

GAY SERIAL KILLERS SERIAL

[approx: 2000 words]

by Chris Barber

Part III

Hunting down repeat murderers was once notoriously difficult. Only in recent years have efficient detection techniques been developed. Profiles of past serial killers are indexed on a computerised database. When details pertaining a new murder scene (including: time, place, victim's characteristics) are entered, the database cross-references these variables, eliminating or assessing potential suspects. A description of the likely killer's characteristics and life-style is produced.

That is the point of introducing "Gay Serial Killers", as a category - to highlight the most likely suspects. It enabled Andrew Cunanan to be promptly identified, after he shot Versace.

Prior to specifically incorporating "Gay" to appropriate hunts for serial killers, many cases were never solved. In New York during 1973, there were seven gruesome murders of gay S&M enthusiasts. Although apparent that one menace committed all the homicides, he eluded capture. A year before, there were ten related gay murders in Washington... Another unsolved case.

Many American Serial Killers are bisexual, sexually molesting both male and female victims before slaughtering them. Albert Fish raped, tortured, killed - then usually ate, dozens of girls, boys, and teenagers, before his arrest in 1910. Henry Lee Lukas, claimed a body count of 360 when driving across the US, during the 1970's and '80's (he lying, having only killed 160). Predominately, his victims were women. But he once had an affair with child killer Otis Toole. Together, they raped and murdered a dozen teenage boys.

Problems were always compounded in the United States, by its sheer size and lack of centralised policing. In Britain, two major cases in the early 1980's demonstrated extraordinary cock-ups by the authorities. One was the Yorkshire Ripper hunt. Another was Gay Serial Killer Dennis Nilson. For years, Nilson's disappearing victims went virtually unnoticed. When he was finally apprehended, it was only thanks to his own recklessness.

In many respects, Dennis Nilson is the most fascinating and abject Gay Serial Killer of them all. Abject, through being simultaneously compelling and sickening.

Between 1978 and 1983, Nilson murdered fifteen young men, keeping their bodies "for company" in his North London home. He selected victims carefully preying on the homeless, gay and drug-user twilight world. Only two of his victims were missed by society. A variety of different methods were used to curtail lives. Nilson masturbated over their corpses before hacking them up. He was a control freak *par excellence*, realising his bizarre necrophillic fantasies through possessing total power over his victims and domain.

Yet Nilson was young, average looking and intelligent. He was openly "proud to be Gay", a trade union activist, to some acquaintances - a quiet, ordinary sort of bloke, for others - arrogant, moody and aloof. He worked in a dole office. Nilson was capricious even in his world, allowing two victims to live and leave. He tried desperately hard to understand his motivations, voluminously recording his self-analysis for others to learn from. At his trial, he insisted he was guilty and sane... And won.

Born in Scotland in 1945, Nilson vividly recollected the impression his grandfather's corpse left upon his childhood. Nilson played solitary games, imagining himself as a dead body and filming the ritual on super 8. In the army

catering corps, he learned butchers skills. This became very handy after his future murders. He was also a policeman for a while. Once he smuggled a guy into his police station for a fuck.

For later pick-ups, Nilson's cloak 'n' dagger bravado routines had a more pernicious slant. Twice, following separate incidents, guys reported to the police that Nilson tried to murder them. But neither victims nor the police pursued charges.

Victim number one was an Irish youth, picked-up in the Cricklewood Arms. They slept together and Nilson awoke to find he had strangled him with a tie. After ritualistically bathing the body, he tried to have sex with it. Then it was concealed under the floor boards. Nilson claims he was shocked and distraught after his first killing (like most serial killers). He considered confessing to the police and suicide, but decided he must stick around to look after his dog, "Bleep".

One year and a day later, the second victim was a twenty-three year old Canadian tourist. After guiding him on a quick tour of London, Nilson invited him back to hear music. He was strangled with the headphone lead. The corpse was laid to rest under the floor boards, but Nilson regularly retrieved it for sex, and to prop-up in an arm-chair and chatter to.

