the abdomen and throat during the theater assault. Mrs. Moser, who was pregnant, suffered a miscarriage on July 28, the day she underwent surgery for her wounds. A statement released by her family the following day, said

the family was still making plans for Veronica's funeral and that Mrs. Moser's "lifetime of care will be a long road."

The oldest victim was 51-year-old Gordon Cowdon, a divorced single father of three girls and a boy.

Alex Sullivan was murdered on his 27th birthday shortly after he tweeted that this would be "the best birthday ever." A bartender at the Red Robin Gourmet Burgers, he would have celebrated his first wedding anniversary with his wife Cassie two days later.

Jessica Ghawi, 24, came close to death at a mall in Toronto last summer during a shooting spree that killed two people. "I was reminded that we don't know when or where our time on earth will end. When or where we will breathe our last breath," the sports reporter for MS-NBC wrote on her blog about that tragedy. Some 22,000 Twitter users followed her postings under her Twitter handle @JessicaRedfield.

Other victims included Alexander Boik, 18, Navy Petty Officer John Larimer, 27, Micayla Medek, 23, Alexander Teves, 24, and Rebecca Wingo, 32.

Whatever else will ever be said about the mass murders at Aurora, there was a chillingly indiscriminate cold-bloodedness to them. This assailant did not care who he killed, only that he killed en masse.



Ponzi Continued

all legitimate pyramid schemes, though they prefer the term Multi Level Marketing. The money is made not by bringing in new members, but by selling a product. If you bring in a new member, you may get a bonus, but that's exactly what it is – a bonus.

So why is it called a “Ponzi” scheme?

Although it was known by various names before, it was in the 1920's that it began to be known as a Ponzi scheme, thanks to a charismatic Italian immigrant who was so successful at the scheme that it was renamed in his honor, or dishonor.

He was born Carlo Pietro Giovanni Guglielmo Tebaldo Ponzi, the son of a postman, on March 3, 1882, in Lugo, Italy, though he himself would tell people that he was from Parma. His early life is mostly unknown, though Ponzi himself gave accounts of his youth. However, with Ponzi being a con man, it's difficult to tell what is true, what is fabricated, or what is embellished.

Not long after his father died, Ponzi was accepted into the University of Rome - La Sapienza, much to the delight of his mother. But, far from home, he met up with some wealthy fellow students and, neglecting his studies, spent much of his time with them in bars and cafés.

The lifestyle of his new friends was one of lavish indulgences, and Ponzi went along with it, unable to afford the same lifestyle, and rapidly blowing through whatever inheritance he had got from his

father. Ponzi began to skip classes, and slept the day away before getting up late and joining his friends for the extravagant nightlife.

It became clear to Ponzi that he was not going to get a degree, and it seemed he had no choice but to drop out of University. On the suggestion of an uncle, Ponzi decided to try his luck in the United States, considered to be the land of opportunity. His family bought him a ticket for the steamship and gave him \$200, which would allow him to establish himself in America. He said goodbye to his family, and then headed for Naples, where, on November 3, 1903, he boarded the S.S. Vancouver that was headed for Boston, Massachusetts.

But Ponzi had not learned his lesson from life at the University. The ticket he had been given was for second class, and so he avoided the misery of steerage with its cramped and filthy sleeping quarters. With his inflated sense of self worth, Ponzi fell into the same habits that he exhibited in Rome at university, spending money on drinks and small luxuries that he could not afford, tipping waiters generously, and gambling.

It wasn't long before the card sharks smelled blood and began circling. Ponzi was invited to join a “friendly” game of cards, and his \$200 rapidly began to shrink. By the time the ship reached America, Ponzi was left with just \$2.50.

The S.S. Vancouver docked in Boston Harbor on November 17, 1903, and, after satisfying the immigration officials, Ponzi stepped onto American soil. His family, no doubt seeing his behavior in Rome,

must have known he would arrive in America virtually penniless, so they had also provided him with a prepaid train ticket to Pittsburgh, where he could stay with a relative.

For the next four years, Ponzi worked his way up and down the East Coast with a succession of menial jobs. He was a grocery clerk, he repaired sewing machines, and he sold insurance. But none of these jobs lasted very long. Some he was fired from, some he quit before he was fired. At one point, he was working in a restaurant, starting as a dishwasher, but working his way up to being a waiter. However, he was eventually caught short changing a customer and was fired for theft.

In those four years, Ponzi had changed. He had grown a moustache, become fluent in English, and had changed his first name from Carlo to the more Americanized Charles.

In July, 1907, Ponzi decided to move out of the United States and head north to Canada. He caught a train for Montreal and there wandered around, once again with hardly any money in his pocket. But that was about to change. Just a few blocks from the railway station Ponzi saw a bank, the Banco Zarossi.

Ponzi, confident as ever, walked through the doors and applied for a job, using the name Charles Bianchi. It took just five minutes, and he was hired as a clerk.

The bank had been founded by Luigi “Louis” Zarossi to service the needs of the Italian immigrants that were flooding into the city. Rival

banks were investing the money in securities that were paying interest at a rate of 3 percent, passing on 2 percent on to their customers and keeping the other 1 percent as profit. Zarossi, to the annoyance of his competitors, was paying the full 3 percent, plus another 3 percent as a bonus. This was unheard of, and of course, people flocked to the Banco Zarossi for the 6 percent and his business grew rapidly.

The rival banks, fairly certain that there was no legal way Zarossi could pay that amount of interest, had their suspicions that he was paying his older customers with the money from his new customers, a process then known as “robbing Peter to pay Paul.” However, knowing something and proving it are two different things.

Months went by, and the Banco Zarossi flourished. But eventually, proving the rival banks correct in their assumptions, the Banco Zarossi found itself in financial trouble. By the middle of 1908, Zarossi, possibly on the advice of Ponzi, had fled to Mexico, taking with him whatever money was left in the bank.

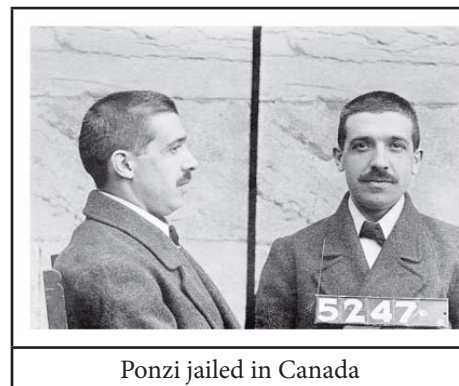
Ponzi, unlike other members of the bank who had fled, stayed in Montreal, living with Zarossi’s family, who he had left behind. But, by August, Ponzi felt the need to move on, back to the United States. As usual, Ponzi had no money.

Ponzi’s First Two Arrests

On the morning of Saturday, August 29, 1908, Ponzi visited the offices of the Canadian Warehousing Company, a shipping agent that once had been a customer of the

Banco Zarossi. As Ponzi had been there many times in the past, no one took any notice of him when he walked in. Ponzi crossed to the office of Damien Fournier, the company manager, and walked in. Finding nobody there, Ponzi quickly looked through the desk drawers, where he found a checkbook from the Bank of Hochelaga. Ponzi quickly tore out one of the checks and then left as swiftly as possible without causing suspicion.

Ponzi wrote out the check for the amount of \$423.58, thinking this ordinary seeming amount would look more like a legitimate transaction, and signed it “D. Fournier.” True to his nature, the moment he had the cash, Ponzi began a spending spree, buying clothing and shoes, and a watch and chain.



But the Bank of Hochelaga had become dubious, and had confirmed their suspicion regarding the check. Before he could even leave town, Detective John McCall had found and arrested Ponzi. Confronted, Ponzi immediately admitted that he was guilty. Charged and convicted of forgery, Ponzi was sentenced to three years in the Saint Vincent de Paul Penitentiary just a few miles from Montreal.

He started out breaking rocks, but soon, he used his skills to move himself into better positions, even-

tually becoming a clerk in the warden’s office. He earned the warden’s trust and was a model prisoner, and his prison sentence was reduced to just 20 months for good behavior.

Just two weeks after he was released, Ponzi was on a train heading back to the United States. On the train with him were five other Italians. When a customs inspector boarded the train, he questioned Ponzi about the other Italians. Ponzi said that he didn’t know them, explaining that he had run into a friend at the station who asked him to accompany the men as they were unfamiliar with the country. He didn’t mention that this “friend” once worked at the Banco Zarossi where he had pocketed money from customers, and had fled after the collapse of the bank. Ponzi also never mentioned that money had exchanged hands.

The five Italians had no immigration papers, and Ponzi, before he had even crossed the border, was arrested for smuggling illegal immigrants into the United States. He received a two year sentence in the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, Georgia.

Ponzi made a couple of new friends there. One was Mafia member Ignazio Lupo, known as “The Wolf,” a Black Hand leader in New York.

Once again, Ponzi worked in the warden’s office, and the warden asked Ponzi to translate Lupo’s letters, hoping to find something incriminating. Ponzi had no problem with this. He knew that nothing in the letters was incriminating, Ponzi shared a cell with Lupo, and he was writing Lupo’s letters for him.

The other friend he made at the prison was a much more interesting person, from Ponzi's point of view.

Charles W. Morse was a wealthy and amoral Wall Street businessman, once known as the "Ice King" as his ice supply business had at one time held a virtual monopoly on New York. His monopoly ended when an investigation revealed the number of bribes he had made to politicians. However, by that time, he had managed to make a profit of \$12,000,000.

After buying at least twelve banks, Morse tried to corner the copper market. The scheme failed and partially caused the financial panic of 1907. Morse was eventually convicted of the misappropriation of bank funds, and sentenced to Atlanta for 15 years.

But, in January, 1912, after serving only two years in prison, Morse was granted an unconditional release following an illness that left him perilously close to death. If he remained in prison, his lawyers argued, he would die. This was confirmed by doctors who examined him on a number of occasions. Morse was supported by wealthy financiers who appealed to President Taft.

Once Morse was freed from prison, his health rapidly improved. It turned out that just before he was due to be examined by doctors, Morse would swallow a mixture of shaved soap and chemicals, producing the symptoms of sickness. These symptoms lasted barely longer than the examination.

To Ponzi, Morse was fascinating, and Ponzi realized that the legal

system treated the wealthy differently than it did the poor.

Ponzi, after he was released, moved south for a while, spending several months at a mining company in Blocton, Alabama, working as a translator and bookkeeper, but in 1917, he eventually made his way back to Boston, where his adventures in America began 14 years earlier.

Ponzi Falls in Love

On Memorial Day weekend, Ponzi was at a Boston Pops concert, accompanied by his landlady, when he spotted a beautiful young woman. It happened that his landlady knew her, and she introduced Ponzi to her. Her name was Rose Maria Gnecco, at 21 years of age, the youngest child of a fruit merchant. Ponzi immediately fell in love with her.

It was a whirlwind romance, and despite the revelations of his past in a letter to her from his mother, on February 4, 1918, Rose and Charles Ponzi married at St. Anthony's Church on Vine Street.

Ponzi worked a variety of jobs for a period of time, including a job at his father-in-law's business, but he wanted to strike out on his own, and rented some rooms on the fifth floor of 27 School Street. After a couple of attempted start ups, Ponzi came up with an ambitious plan. He would publish his own foreign trade magazine that would be a reference guide for businesses all over the world. His ambition was to double the circulation at regular intervals.

He would start out with 100,000

free copies that he would mail out to companies, and then, some time later, mail out an updated edition to the same companies, plus a free mailing of the magazine to 100,000 more companies. The advertising generated would make him rich.

Ponzi estimated that the initial mailing would cost \$35,000, but the advertising for the first edition would bring in \$80,000. The problem was acquiring the initial start up money, and he tried to entice investors into the business. None were interested, and Ponzi was running through his own money rapidly.

The guide didn't even make it to its first edition.

But Ponzi wasn't daunted by the failure of this enterprise. It was not the first time a business venture had fallen through and he knew that something else would turn up. And within a short while, something did.

It was August, 1919, and Ponzi was in his office going through his mail. One letter was from a business in Spain, asking about the now abandoned catalogue. For Ponzi, it wasn't the letter that he found interesting; it was the square slip of paper that accompanied it, something Ponzi had never seen before. It was an International Reply Coupon.

The Ponzi Scheme is Born

The International Reply Coupon, or IRC, was introduced in April, 1906, at a Universal Postal Union congress held in Rome. Sixty-three countries, members of the Postal Union, gathered to make it easier to send mail internationally. Up until

that time, it was extremely difficult to send anything between nationalities that required a return, stamped envelope. Foreign stamps could not be purchased in other countries, and if the stamps from the original sender were included, they would be turned away. If the sender included cash to pay for stamps at the other end, it required the person to go to a bank, exchange the foreign cash for the equivalent in his country, and then purchase stamps.

The International Reply Coupon eliminated all the problems. An IRC bought in Spain for the equivalent of five cents could be redeemed for a stamp of five cents in the United States.

But for Charles Ponzi, holding the slip of paper between his fingers, what he saw was not a solution to the return post problem, but a multi-million dollar opportunity.

Ponzi began to work out the figures.

The Great War had resulted in the devaluation of many world currencies, and Ponzi realized that the IRC had not been changed to reflect these devaluations. He knew that one of the worst hit currencies was the Italian lira. In the United States, one dollar could buy twenty IRC's valued at five cents each. That same dollar in Italy could buy 66. He knew that if he purchased them in Italy for one dollar and then redeemed them in the United States for \$3.30, his profit would be \$2.30. All he needed to do was buy the coupons in bulk from foreign countries using American money, and then redeem them in the United States.

It was a process known as arbitrage, and it was not even illegal. Ponzi set up a new business and called it The Securities Exchange Company. Ponzi's house in Lexington, Mass

As with his last venture, the first problem Ponzi had to solve was getting the initial amount of money to get the process moving. He went to friends and explained how the system worked, and some of them invested. Ponzi had promised them an unbelievable rate of interest. Within 45 days, he told them, they would make a 50 percent profit. He had a network of agents who would do the bulk purchasing in other countries and send the IRC's back to Ponzi, who would then cash them in.

But there were other problems, ones which he had not told his investors. First, he didn't have a network of agents buying up the IRC's. Second, even if he did, the cost of shipping them to Ponzi in the United States would be incredibly high, possibly enough to eliminate the profit. And there was a third problem. He was informed by the postal service that they would not redeem the IRC's for cash, but only for stamps. This meant there was the added problem of then selling the stamps as well.

But by this time, Ponzi was committed to this venture. He had promised returns, and he paid returns. Ponzi paid off the early investors from the money collected from the newer investors, and word of how much money could be made by investing with the Securities Exchange Company spread rapidly. Ponzi had started an avalanche.

Potential investors flocked to

School Street to invest in the IRC scheme, and by February, 1920, Ponzi's profit was \$5,000, and by the following month, it was \$30,000. By May, it was up to \$420,000, the equivalent of over \$5 million in today's money.

By the middle of the year, Ponzi had made millions, with estimates suggesting that he was making around \$1 million a week. By this time, he had purchased a controlling interest in the Hanover Trust Bank, which must have been satisfying as they had originally refused him a loan.

With almost everyone rolling over their money to be reinvested, the scheme ran on longer, but some people were already beginning to have some doubts about the business and questions were being asked.

One financial writer questioned the business, suggesting that Ponzi could never legally deliver returns this high in such a short period of time. Ponzi sued for libel, and as the burden of proof in those days lay with the writer, Ponzi won, receiving \$500,000 in damages.

The Bubble Bursts – Investors Lose \$20 million, Ponzi Goes to Prison

However, some time later, the Boston Post, which had run favorable stories on Ponzi and his business in the past, contacted financial analyst Clarence W. Barron, founder of financial journal, Barron's Magazine, to examine Ponzi's claims. One of the things Barron noticed, other than Ponzi was not investing in his own business, was that to make the business work, there needed to be

at least 160 million IRC's in circulation. The problem was there were only 27,000.

The Boston Post printed the findings and this caused a run on Ponzi's business, forcing him to pay out \$2 million over a three-day period.

By this time, Ponzi had attracted the attention of Daniel Gallagher, the U.S. Attorney for Massachusetts, and he commissioned an audit of the Securities Exchange Company, which was made difficult by the fact that Ponzi didn't keep any books on the business, just a stack of index cards and names.

Ponzi hired a publicity agent named William McMasters, but McMasters, having discovered what Ponzi was doing, instead wrote an article for the Boston Post claiming that Ponzi was at least \$2 million in debt.

This was the beginning of Ponzi's downfall.

Joseph Allen, the Massachusetts Bank Commissioner, worried that the run on Ponzi's business generated by the story would bring the Boston bank system down. Bank examiners informed Allen that Ponzi's main account was now overdrawn due to investors cashing out. Allen ordered the bank account to be frozen.

The Massachusetts State Attorney General issued a statement revealing that there was no evidence to support the claims made by Ponzi, and officials asked investors to give their names and addresses so that an investigation could be carried out.



Boston Post

That same day, the audit commissioned by Gallagher gave Ponzi a report of its finding. Ponzi's debts were not \$2 million, as claimed by McMasters. His debt was over \$7 million.

The Hanover Trust Bank was seized by authorities, and five other banks were brought down by the scandal. Ponzi was fully aware that he was about to be arrested and so surrendered to the authorities, who charged him with mail fraud. His investors lost virtually everything, losing around \$20 million, or almost \$240 million in today's money.

Ponzi was charged with 86 counts of mail fraud, which would have jailed him for the rest of his life. However, his wife, Rose, urged him to make a deal and plead guilty, which he did on November 1, 1920, on just one count. Ponzi was sentenced to five years in Federal prison.

After serving three and a half years, Ponzi was released, and immediately arrested once more and put on trial for 22 charges of larceny by the Massachusetts State. Ponzi was stunned. He believed that the deal he had made to plead guilty would result in the State charges being dropped. Although he sued, it was

ruled that a plea bargain on Federal charges have no standing in regard to State charges.

The 22 charges were split into three trials. In the first, Ponzi was found not guilty on 10 of the charges. In the second, the result was a deadlocked jury on five charges. But in the third trial for the remainder of the charges, Ponzi was found guilty. He received a sentence of five to seven years. And, as Ponzi had not obtained citizenship, the authorities also wanted him deported at the end of his sentence.

Ponzi was released on bail as he appealed the State conviction, and immediately ran away to Florida, where, in September, 1925, he created an association, the Charpon Land Syndicate, offering investors land and promising returns of 200 percent in two months. But the land was actually swampland in Columbia County. In February, 1926, Ponzi was arrested and found guilty of violating the Florida Trust laws, and was sentenced to a year in jail. He appealed the sentence and paid a \$1,500 bond.

Once out of jail, he fled to Tampa, where he shaved his head and tried to flee the country on a ship heading for Italy. However, the ship made one last call in New Orleans and he was recognized and captured, and sent back to Massachusetts where he served seven more years in prison.

Ponzi Deported

In 1934, upon his release, Charles Ponzi was deported back to Italy.

Rose, the love of his life, didn't want to leave Boston, and so she stayed

behind, and finally divorced him in 1937. Rose later remarried and became the bookkeeper for the New Coconut Grove nightclub.

Ponzi tried more schemes while in Italy, but each of them failed. Eventually, he began working for Ala Littoria, Italy's state airline, and moved to Brazil to be their agent there. However, when Brazil sided with the allies during World War II, the airlines operation in Brazil was closed down.

Ponzi worked as a translator for a while, but his health was now failing. In 1941, Ponzi, now 59 years old, suffered a heart attack which left him very weak. By 1948, his health had severely deteriorated. He was almost blind, and had suffered a brain hemorrhage that had left him paralyzed down his right side.

On January 18, 1949, at the Hospital São Francisco de Assis, at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, Charles Ponzi died. He was 66 years old. The man who had made millions passed away in a charity hospital, penniless, and was buried in a pauper's grave.

Some believed that Ponzi never intended to rob people, and that he truly believed the IRC business would work. But the business was flawed and before Ponzi could stop it, the business snowballed. It's possible, though unlikely.

But whatever the truth about Ponzi, his name has entered the English language, and is almost never said without the word "scheme" spoken straight after.



Tupac and Biggie Continued

shooting, saying that Shakur had simply been the victim of a botched robbery.

Police agreed. The day after the shooting, John Hill, commanding office of New York Police Department's 19th precinct, held a news conference. "Rap star Tupac Shakur and three members of his group were robbed and shot," Hill said. That was it. No suspects. And, a few days later, the investigation into the shooting was dropped. Detective George Nagy of the New York Police Department explained it like this: "His lawyer never called back. No one called back. They more or less handled it their own way."

But Tupac refused to back down from his accusations about Biggie.

Also, the day after the Quad Studios shooting, a heavily bandaged Shakur was found guilty of one count of sexual abuse for having molested a female fan in November 1993. He was pushed into the courtroom in a wheel chair. Soon after, he was sentenced to a prison term of one and a half to four and a half years. While Tupac maintained his innocence, his financial resources were stretched to the limit by the legal action; he couldn't make bail.

As his lawyers worked on his appeal, Shakur was locked up in a New York prison. It was during this time that Smalls exploded on the rap scene, following Tupac's example. He was the 1995 Billboard rap artist of the year and became Bad Boy's biggest talent when his debut album, Ready to Die, went platinum.

By October 1995, Tupac had served eight months in prison. Desperate to get out, he signed a record contract with Marion "Suge" Knight, CEO of Death Row Records.

Knight, a six-foot-three, 315-pound former bodyguard with a criminal record, was one of the most powerful and feared men at the time in the music business. He had built Death Row into a top rap label, with \$100 million in sales. But Knight wasn't without controversy, especially his known connection to the Bloods, a street gang in Compton, where Knight grew up, and rival of the Southside Crips. Still, Shakur signed with Death Row. In return, Knight posted Tupac's \$1.4 million bond.

Bad Blood

Shakur and Smalls, the two biggest gangsta rappers in America, were now on the two biggest hip-hop labels. And Shakur was not about to let old rivalries die. Knight and Shakur repeatedly ridiculed Smalls and Combs in public and in the press.

The beef between the two rappers escalated even more after Shakur boasted in a song that he'd had an affair with Smalls's wife, Faith Evans. It triggered what became widely known as the East Coast-West Coast war. Smalls and Shakur soon found themselves overtaken by the very violence they rapped about.

On September 7, 1996, Shakur attended the Mike Tyson-Bruce Seldon heavyweight fight in Las Vegas and was on his way to a party. Knight was at the wheel of his black 1996 BMW 750iL sedan; Shakur

was riding shotgun. At a stoplight at the busy intersection of Flamingo Road and Koval Lane, a late model white Cadillac with four men inside pulled up next to Knight's car. Suddenly, a gunman sitting in the backseat started shooting at the passenger side of the BMW. A bullet grazed Knight's head, but Shakur was not as lucky. He frantically tried to climb into the backseat to avoid the gunfire but was struck by four bullets. The gunfire ended as quickly as it had begun.

Tupac Shakur was executed in cold blood. The Cadillac fled the scene. Tupac never regained consciousness and died six days later, on Friday the 13th. He was just 25.

Who Killed Shakur?

In the search for answers for Shakur's murder, speculation again focused on Smalls. "My son had nothing to do with Tupac's murder," Voletta Wallace says. "He was shocked and upset." Wallace says her son laughed at comments made by Shakur accusing Smalls of being involved in the Quad Studios shooting. After Shakur was killed, Smalls's mother says, he quit laughing.

By October 1996, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department had a possible suspect in the murder, Orlando Anderson, but was unable to link him directly to the killing. If Anderson murdered Shakur, a Southside Crip, the reason seemed relatively simple: Shakur's association with Suge Knight and the Bloods, the Crips' rival, was well known. Shakur had even appeared in photographs wearing a red scarf – the gang color of the Bloods. Anderson had another,

more immediate motive for the killing: Security video at the MGM Grand Hotel showed that just three hours before the shooting, Shakur and his entourage, including Knight, had beaten and stomped Anderson in the hotel lobby. Could the killing have been revenge for the assault? Shakur's mother, Afeni, thinks so. In fact, she filed a wrongful-death lawsuit against Anderson. Her lawyer announced that two crimes were committed against Shakur: one by Anderson and the other by an incompetent police investigation. The case was scheduled to go to trial this past September. Now that Anderson is also dead, it never will.

Following Shakur's murder, Knight was incarcerated. The courts decided that the assault he and Shakur had carried out on Anderson at the MGM Grand was a violation of Knight's probation from a prior assault conviction. He has been sentenced to nine years in prison at the California Men's Colony, in San Luis Obispo, but many in the industry claim they still fear him. Knight refused to be interviewed for this story. (While writing this article, I was warned off by entertainment writers and attorneys. Their biggest fear, they claimed, was Knight and his reputation of strong-arm tactics.)

At the time of Shakur's murder, the police blamed witnesses for not providing them with enough information to make any arrests. But there was one witness, Yafeu "Kadafi" Fula, who said he could possibly identify Shakur's killer. Fula was a rapper in Shakur's backup group and was riding in the car behind Knight's on the evening Shakur was mortally wounded. But

the police let him go home to New Jersey without interviewing him about possible suspects.

On November 10, two months after Shakur died, Fula was visiting his girlfriend at a housing project in Orange, New Jersey. In the middle of the night, gunfire erupted inside a dark hallway. When the police arrived, they found the 19-year-old Fula slumped against a wall near a stairwell. The bulletproof vest he was wearing did not save him: He died hours later, having been shot in the face at point-blank range. "Execution style," was how Orange police described it.

Orange and Las Vegas police insist that Fula's death was unrelated to the Shakur investigation and that it was not the result of trying to silence a witness. The day after Fula's murder, Sergeant Kevin Manning of the Las Vegas police said that Fula was simply one more young black man to be gunned down. "The odds were against him" because of his race, not because he was a witness to Shakur's murder.

In the months following Shakur's murder, other rappers began taking precautions, hiring bodyguards, and wearing bulletproof vests. Even with the apparent danger, though, Smalls took a break from New York and traveled to Shakur's home turf, the West Coast. "Yes, Christopher was comfortable," Wallace says. "Maybe he was too comfortable."

The Murder of Biggie Smalls

On March 9, 1997, two weeks before the release of his second album, *Life After Death*, Smalls, 24, was celebrating at a party at the Petersen Automotive Museum in

Los Angeles. About midnight, Los Angeles fire marshals broke up the party because the crowd of 2,000 exceeded the building's fire-code capacity. Combs and Smalls headed to another party. Smalls sat in the passenger seat of a rented GMC Suburban. Combs sat in a car in front of his, and security guards followed in a Chevy Blazer. The streets were packed with people as the caravan waited at a stoplight on Wilshire Boulevard and Fairfax Avenue. Suddenly, a dark-colored car pulled up alongside Smalls's vehicle, and an unidentified black male wearing a suit and bow tie opened fire on the passenger side with a 9mm pistol. Smalls was hit seen times in the chest and was dead on arrival at the Cedars-Sinai Medical Center.

The immediate assumption on the streets was that Smalls's killing was a reprisal of Shakur's death. "Nonsense," says Combs' attorney, Kenny Meiselas. "The (murders) were not connected. I think everyone who has investigated the cases or has had direct information about them knows they were not."

The most plausible explanation for Smalls's death was that he owed money to someone, possibly to a street gang he had employed as security while in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles Times backed up this theory when it reported, using unnamed police sources, that Smalls's shooting was suspected to be over a financial beef the rapper had with a Crips gang member whom some say Smalls and Combs hired to protect him on his trip to L.A. Bad Boy, however, has denied ever hiring gang members for security.

Conspiracy Theories

The murders led to an explosion of theories about the deaths of the two top performers in rap. Some say that the killings were the result of an effort to rub out black gangsta rappers. Still others think they were deliberate hits by rival hip-hop camps with gang affiliations. Some conspiracy theorists go so far as to say that the federal government was involved and that the police have conspired not to solve the crimes. "The other thing I heard," Voletta Wallace says, "was that the shot was not meant for my son. The shot was meant for Puffy." That Combs, and not Smalls, may have been the intended victim has not been ruled out by the LAPD. "It's pending," detective Fred Miller said.

Even stranger still, many believe that Shakur is not dead, that he faked his own death, perhaps to avoid returning to jail. Some subscribe to what has become known as the Seven-Day Theory; Shakur was shot on the seventh, the numbers of his age, 25, add up to seven, and his posthumous album, for which Shakur adopted the name Makaveli, was entitled *The Don Killuminati: The 7 Day Theory*. Chuck D, an elder statesman of rap and now a reporter for Fox News, responded to the death with a list of 18 reasons that led him to believe Shakur was still alive. They included number six: "The name of Tupac's next album is Makaveli [Machiavelli] was an Italian war strategist who faked his own death to fool his enemies. Perhaps Tupac is doing the same thing!"

The theories have been outlandish, but what is perhaps equally bizarre is how widely they are believed. (After Shakur's death, I wrote a book titled *The Killing of*



The Notorious B.I.G

Tupac Shakur. In an effort to quell the rumors, I included a photo of a very dead Shakur on the autopsy table. Still, every day I get e-mails, social media messages and phone calls from fans unable to accept that Tupac is gone.)

Critics of both the L.A. and Las Vegas police investigations have claimed that if Shakur and Smalls had been white men, the cases would have received more attention. The police, of course, see it differently. They feel they have been continually frustrated by hundreds of witnesses and friends who refuse to talk. Among some sections of the younger African-American community, a code of omerta is observed. Their distrust of the police is so ingrained, and so powerful, that they refuse to cooperate, even when a close friend has been killed or when their own lives are in danger.

In the Quad Studios shooting, the police contend that Shakur, the victim, refused to cooperate, so the investigation was simply closed. "His lawyer never called back. No one called back," explains detective George Nagy of the New York Police Department. "They more or less handled it their own way."

But Nagy – clearly frustrated – then



read about what they're doing in the newspapers," Chesnoff says.

Knight has repeatedly denied that any money from illegal activities financed Death Row. He has suggested that the federal probe is racially

goes on to outline the police's attitude in an extraordinarily bold admission of the way things really are: "Why would a guy go out of his way to investigate a case when the guy who was shot didn't even care?" he asks. "Why are you going to try hard when you have a million other cases?"

After Shakur was killed in Las Vegas, Nagy says, Las Vegas police did not contact the NYPD to see if the murder might have been related to the Quad Studios shooting. But Las Vegas police have a different story. They say they did contact New York detectives but were unable to learn who was handling the case.

The U.S. Justice Department, meanwhile, is reportedly looking into another conspiracy. The FBI is investigating Death Row's possible links to drug trafficking and money laundering by L.A. street gangs and the New York Mafia. David Chesnoff, Knight's attorney, confirms that a grand jury was convened to look into Death Row and Knight about two years ago, shortly after Knight was jailed. The grand jury has not yet made its findings public. "Unlike the President Clinton grand jury investigations, we don't get to

motivated. "Suge is an exceptionally smart and talented person who got tainted with a bad image that's really undeserved," Chesnoff says. "He's one of the few entrepreneurs who has made significant contributions to the community from which he came. I predict that, like a phoenix, he is going to rise from the ashes."

And then, out of the conspiracy box, came rumors that Smalls, too, was under investigation. The Los Angeles Times reported that federal agents were monitoring him in the week before his death as part of an investigation of criminals allegedly connected to Bad Boy.

If Smalls was under surveillance, were the agents watching when he was murdered? "I was told that 10 minutes before he was shot, Christopher was under surveillance by the FBI," Biggie Small's mother says. "Then when he is shot, all of a sudden they're not there. Maybe the FBI knows who shot him. Maybe the FBI is the one who shot him." The feds, meantime, weren't talking.

Bad Boy, though, run by Sean "Did-

dy" Combs (formerly "Puffy") was unaware of any federal surveillance of Smalls on the night of his death, and according to Kenny Meiselas, no one at Bad Boy has ever been contacted about an investigation by the FBI. Meanwhile, Combs stopped answering reporters' questions about the shootings. "Puff's thinking is that talking to reporters has not necessarily changed what they print," Meiselas says. "It's been frustrating for him."

But Wallace wonders if Combs may know more about her son's death than he is telling the police. "Does Puffy know something about my son's death? Maybe he's afraid to talk. Maybe he's intimidated," she says. "But at least do something. Give a hint. Don't just sit back and act as if he was my son's best friend and confidant.... There are a lot of people out there who know something about my son's death. But they're afraid to come forward."

Meiselas disagrees. "Sean Combs loved Biggie like a brother," he says. "He has done everything possible to assist police in finding the person who took his friend and creative partner away."

During the "Puff Daddy and the Family World Tour" in 1997, Combs repeatedly implored the crowds to remember Smalls. This could have been a sincere gesture or a publicity opportunity. "Believe me," Voletta says, "it's not the buddy-buddy thing that the media says their relationship was. They had a beautiful relationship. But it was a business relationship.... Puffy was not Christopher's best friend." When Wallace hears Combs talking about how he is looking after her financially, she bristles. "Puffy's not taking care of Biggie's mother," she

says. “Biggie is taking care of Biggie’s mother. Puffy doesn’t buy my food, pay my mortgage. Everything was in Christopher’s name. He died a very rich man and a very smart man,” she says proudly.

LAPD detectives say the Smalls case is still alive, despite many stalls throughout the years. The investigation began with 20 detectives, however; today, four homicide detectives are assigned to the case.

Meanwhile, the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department says that the Shakur investigation, which from the start was handled by two detectives and one sergeant, is also continuing. Fifteen years later, however, its investigation, though still open, has stalled as well.

The real story behind the death of Tupac Shakur may never emerge. In the meantime, his murder has become so encrusted with conspiracy theories and myths, it’s difficult to tell where the truth lies. Strip away hyperbole, innuendo, theories, and emotion, and the facts speak for themselves. Smalls’s and Shakur’s deaths have absorbed the rage, the sorrow, the confusion, and the pain in communities in which many have lost friends and relatives to violence.

In 2011, a joint law-enforcement task force investigating gang activity for more than a year in the Los Angeles area looked into both cases. The task force ended its probes without resolution. Both murders remain unsolved.



BTK Continued

He identified with both the aggressors who had bound the women and the women who were in bondage.

Young Dennis was interested in drawing but those around him criticized his drawings as showing no talent. Some derided art as “sissy.” He feared pursuing it lest he be considered girlish.

When he got to his teen years, the future BTK began secretly peeping into women’s windows. Once he broke into a house in the middle of the day and stole lingerie.

He considered seeking psychiatric help but feared that would look bad on future employment records. He did not attempt to act out fantasies with prostitutes because that would necessitate discussing them – and having a living person know about his secret self.

In 1966, three years after graduating from high school, Rader enlisted in the Air Force. He hoped that serving in the military – a rite of passage for many men from youth to full adulthood – would make him normal.

In *BTK Unholy Messenger: The Life and Crimes of the BTK Serial Killer*, Stephen Singular writes that “During four years in the military, he was a fine soldier and earned a number of awards, including the National Defense Service Medal, the Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon, and the Air Force Good Conduct Medal.” He was a sergeant when honorably discharged in 1970.

In conversations with authorities after his eventual arrest, he said that the obsessive fantasies of women bound and choking continued unabated.

Rader worked at the Coleman camping supplies factory in Wichita in the early 1970s. There he met friendly conservative Christian Paula Dietz. They wed on May 22, 1971 when Rader was 26 and Dietz 23.

He hoped marriage would cause his secret bizarre yearnings to dissipate. He thought his secrets might be comparable to the “wild oats” young men often sow before “settling down” into married life. The love of a good woman and the security of marriage would heal him.

He joined Christ Lutheran Church and attended regularly. Despite being busy with work, marriage, and church, the preoccupations remained. No matter how often he prayed to be relieved of them, they persisted.

Jack the Ripper fascinated Rader. This man, who murdered and mutilated prostitutes in London in 1888, had taunted police through letters and yet never had been caught. Rader believed Jack the Ripper must have been someone like himself who blended in well.

Rader gave the thoughts and impulses that had plagued him a name: “Factor X” or “Rex.” He drew Rex as a devilish little frog.

Occasionally Rader returned to his childhood home where his parents still lived – not to visit them – but to sneak into the basement. There

he stripped naked and dressed in women's clothes. Sometimes he would wrap a cord around his neck and stage a hanging of himself. He photographed himself in these odd postures, often with a female mask or a towel over his face. It seems possible that he hoped to purge himself of his fantasies by acting them out on himself.

Rader started thinking obsessively about a woman who worked nights at a nearby convenience store. He cased the store, imagining that he would kidnap the woman, tie her up, kill her, and leave her corpse in the countryside. Still struggling to keep his impulses at bay, he did not follow through.

He stalked a woman out of a mall. She whirled around, scaring him away.

After deciding on another particular woman as a target, he drove to the countryside and dug a grave for her. He broke into her house when she was not home and waited for her. As it got dark, she still did not come home. He feared his wife would miss him so he got in his car and returned home.

In early 1973, Rader began working for Cessna, a major company that manufactures small aircraft.

“Project Little Mex”

Julie Otero, a lovely Hispanic woman who used to work at the Coleman plant, had caught Rader's attention and held it. He often drove by her home at 803 North Edgemoor in northeast Wichita. On these drives, he saw that she had a preteen daughter. He was powerfully attracted to the daugh-

ter.

He found females with black hair, brown eyes, and brown skin like many Hispanics possess extremely attractive. He also felt there was something wrong about being attracted to women outside his own white Anglo ethnic group.

Rader had a conventional sex life with his wife but he feared even suggesting bondage to her, thinking her conservative Christian values might cause her to react with horror. Perhaps even more importantly, he did not want someone he would see in the future to know about this part of himself.

In late 1973, Rader lost his job at Cessna. The Wichita Eagle quotes Rader after he was finally arrested as stating in a taped interview that the loss of the job “was demoralizing to me.” He also said it meant he had “idle hands,” and referred to the old saying that “idle hands are the devil's workshop.”

He may have also been depressed because his appearance was changing. As his hair receded and he put on weight, he went from handsome to homely.

The unemployed Rader began casing Julie Otero's family. It had five members. Her husband, Joseph Otero, relished jokes, cars, airplanes, and drumming on bongos. Born in Puerto Rico, he came to the mainland as a child and came up of age in New York City where he met Julie. In the 1970s, Joseph worked as a mechanic and flight instructor for the Rose Hill Airport.

The Otero kids were Charlie, 15, Danny, 14, Carmen, 13, Josephine

“Josie” Otero, 11 and Joseph or “Joey,” 9.

Rader felt a special pull toward Josie, a pretty girl with long, dark hair. She liked Barbie dolls, painting, and poetry. Although Carmen was also pretty, she held no interest for Rader. He planned to intrude into the home when only Mrs. Otero and Josie were present. He gave his plans a specific title, one that focused on the girl: “Project Little Mex.” The title indicated that he assumed incorrectly that the Oteros were of Mexican background.

After stalking for several weeks, he picked a date and time to attack. From what he had observed of the movements of Otero family members, Rader was certain that only Mrs. Otero and Josie would be home around 7:30 a.m. on the morning of January 15, 1974 when he arrived at the residence equipped with rolls of black tape, rope, wire cutters, gloves, a knife, and a .22 handgun.

When Rader arrived at the Oteros' garage that morning, he saw something that alarmed him: a dog's fresh paw prints. In all his stalking of the family, he had somehow missed seeing their pet. The weather was cold but Rader was sweating profusely. His hands shook. The back door of the house opened. A 9-year-old boy let a dog into the backyard.

Little Joey Otero looked up to see a stranger in his parents' garage. Rader emerged from the garage, drew his gun and shoved Joey into the house, leaving the dog in the yard. When Rader got in the house, he was startled to see not only the

grown woman and young girl for whom he was there but an adult man. Only the Otero's three teenage children had already left the house that morning.

Joseph Otero spoke first. Thinking the man holding a gun was making a practical joke, he asked, "Who sent you over? My brother-in-law?"

Rader claimed he was a fugitive wanted in California and Mr. Otero believed him.

Rader told the four people that he was not going to harm anyone but needed food, money, and their car. He said he had to tie them up but would take what he needed and leave them unharmed.

Rader guided the four into the parents' bedroom. He set the gun close beside him and tied their hands behind their backs with pre-knotted Venetian-blind cords and adhesive tape. Mrs. Otero and Josie were on the bed and Mr. Otero and Joey were on the floor.

All four Oteros complained about pain. Mr. Otero said he had a cracked rib from a recent car accident so Rader placed a pillow and coat under him. He loosened the bonds on the others.

The Oteros continued complaining.

Distraught by the noise, Rader considered just leaving but thought they could identify him because he wore no mask so he would be arrested if he left them alive. Besides, he had come so far he wanted to see it through.

Rader placed a plastic bag over Mr. Otero's head and started chok-

ing him. When Mr. Otero stopped moving, Rader assumed he was dead.

Mrs. Otero, Josie, and Joey screamed and frantically squirmed. Rader choked Mrs. Otero. She quit moving and he believed she was dead. To Rader's shock, he heard a noise from Mr. Otero who had bitten through the bag and was gasping for air. Rader strangled him again, this time actually to death.

Rader pulled Joey into another room where he tied two t-shirts and then a bag over the boy's head. He choked Joey until he almost stopped breathing. Then Rader watched as the child tried desperately to breathe and then fell off the bed and died.

Again to Rader's shock, he heard Mrs. Otero scream, "You killed my boy!"

Rader ran back to the master bedroom and strangled Mrs. Otero to death. Josie sobbed as she watched her mother being killed. Rader took Josie down to the basement. Cellars had strong sexual associations for him as he had taken pictures of himself in drag and demeaning poses in his parents' basement. The terrified girl asked what Rader was he going to do to her.

He answered, "Well, honey, you're going to be in heaven tonight with the rest of your family."

Rader partially disrobed her and pulled her underpants down to her ankles. He tied her legs together and tightly bound her hands. He wound a cord around her neck and attached it to a sewer pipe.

"Mommy!" she screamed. "Mommy! Mommy! Mommy!"

Rader choked her to death.

Immediately after she died, the sexually aroused Rader masturbated close to her body, ejaculating on her leg.

Before leaving the house, he took Mr. Otero's wristwatch, Joey's radio, and the car keys. He drove the family's car back to the Dillon's parking lot where he had left his own car.

That afternoon, Danny, Carmen, and Charlie came home. Danny and Carmen got inside before Charlie. Puzzled by the absence of seeing anyone or hearing anything in the living room or kitchen, the pair went to their parents' bedroom.

Danny and Carmen screamed at the horrifying sight before them. Their father lay on the floor with a plastic bag tied around his head. His feet were tied at the ankles and his hands at the wrists. Their mother lay diagonally across the bed, without a bag on her head but similarly bound. Neither was breathing.

When Charlie heard his siblings scream, he ran into that room. In shock at the sight, he grabbed a yardstick and snapped it in two.

Danny went to the kitchen. He fetched a knife that he took back to his parents' room. He cut them free of the ties and shook them but they did not move. He picked up a phone to call an ambulance. There was no dial tone. The phone lines had been cut.

Danny ran outside and found

neighbor Dell Johnson whom he told about the terrible sight. Dell ran to the house and saw the bodies. Then he raced home and called police.

Officers of the Wichita Police Department arrived. They found Joey in his room, also dead and with a bag around his head.

In the cellar they found little Josie, clad in sweater and socks, panties pulled down, hanging dead by the neck from a sewer pipe. No rape had occurred but semen was on Josie's inner thigh and elsewhere in the basement.

The Oteros' car was not at their home. It was discovered that evening in a nearby Dillon's parking lot. Examined for fingerprints, the only ones found were those of the Oteros.

The only item identified as missing from the Otero residence was Joey's radio.

In the days that followed, Rader suffered no remorse or was he troubled by the possibility of being caught. He was pleased that neither his wife nor anyone else noticed anything amiss about him.

In the aftermath of the Otero murders, Rader was haunted by a deep sense of disappointment. He had expected to receive a catharsis. He had satisfied his cruel, murderous, sexually brutal impulses. He thought he should be rid of them. But he was not. They were as strong, persistent, and troubling as ever.

He had learned something from killing the Oteros: It took a lot of

strength to strangle a human to death. He purchased a small rubber ball and habitually squeezed it to build strength in his hands.

In the aftermath of the Otero massacre, fear seized Wichita. Gun sales and security-system installations skyrocketed. Women locked their doors and children were forbidden to play outside without adult supervision.

“Project Lights Out” – The Killing of Kathryn Bright

Rader believed that the reason the Otero slaughter had failed to relieve him of his obsessions was that it had not gone according to fantasized plan. The presence of males plus the disorder and noise had interfered with his ability to exorcise his impulses once and for all. He thought he might be rid of them if he could adhere more closely to his fantasies in another murder.

With her cheerful disposition, blonde hair, denim clothes and antique beaded purse, Wichita assembly line worker Kathryn Bright, 21, seemed to personify her last name. She captivated Rader. In his warped mind, admiration led to a desire to destroy.

As a reference to Bright, he called his plans for her “Project Lights Out.”

For weeks he followed and observed her. She lived alone. She had no boyfriend. He did not want a male around this time. He decided not to cut her phone line and to use rope but not Venetian-blind cord because he did not want cops connecting this crime with the Otero murders.

Rader knocked on Kathryn Bright's door on April 4, 1974, less than three months after he murdered the Oteros. No one answered. He walked to the back of the house and broke the glass back door. Her hid in her closet. While huddled among her clothes, he touched the .22 and accidentally fired the gun. Startled, he worried Kathryn Bright might smell gunpowder but stayed put. Excitement stirred through him when he heard the front door open.

Rader exited the bedroom and pointed the gun at – to his surprise and disappointment – two people: Kathryn Bright and her 19-year-old brother Kevin Bright.

Rader later recalled that he tried to “ease them” with the same story he had told the Oteros: He was a fugitive from California and wanted only food and a car. At gunpoint, Rader ordered Kevin to tie up Kathryn in a bedroom. Kevin obeyed.

Then Rader ordered Kevin into the other bedroom where Rader bound him with a stocking and turned the stereo on loud. Rader tightened the fabric around Kevin's neck. Kevin desperately fought back and broke free. He grabbed Rader's .357 out of Rader's belt and fired at Rader but the gun jammed. Rader wrestled the gun away, then brought out his .22 and shot. The bullet hit Kevin in the forehead. He crumpled to the floor, unconscious.

When Kevin came to, he heard his sister being strangled. He raced into the room in which she was tied up on the bed. Kevin jumped on Rader and grabbed his .357. He tried to fire it and it jammed again.

Rader reacted by shooting the .22 into Kevin's mouth. It ripped open his lip and took out two teeth. Kevin hit the floor but remained conscious. Rader turned his attention to Kathryn. Kevin managed to run out of the house. The bleeding Kevin shouted for help. A driver picked him up and took him to Wesley Medical Center.

In the meantime, Kathryn fought desperately. Rader took out his knife and stabbed her seven times in the back and four times in the belly before fleeing the house. He considered the crime "a total mess . . . I didn't have control."

The police found Kathryn, having crawled out of the bedroom, lying in a pool of blood on the living room floor. She was rushed to the same hospital where Kevin was being treated and she clung to life for five hours before dying.

Kevin was in the hospital two weeks before being released. He told police the story the assailant had told him about being a fugitive from California. Police were uncertain as to how much credibility to give Kevin's description of the man due to confusion from his injuries.

When Rader fled, he tried to start Kathryn's car but could not. He ran to the Wichita State University campus where he had parked his own car. Covered in sweat, he drove home and cleaned up. Again he was relieved that his wife suspected nothing.

But again he was disappointed that he had had to deal with someone other than his target and that the crime had not gone as planned. Later he was disappointed to find

that this crime had also failed to relieve him of his troubling obsessions.

In October 1974, six months after Kathryn's killing, a man was arrested for trying to have sex with a duck. While questioned, the would-be duck rapist confessed to murdering the Oteros. He implicated two other men whom cops soon arrested. They also confessed to the murders.

On October 22, 1974, a man phoned Don Granger, director of community affairs for The Wichita Eagle and head of the Secret Witness hotline. The caller stated that the murderer of the Oteros had placed a letter in a mechanical engineering textbook at the main downtown branch of the Wichita Public Library. Then he hung up.

Granger reported the call to the police. Detective Bruce Drowatsky searched the library and found the typed letter. It was cluttered with spelling errors and grammatical mistakes but its message was clear. Its author said he wanted to save taxpayer money and police time by informing them that the three in custody were innocent of the Oteros' slaughter. The author had committed the crime by himself. He then described the positions in which the victims had been found, the manner in which each had been killed, and the clothing they wore at the time of death. The writer said he stole little Joey's radio and Mr. Otero's wristwatch.

Then the icy, callous tone of the letter changed as the writer claimed he was sorry the murders were committed but that he had little control over the "monster" that

entered his brain and that he as well as "society" was hurt by it. He wrote, "Maybe you can stop him. I can't." In a P.S., the writer said, "Since sex criminals do not change their M.O., or by nature cannot do so, I will not change mine. The code words for me will be . . . Bind them, torture them, kill them, B.T.K."

The WPD decided not to publicize the letter. The letter did serve to clear the three emotionally disturbed men. Only investigators and the murderer could know the details it recited.

After a period of unemployment Rader began working for ADT Security Services. He went to homes throughout Wichita to install security services. Some people told him they wanted security installed to protect against a murderer who was at large. Rader expected knowledge of security systems to help him with future crimes.

When Rader's wife informed him that she was pregnant in 1975, he hoped that becoming a father might finally free him from his murderous urges. Brian Rader was born that year. As with the military, prayer, and marriage, Rader was disappointed to find fatherhood did nothing to alleviate his obsessions.

Rader's son Brian entered the Cub Scouts as soon as he was old enough. His father became a troop leader. Rader especially enjoyed teaching the boys knot tying. In the mid-1970s, Rader also enrolled at the Wichita State University where he majored in the administration of justice. He received his B.S. in 1979.

Popular with his neighbors, Rader often told them that he appreciated

living in Park City because the suburb had a much lower crime rate than nearby Wichita. Most people liked Rader but a few were put off by his prudishness. Rader was disgusted by off-color jokes and swearing. He often objected when men swore around women.

“Project Waterfall” – The Impulse Killing Shirley Vian

Between “projects,” Rader fondly mulled over memories of murders he had committed. He also obsessively fantasized about possible future murders.

As The BTK Strangler Serial Killer Bondage Photos and Artwork notes, “He used tracing paper to reproduce female images from photographs, and then would add ropes and other bindings. Rader was obsessed with cutting out magazine and newspaper ads of women models and sketching binding materials over them.”

He stalked women and considered various candidates for killing. But he did not strike again until three years after Kathryn Bright’s death.

Two Wichita women lived together in a house near a street called Hydraulic so Rader called his plan to murder one or both of them “Project Waterfall.”

On the morning of March 17, 1977, carrying a briefcase filled with what he called his “hit kit,” he knocked on their front door. No one answered. He decided not to break in.

He recalled, “I was all keyed up.”

As he walked down the sidewalk, he encountered 6-year-old Steve

Vian on his way home from an errand to the grocery store. His mother suffered a recent mild sickness so she had sent him out to buy groceries. Rader stopped Steve, telling the boy, “I’m a police detective. I’m looking for these people.” He displayed a photograph of his own wife and son and asked if Steve had seen them. Steve said he had not and continued home.

His brother Bud and sister Stephanie, both small children, were watching TV but Steve did not join them. After he put down the groceries, he crawled in bed with his ailing mother.

There was a knock on the door. One of the children answered and Rader again stated that he was a detective. After briefly chatting with the children, he forced his way in. He immediately turned off the TV, lowered the blinds, and showed a gun to Bud and Stephanie.

Hearing a commotion, Shirley Vian, still wearing a pink nightgown, ran into the living room. She asked Rader not to hurt her and her children. He assured her he would not. He ordered the three kids into the bathroom. Then he told Mrs. Vian to gather toys and a blanket. She did. Rader tied the door of the bathroom to another door and shoved the bed against the door to trap the children.

Although Rader was disgusted by the lingering odor of vomit left because Mrs. Vian had thrown up early that morning as well as the relatively unkempt appearance of the house, he was determined to see “Project Waterfall” through to a satisfactorily brutal conclusion.

He told Mrs. Vian he was going to tie her up and rape her. She objected that she was sick. As Rader began tying her, she vomited. He went to the kitchen and poured a glass of water for her to settle her stomach. She drank it.

“Leave our Mom alone!” was one of the messages the kids shouted as they banged frantically against the bathroom door.

Little Steve managed to peek over the transom. He saw his mother tied up lying face down with a plastic bag tightly drawn over her head. Stephanie climbed up and also saw her mother. The children screamed in terror and demanded the man stop. Bud pushed against a little bathroom window so hard he broke the glass and badly cut his hand. The ruckus rankled Rader who was always upset by disorder. When the phone rang, Rader ran from the house, leaving Mrs. Vian dead and the children screaming in the bathroom. If he had had the time, he would have murdered all three children.

It was a relief to get back to his quiet and orderly office at ADT.

This scene had been another disappointment: He had not had time to masturbate during or after Mrs. Vian’s murder.

After the intruder departed, Steve managed to ram his little body so hard against the bathroom door that he knocked it ajar. He squeezed through. Horrified by the sight of his mother bound and not breathing, her panties next to her, he ran outside and asked neighbors to call police.

The children were interviewed by authorities and then by a psychologist. They moved to Oklahoma to be raised by their maternal grandparents.

Two detectives working on the Shirley Vian homicide believed BTK could be the culprit but most thought that unlikely. The Otero children had been killed but not the Vian kids. BTK had not struck in three years so it was commonly believed that he had died, was incarcerated, or in another area.

“Project Foxhunt” – The Vicious Murder of Nancy Fox

In late 1977, Rader started stalking Nancy Fox, a young woman employed at Helzberg’s Jewelry Store. When he peeked into a window of her home, he saw that she kept a clean and tidy home. He admired that as well as her evident kindness. In his twisted psyche, admiring a woman led to wanting to kill her.

On December 8, 1977, he began “Project Foxhunt” by breaking into her house through a rear window and waiting in her closet until she returned from work. When she got to her bedroom, Rader burst out of the closet. Seeing a strange man in her bedroom, she ordered him out and threatened to call the police.

He told her he had cut her phone line. He added, “I just want to have sex and take some pictures of you but I have to tie you up to take pictures.” Realizing she could not fight him off, she said, “Let’s get this over with.” She asked his plans. He said, “I’m going to tie you up and then probably rape you.”

She said, “You’re sick.”

He easily agreed, “Yeah, I’m sick, ma’am but that’s the way it’s got to be.”

She asked if she could use the bathroom. He said she could but must be nude when she came out. Nancy Fox was naked when she exited the bathroom.

Rader clamped handcuffs on her and she got into bed. He began putting other binds on her with pantyhose and a sweater. To terrorize her even more, he told her he was the serial murderer BTK. In her terror, she squirmed around as she fought desperately, clawing his testicles in the process with her handcuffed hands.

The next morning, Rader called police from a pay phone and said they would find a homicide at 843 South Pershing and that the victim was Nancy Fox. Cops found her with her ankles bound with a sweater. Several sets of pantyhose were tightly wrapped around her neck and the hands that were cinched behind her back. She was gagged with pantyhose.

For the first time, Rader had spent as long as he wished with a victim. Her face was grotesquely swollen from the repeated cycle of choking, releasing, and choking. After he killed her, he masturbated while gazing at her corpse. The police found semen in a negligee lying next to her head.

Rader never had raped a victim and never would. He masturbated either while or after strangling a victim if things went as planned. When they went awry, he left the scene of the crime without an orgasm.

In January 1978, Mrs. Rader told her husband she was pregnant again. She delivered daughter Kerri a few months later.

Rader kept busy working for ADT and studying for classes at Wichita State.

Paula Rader discovered a poem her husband had written. It frightened her and she asked him about it. “We’re working on a BTK thing at school,” he said. She accepted the explanation.

In early February 1978, The Wichita Eagle received a card on which a poem was written that began, “SHIRLEYLOCKS SHIRLEYLOCKS WILT THOU BE MINE.” Reporters and editors as the paper realized it probably referred to the 1977 murder of Shirley Vian and turned it over to police.

On February 10, Wichita’s KAKE-TV received a letter that included a poem entitled “Oh! Death to Nancy.” A drawing of Nancy Fox lying dead was with the letter. The writer expressed frustration that there was not more publicity. He stated, “How many do I have to Kill before I get a name in the paper or some national attention.”

He also stated that he would have killed the Vian children if time had permitted. He continued that he would have enjoyed hanging the girl: “what a beautiful sexual relief that would have been. Josephine, when I hung her really turn me on; her pleading for mercy then the rope took whole, she helpless; staring at me with wide terror fill eyes the rope getting tighter-tighter.” As always, Rader’s grammar was poor

but his meaning was all-too-clear.

The Mysterious and Fatal “Factor X,” also called Rex

The letter speculated about what the author called “Factor X,” a mysterious impulse that drove the writer along with other serial murderers. Rader wrote, “There is no help, no cure, except death or being caught and put away.” He called having such desires a “terrible nightmare” but continued, “I don’t lose any sleep over it. After a thing like Fox, I go home and go about life like anyone else.” He wrote that he planned to murder another victim.

Police announced that a serial murderer was loose in Wichita. Terror gripped the city as people bought locks and guns.

That fear had to have affected 63-year-old Anna Williams. She had suffered a terrible trauma the previous year, in 1978, when her husband died. She sought treatment for depression and other health problems. Seeking to lift her spirits by keeping active, she was at a square dance on Saturday night, April 28, 1979.

While she was at the square dance, Rader broke out a basement window at her house at 615 South Pinecrest. He cut her phone line and searched the house. Happy to see no dog, he headed to her bedroom where he stole jewelry, a scarf, and \$35 in cash. Fearful but excited, he hid in her closet, eagerly anticipating the fulfillment of “Project Pine Cone.”

He had selected Anna Williams as his next victim because he thought

her age meant she would put up little fight against a 34-year-old attacker, although by now Rader had gotten rather flabby.

He waited and waited but still she did not come home. Time was running out. Rader knew his wife would miss him if he did not return before midnight. Frustrated by the delay, he left the closet and went through the house looking for more items to steal. Before departing, he returned to her bedroom and left rope and part of a broomstick handle beside her bed. At least that would scare her when she found them and inform the cops that BTK had been there.

When Anna returned at about 11 p.m., she was indeed alarmed to find her house in disarray and the broom handle and rope by her bed. She tried to phone the Wichita Police Department but found her line was cut. She made the call from a neighbor’s house.

Six weeks later, on June 15, 1979, Anna received a large manila envelope in the mail. It was addressed to her late husband Clarence R. Williams. Inside she found her stolen scarf and jewelry, a typed poem and drawings. The drawings were of a naked woman gagged and bound, her eyes wide with fright.

The poem was entitled, “Oh ANNA Why Didn’t You Appear.” Now there was no doubt the intruder into Anna’s home was BTK. She moved out of the house and in with a daughter.

On June 16, 1979 KAKE-TV received an envelope with another scarf and a letter confirming it was BTK who had broken into Anna’s

house.

Police investigators determined that a Wichita State University copier had been used for these latest BTK communications.

Following these letters, BTK would not write again for 25 years. People speculated he had died, been imprisoned, or left town.

Rader was proud when his son Brian became an Eagle Scout and his daughter Kerri became a high school golf champion during the early 1980s.

Although Rader was reputed to be humorless, he amused the Scout troop one evening during this time period when he and another man dressed in women’s clothes and put on a funny skit. The Scouts hooted and howled.

“Project Cookie” – The 1985 Murder of Neighbor Marine Hedge

Unlike Rader’s previous victims, 53-year-old Marine Hedge resided in Park City. In fact, her home was only six doors away from his. The friendly woman frequently smiled and waved at her neighbors. Originally from Arkansas, her high-pitched voice carried a hint of a drawl that reminded some of the voice of singer Dolly Parton. Marine Hedge enjoyed gardening, playing bingo, cooking, attending her Baptist church, and dressing nicely. The recently widowed grandmother worked at a coffee shop which may have been why Rader named his nefarious plans for his good neighbor “Project Cookie.”

Rader had always avoided attacking

women in Park City but found an advantage in it now because it was so easy to stalk her since they normally saw each other and waved. He was wary of younger women because Nancy Fox had so painfully clawed his testicles. He believed Marine Hedge would be unable to put up much of a fight. In addition, she had no dog and no regular gentleman caller.

In early 1985, Rader hid rolls of black plastic, together with thumbtacks, at the Christ Lutheran Church. He had something special planned for Mrs. Hedge – or rather for her corpse.

The Scout troop to which his son Brian belonged was holding a campout on the Friday of April 26, 1985. Since the plan was to campout until the next day, Rader saw an opportunity to murder without fretting about getting home to his wife before she worried about him.

He was wearing his Scout leader uniform when he complained about a terrible headache and left the campsite. He changed into dark clothes. Carrying a bowling bag with his hit-kit inside, he walked into a bowling alley. There he ordered a beer that he swished inside his mouth and also purposefully spilled on his clothes. He called a taxi. He asked the driver to let him out near his home. Deliberately slurring his words to feign drunkenness, he said, “I need to wear this off.”

To his delight, Rader saw that Marine’s car was parked in her driveway. He cut her phone line. However, when he broke in through the back door, he was disappointed to find she was not home. He looked

around the house until he was startled by the sound of a car door slamming and a man’s voice. He ducked into her bedroom closet, disappointed that yet again another male might be on the scene.

In the closet, Rader heard a lengthy albeit muffled conversation between Marine and her male companion. Then he heard the welcome sounds of the man leaving, the door closing behind him, and the car driving off.

Marine was in her bed asleep when Rader made his move. He left the closet and flipped on a light. Then he got on the bed. Awakened, Marine screamed, “What in the hell is going on?”

Rader choked her for a long time, his hands tiring in the process, before Marine died. He removed her sleeping garments, wrapped her in blankets, and carried the corpse to her car and put it in the trunk. Then he drove her car to Christ Lutheran Church. He tacked black plastic over the church windows with thumbtacks so people could not tell that the lights were on. He took the body from the trunk and dragged it into the church.

He took her body to the basement, a part of a building that, as previously noted, had special connotations for him. He put black high-heeled shoes on her feet, tied her hands behind her and stuck a gag in her mouth.

He photographed the corpse posed in various positions.

When he finished, he put her back in the trunk and drove to a wooded area where he placed the body in

a culvert. Then he drove her car to the shopping center where he had left his own car. He took his car back to the church where he cleaned himself up and changed into his Scout leader’s uniform. Then he drove his own car from the church to the campsite. As usual, no one noticed anything amiss with Dennis Rader.

Marine’s car was found a few days later and her decomposing body was discovered a few days after the car was found. No BTK victim had previously been found outdoors or been murdered in Park City so police made no connection.

“Project Piano” – The 1986 Murder of Vicki Wegerle

Often while working at his ADT job and sometimes on lunch breaks, Rader passed in a car or on foot the Wegerle home. He sometimes heard Vicki Wegerle playing piano. He was entranced by her talent and how pleasing the notes and chords of her music sounded. He called his plan to murder her “Project Piano.”

On September 16, 1986, Mrs. Wegerle drove her 9-year-old daughter Stephanie to school. Back at home, Mrs. Wegerle’s 2-year-old son Brandon was on the floor playing with toys and Mrs. Wegerle was playing her piano when they heard a knock on the door. Mrs. Wegerle went to answer the door.

Rader had disguised himself as telephone repair worker. He wore a hardhat with a Southwestern Bell logo and displayed a fake ID. He told Mrs. Wegerle he had to check her phone line and she let him in. At first, Rader pretended to test her phone. Then he pulled out a gun.

He told Mrs. Wegerle they must go to her bedroom.

Weeping, she told Rader she expected her husband soon. This was not just a ploy as she did in fact expect husband home for lunch.

Rader said, "I hope he won't be home too soon." Then he forced her into the bedroom as her toddler continued playing in the living room.

When Rader began to tie her up, she fought and they both landed on the floor. She scratched his face. She begged and then prayed as Rader strangled her. When she was close to death, Rader took out a camera and snapped a series of photographs.

Leaving a 2-year-old child alone in a house with a dead woman, Rader stole the Wegerle car and drove it to the shopping center where he had left his own ADT truck. As he drove off in the truck, he saw Emergency Medical Services racing toward the Wegerle residence.

When Bill Wegerle came home for lunch, he discovered his wife's almost naked body sprawled on the bedroom floor and called 911. Police made no connection between this crime and BTK. They believed it likely Mr. Wegerle had murdered his wife. He took two polygraph tests – and failed both. However, cops were never able to gather enough information to charge him.

For 18 years, Bill Wegerle lived under a cloud of suspicion. Children taunted Stephanie and Brandon as having a father who had murdered their mother.

“Project Dogside” – The 1991 Murder of Delores Davis

In late 1990, Dennis Rader became president of Christ Lutheran's Congregation. Everyone on the 12-member church council was delighted with his selection and impressed by how prepared and efficient he was when he chaired meetings.

During January of 1991, Rader began stalking attractive Delores Davis, 62, who lived in the country a half-mile east of Park City. Rader was happy to learn that she lived alone. He did not want to run into a male again. Retired from an oil and gas company, Mrs. Davis had a part-time job selling Mary Kay cosmetics. She loved animals. When her grandchildren visited, she often sat with them on the couch and watched films that revolved around dogs, cats, or horses.

Mrs. Davis lived near a dog kennel so Rader called his plans for her "Project Dogside."

One evening he peered through her window but her cat struck the window with its paw, scaring Rader off.

On January 19, 1991, he pushed a cinder block through her sliding-glass patio door.

Awakened, she ran into the kitchen where she saw an intruder. The shocked woman asked if he had hit her house with a car. He said he had and that he was a fugitive from the law who needed to take some food and then her car. She said he could not be in her house.

He insisted, "You've got to cooper-

ate. I've got a club, I've got a gun, I've got a knife. You take your choice how you want it."

She promised to cooperate.

He handcuffed her. She said she expected a visitor and "he" would soon be there. Rader believed her and was dismayed that his luck could be so bad once again. He forced her into her bedroom and started wrapping pantyhose around her throat. She begged him not to kill her and he said, "Too late." He strangled her to death.

Taking some personal items, he dragged her body outside and deposited it in the trunk of her own car. He drove her corpse to a lake and hid it in bushes. He drove her car back to her house and walked to where he had left his own car. He drove back to the lake and hid the body under a bridge.

After spending the next day with a Scout troop, he drove to Mrs. Davis's corpse. He was upset to find that animals had already eaten away at her face. He returned to his car and fetched a female mask. He placed the mask over her face. He shot a series of pictures of her in various bondage positions, and then covered her corpse with debris.

Police found her decomposing corpse two weeks later but as with the Vicki Wegerle murder, they did not connect this murder to BTK. As far as the police knew, the last BTK murder was that of Nancy Fox in 1977.

BTK Productions

In 2004, as Rader was approaching

59 years of age, he was an unattractive, middle-aged man whose life was a routine of work as a Park City compliance officer. He had held this job, which consisted of enforcing minor ordinances about such things as how high grass could grow in a lawn and ensuring dog owners kept their pets under control and on leashes and had current licenses since the mid-1990s. It had been over a decade since his last murder and a quarter of a century since he had written to anyone as BTK. Brian and Kerri Rader were no longer at home. Outside of work, his life was taken up with church attendance as well as the day-to-day chores he and his wife shared as a long married couple.

Although he had reached the end of his killing spree 13 years earlier with the murder of Delores Davis, he was not content to take his terrible secrets to the grave with him. To stave off this possibility, he came up with a plan he called "BTK Productions." He would take all drawings, photographs, writings, and other memoirs associated with his crimes and put them on CDs and put the CDs into a safe-deposit box. His will would stipulate that the box be opened after his death.

The CDs would treat his murders as a movie – one that would certainly leave the entire community of Wichita, particularly those who knew him, in shock. He would die with the knowledge that he had outwitted them all and not lost a day of his freedom. Among those whom BTK Productions would shock were his wife and children but, despite his later insistence that he loved his family, he was quite willing to put them through this trauma and resulting shame.

On January 17, 2004, Rader read an article in The Wichita Eagle that upset him. The article was headlined: "BTK Case Unsolved, 30 Years Later." Reporter Hurst Lavinia quoted authorities who believed BTK was probably dead or perhaps imprisoned. When he read that Wichita attorney Robert Beattie was writing a book about BTK, he was particularly disturbed. Rader was offended that anyone could presume to know about him and why he had murdered.

The Wichita Eagle received a letter postmarked March 17, 2004. Inside the envelope was a photocopy of a driver's license as well as three photocopied photographs of a dead woman in three different poses. The newspaper passed both envelope and contents on to the Wichita Police Department.

The photographs were of Vicki Wegerle, who had been strangled to death on September 16, 1986. The license was hers as well. Authorities finally realized that BTK had murdered Vicki – and that husband Bill Wegerle, despite failing two polygraph tests, was innocent.

The return address on the envelope read: Bill Thomas Killman; 1684 S. Oldmanor; Wichita, KS 67202. No one by that name lived in Wichita and cops instantly recognized the initials as BTK. There was no Wichita street called Oldmanor.

BTK was back.

Headed by Lieutenant Ken Landwehr, a fresh investigation began. On March 25, 2004, Lt. Landwehr held a news conference announcing the re-opening of the BTK inves-

tigation. He discussed the crimes and then tried to directly address the culprit, saying, "The individual would be very interesting to talk to."

Leads poured into hotlines and a website called CatchBTK.com was set up that also took leads.

Profilers were divided about whom to look for. Some were convinced BTK had to be a loner. A man with a wife and family could not possibly commit such horrible crimes without someone realizing something was wrong with him. Others guessed the truth that BTK had mastered the art of blending in and that his apparent normalcy functioned as the perfect cover.

Semen samples tested for DNA showed that BTK was a Caucasian man and would probably be in his 50s or 60s by 2004.

Police combed Wichita taking DNA swabs from the mouths of middle-aged white men, most of whom easily cooperated. No swabs from men in Park City were taken.

As the hunt for BTK intensified, Rader contemplated a final, most hideous project. A woman would be strangled and wrapped in diaphanous plastic and hung from the ceiling. However, he never worked out the specifics of how to do this.

On October 22, 2004, he left an envelope at a UPS drop box. It was labeled "BTK Field Grams." Inside were magazine pictures of children with bindings pinned across their faces and bodies. There was a poem entitled "Detective Ken Landwehr" that threatened detectives.

Finally, there was a purported history of BTK.

Lt. Landwehr held a press conference on November 30, 2004. He revealed that BTK had given what he claimed was his history. The detective related that history.

Not surprisingly, most of what Rader had written about himself was false. Unlike the character he described, his father had not died when he was young nor did Rader frequent Wichita prostitutes. He was too tight with money to patronize hookers. Indeed, as far as is known, he never performed an actual sex act with any woman other than his wife. He masturbated and ejaculated when or immediately after murdering but did not rape. He had no affairs. It is possible he believed he remained “pure” if he did not commit adultery.

The claim that his father died young may have reflected a psychological truth: He felt his mother was so much more important that she might as well have raised him alone. His mother was the one who disciplined Rader as a child – and sexually aroused him while spanking him. The boy aroused during punishment became a man who viciously punished those who aroused him.

December 8, 2004 was the 27th anniversary of Nancy Fox’s murder. Rader marked that day by making a call from a pay phone to a QuikTrip store. When the QuikTrip clerk picked up the phone, he heard a man talk about a package near the intersection of Interstate 35 and Ninth St. When the clerk seemed uninterested, Rader slammed the phone down.

Puzzled, the clerk mentioned the odd phone call to his supervisor, who called police about it. Cops drove to that intersection but found nothing.

Five days later, William Ervin walked across a nearby park and picked up a white plastic bag. Inside was a doll with make-up on its eyes and lips, hands tied behind its back and Nancy Fox’s driver’s license attached to an ankle. An accompanying paper described Nancy’s murder.

Police officers searched stores that sold the doll. Surveillance tapes were examined but all the purchasers of the doll were females.

The white bag came from Leeker’s grocery store in Park City but this was not considered significant. Both Rader’s mother and his wife’s mother had worked at that store.

Since Rader was a serial murderer, he thought it would be witty to place a communication in a cereal box. He placed a Special K box in the open metal bed of a randomly chosen pickup parked in a Home Depot parking lot.

The pickup’s owner thought the cereal box was trash and consigned it to a wastebasket at his house. After a few days, the woman he lived with saw the box in the trash and noted the handwritten “BTK” and “bomb” on top of it. She looked inside and saw a necklace and computer paper. Although she was puzzled, she waited several days before contacting the police.

Hearing nothing about the Special K communication on the news, on

January 17, 2005, Rader left a Post Toasties box propped up against a road sign.

He sent a postcard to Wichita radio station KAKE. The return address read “S Killett” and 803 North Edgemoor, the address of the Oteros when murdered. On the postcard, Rader stated the address where the Post Toasties box could be found.

Police found the box. Inside it was a doll that had rope tied around its neck and was fastened to a pipe. The paper stated “LITTLE MEX,” a clear reference to Josephine Otero. Experts divide serial murderers into organized and disorganized. Rader wrote on a paper placed in the box, “An Organized Serial Killer Did the Murders.”

That same paper had a question: “Can I communicate with Floppy and not be traced to a computer. Be honest.”

Officers were shocked by the naïve inquiry. Could BTK really not know that experts could discover on which computer information had been input in a floppy disk? Could he be ignorant of the ability of computer experts to retrieve deleted information? Could he really expect police to answer the question honestly?

Cops were wary, thinking this could be a trick. However, they took out a newspaper ad reading: “Rex, it will be OK.”

Rader saw this ad. He sent a postcard to KAKE: “Tell WD that I receive the Newspaper Tip for a go.” Bowing to police wishes, KAKE did not publicize the postcard.

Rader mailed a floppy disk to Wichita Fox TV station KSAS. It was turned over to police. The file that immediately came up stated, "This is a test." It continued that the author wanted more communications through the newspaper.

Then cops retrieved deleted data. The names "Christ Lutheran Church" and "Dennis" popped up. Detective Randy Stone googled Christ Lutheran Church and discovered that Dennis Rader was congregation president. He then learned that Dennis Rader was a Park City compliance officer who resided at 6220 Independence St. in that suburb for over 30 years.

Officers had to be cautious. After all, the initial questions about whether or not cops could trace a floppy disk or retrieve deleted information from it – with the expectation that police would not mislead a serial murderer – had seemed astoundingly stupid. The whole thing could be an attempt by BTK to send police on a wild goose chase or, worse yet, to arrest someone BTK was setting up to take the fall.

Rader was placed under 24-hour surveillance. Detectives obtained Kerri Rader's Kansas State University medical records. Her pap smear was examined. A lab reported that DNA proved that the man who had left semen in the Otero basement was Kerri's father.

This did not conclusively prove that Rader was the man. Kerri could have been conceived through rape or an extra-marital affair. But the chance that Dennis Rader was the biological father of the girl who

called him "Dad" was enough to justify an arrest.

BTK's Arrest

On February 25, 2005, Rader was driving home for lunch when he noticed a police car behind him with its red light flashing. He parked his Park City compliance officer's truck at the side of the road. Other police cars surrounded him.

"Hit the ground!" an officer shouted.

Rader got out of his vehicle and dropped to his belly. He was handcuffed. A detective asked if he carried any weapons and Rader answered, "A knife." It was taken from a pocket.

A small smile was on Rader's face as he rode in the transport car. He saw Lieutenant Landwehr. Rader said, "Hello, Mr. Landwehr."

The detective replied, "Hello Mr. Rader. Do you know why you're going downtown?"

The Christ Lutheran Church president said, "I have a pretty good idea."

After Rader was swabbed for DNA at the station, Detective Landwehr recited the famous Miranda rights. Rader said he did not want a lawyer.

At first, the two men discussed the BTK case in general terms. Then Det. Landwehr placed the disk Rader had mailed on the desk. Calmly Rader said, "I'm BTK."

Soon after, Rader asked in a hurt tone, "Why did you lie to me, Ken?"

Lt. Landwehr answered, "Because I was trying to catch you."

For the next several hours, Rader discussed his 10 murders in a matter-of-fact tone. He expressed no remorse but voiced concern about ramifications for his family and church. He seemed relieved at finally dropping the mask of normalcy he had worn for so many years.

When Rader's DNA test returned from the lab, it stated that his DNA was that found in the semen at the Otero, Fox and Wegerle crime scenes.

While cops were delighted to have BTK in custody, they were saddened at the task of having to inform his family.

Rader's 79-year-old mother had trouble understanding the news. Paula, Brian, and Kerri Rader were shattered, each telling the police that there must be some terrible mistake. His brothers were amazed. They also insisted that no one in the family had ever been abused sexually or in any other way. They said they had grown up in a moral and loving family.

The mood throughout Wichita and its surrounding environs was one of celebration and relief. The boogeyman that had terrified and haunted citizens for over three decades had finally been run to ground. A storeowner put up a sign: "Even the dogs feel safer now."

Rader's mugshot was widely seen. In pictures prior to his arrest, he looks homely yet amiable. The hard, cruel expression on the mugshot

renders him ugly. It seems likely this may have been the face seen by his victims.

While in jail awaiting trial, Rader spent much time reading the Bible. Pastor Clark visited once a week.

Paula, Brian, and Kerri Rader never visited and refused all media requests for interviews. Rader received a bitter letter from his daughter in which she told him he had ruined all their lives. Rader wept.

“Guilty, Your Honor,” Rader pleaded

Judge Gregory Waller, a black jurist with a reputation for fairness, set a trial date of June 27, 2005.

There were various pleas open to Rader. He could plead not guilty by reason of insanity; he could enter a plea of no contest, acknowledging the evidence was there to convict without acknowledging guilt; he could, despite the enormous evidence against him, plead not guilty. Or he could save Wichita the expense and time of a trial and plead guilty.

His attorneys were public defenders Sarah McKinnon and Steve Osburn. The lead prosecutor was Sedgwick County D.A. Nola Foulston.

They were all in the courtroom, along with Lt. Landwehr and other BTK detectives, as well as several family members of BTK victims, on the morning of June 27.

Rader was dressed in a cream-colored suit, crisp white shirt, and dark tie. He wore a trimmed goatee.

Nothing could make him appear handsome but he looked polished.

Judge Waller asked Rader what his plea was. “Guilty, Your Honor,” he replied.

Judge Waller proceeded to question Rader closely about exactly what had transpired at each murder scene. Writer Singular wrote that Judge Waller might have wanted “a public purging of the evil Rader had created, the torment and hatefulness he’d imposed on an entire city for more than three decades.”

Rader answered clearly and precisely. Occasionally, emotion would come through as he blushed, a hand trembled, or sweat burst on his forehead. He often used the term “put them down” as if describing euthanizing dogs or cats.

When discussing his crimes against Kathryn and Kevin Bright, he noted that the bonds he had tied them up with were from their house. He elaborated, “If I had brought my own stuff and used my stuff, Kevin Bright would be dead today. I’m not bragging, that’s just a fact.”

Judge Waller set the sentencing hearing for August 17. Sentencing Rader to death was not an option for the judge to consider because all of the murders Rader had committed had occurred prior to 1994 when Kansas reinstated the death penalty.

Most everyone believed Rader would be imprisoned for life. Nola Foulston wanted to ensure that he had no chance of freedom even if he lived to be over 100. On the first nine murders, he could apply for parole after 15 years even

if he received life with the terms served concurrently. On the 10th count, Delores Davis’s murder, D.A. Foulston sought the “hard 40,” meaning he could not apply for parole until he served 40 years. Since he was 60 at the time, it would guarantee he had to be 100 before he could apply for parole.

On the first day of his sentencing hearing, August 17, 2005, Rader appeared pale and thin in a dark blue coat.

D.A. Foulston was confident and dynamic as she displayed photographs of his victims, their eyes grotesquely bulged due to strangulation and their partially clad bodies posed in various degrading positions.

The next day, she put up pictures he had taken of himself. In some, he had snuck into his parents’ basement to photograph himself in a mask, a wig, and women’s clothes. He was also in that basement when he posed with a black bra, bindings, a towel over his face, and a rope from his neck simulating his own hanging.

Other pictures had been shot outdoors such as the one in which he photographed himself inside a grave he had dug, tied up, and wearing a female mask. Singular observes, “Pain and shame and desperation leaked out from these photos.” They were photographs in which he appeared to punish himself by turning himself into a victim.

In the afternoon, surviving victims and their relatives gave victim impact statements. Charlie Otero stated, “Dennis Rader caused ir-

reparable damage to my blood family.” However, he asserted that he and his surviving siblings remained strong, remarking, “Dennis Rader has failed in his efforts to kill the Otero family.”

Kevin Bright testified, “My sister suffered so much.” He noted that it took her hours to die. Kevin Bright said he has permanent nerve damage from the gunshot wounds that causes his body to sometimes “overheat and become weak” and left him with a “digestive system [that] is out of whack” so he has to be extra careful about what he eats. He elaborated that even though he was injured, “I’m glad I was there that day to stop him from acting out his sexual fantasy on [his sister].”

Rader burst into tears.

Jeff Davis, son of last victim, Delores Davis, appeared to embody the fury of the community. He reviled Rader as “social sewage,” “a rabid animal,” “a social malignancy,” and “a quagmire of madness” who had “blasphemed in God’s house.”

Public Defender Steve Osburn asked Judge Waller for leniency, stating that Rader had “in effect . . . turned himself in” and pointing out his cooperation with law enforcement

Then Judge Waller asked if the defendant had anything to say before sentence was passed. As Rader rose, all of his surviving victims and family members of victims who were in the courtroom stood up and walked out the courtroom. He appeared startled by this walk out. Then, with tears on his face, he began a remarkable, rambling speech. “I

brought the community, my family and the victims dishonor. It was all self-centered, selfish. I’m a sexual predator.” He acknowledged more than once that he had been “selfish” and “dishonest.”

He mused on similarities between himself and those he killed. He noted that both he and Joseph Otero had served in the Air Force, that he enjoyed gardening like Marine Hedge and that he was fond of animals like Delores Davis. This led him to observe, “I have a lot of memories as a kid with a dog. A boy and a dog is what you have to have when you’re a kid.” He appeared to see no contradiction between this and the cruelty he’d shown to animals. He noted that little Josephine Otero had liked Barbie dolls as his own daughter Kerri had at that age.

His drawing of parallels between his life and those of the people he murdered was tone deaf and pathetic.

He talked about his respect for law enforcement and said, “Sedgwick County has a good police force.”

He began thanking people involved in his case. He stated fondly, “Sarah (another public defender) has been my workhorse.” He thanked the person who cut hair from the sides of his baldhead and chose his courtroom attire. He thanked many others.

The D.A. appeared amused by this round of congratulations.

Rader read a poem from a Christian magazine and a New Testament verse: “He who follows me shall not walk in darkness but have

light of life.” He ended his statement, “We speak of a man as an evil man. A dark side is there but now the light is beginning to shine. . . . Hopefully, this will keep me from going over to the dark side.”

Then Rader said, “That’s it.”

Judge Waller said, “Thank you very much.” Then he asked if the district attorney wished to speak. She did.

Remaining seated, Foulston noted, “Mr. Rader did not turn himself in and go peacefully. Mr. Rader was caught and intended to commit an 11th murder, but for the actions of the Wichita Police Department in bringing him to justice.” She characterized Rader as “an individual who cannot be rehabilitated by the nature of the crimes.” She ridiculed him for treating this hearing like “the Golden Globe awards” with his round of thank-yous.

Foulston asked for life sentences for each murder to be served consecutively. In the 1991 murder of Delores Davis, the prosecutor urged a “hard 40” sentence that prohibited a convict from applying for parole until 40 years had been served. The “hard 40” statute had been enacted in Kansas in 1990 for murders judged “especially heinous, atrocious, or cruel.”

Judge Waller sentenced Rader to 10 consecutive life terms and put a “hard 40” provision in for the Davis murder. He would not be eligible to apply for parole for 175 years.

Rader, who turned 67 in 2012, is imprisoned at the El Dorado Correctional Facility where he is isolated and spends 23 hours of each day in his cell.