Nilson resigned himself to being a serial killer. Six months later, his third victim was a sixteen year-old from Liverpool. He was strangled unconscious and drowned in the bath. His body joined the others under the boards.

This obstreperous behaviour continued with escalating frequency, for another three victims. Nilson had so many bodies stashed about his flat, that they became a bit of a nuisance. One he had forgotten about, fell out of a cupboard onto him. When the stench got too much, Nilson retrieved the bodies and cut them up in the bathroom. Bits were burned in the garden.

When his hopes of work promotion were frustrated, Nilson avenged himself with more murders. Nilson would later recall that his eleventh victim was a skin head with a serrated line tattooed around his neck bearing the inscription, 'Cut along dotted line'... So he did !

In 1981, Nilson's landlord persuaded him to move to another flat. First he cleared-up with his customary cut'n'blaze zeal. Unfortunately his new pad did not have a garden. So disposing of bodies became far more difficult.

Unabated, Nilson continued to kill. Dissected body parts were dumped in bin-bags for the dustmen. Lumps of flesh and entrails were flushed down the loo. This proved to be his undoing. A neighbour complained about the stinking blocked drains and called a plumber. When the plumber realised what was causing the problem, he notified the police. They arrested Nilson, who confessed to fifteen or sixteen murders, apparently relieved that his ordeal had ended.

Imprisoned for life, Nilson continued to attract tabloid attention by having an affair with a fellow prisoner.

During the gloomy Thatcherite 1980's, London's gay community was panicked by two more reigns of serial killer terror...

In 1986, Michael Lupo was diagnosed positive for AIDS. He was enraged, and began a violent campaign against gays. Combing the S&M scene, Lupo got his first victim - 37 year-old, James Burns. He was mutilated with a razor, sodomized, smeared with excrement and had his tongue bitten off. Lupo killed another three guys. But one attack failed, allowing his target to escape. Lupo was arrested in a gay bar, having been identified for police by the previously escaped victim.

Colin Ireland, was a sad closet case who picked-up, tortured and killed five gay men. His murderous deeds struck

terror throughout the gay community. You just weren't sure who and where he would strike next. When caught, Ireland insisted he was not gay, but wanted to wipe-out homosexuals. Ireland claimed he had aspired to be a famous serial killer. But despite the fear and sensationalism his rampage provoked, Ireland has failed to sustain much notoriety... Too bad Colin!

By contrast, America's "Dennis Nilson", is a truly infamous serial killer... Jeffrey Dahmer.

Jeffrey Dahmer was born in 1960, to a hysterical mother and a zealously christian father. His parents hated each other and divorced when he was a teenager.

His childhood was lonely and friendless, causing his emotional development to stagnate. Aged ten, he was sexually molested by a neighbour. While still at school, he became alcoholic. He desperately wanted to possess someone - physically and intimately. Tragically, he was incapable of expressing his feelings. In his fantasies, he fetishised the naked male chest and internal body organs.

Ignored by his parents during their divorce, Dahmer committed his first murder - Steven Hicks, a nineteen year old hitchhiker. He was strangled, his skull crushed and body dismembered. Although distressed by the realisation of what he had done, he pulled himself together and concealed the body (so successfully that it was never found).

Dahmer was charged with exposing himself to a minor. Several ensuing psychiatric reports noted his alarmingly defective personality. A few years in the army failed to dent his introversion.

While residing with his grandmother he worked in a chocolate factory. He also ventured into a gay bath-house. Now beyond any possibility of intimate relationships, he sought a totally passive physical object, pertaining to him. The bathhouse had private rooms, where Dahmer could take partners and spike their drinks with sleepers. When they slept, he played with and lorded over their inert bodies.

After years of fighting the temptation, he had to murder again. Steven Tuomi, was killed in a hotel room in 1987.

Victim number three was James Doxtator, in 1988. Dahmer picked him up in a gay bar and took him back to his grandmother's house. He did not want his new friend to leave. So he spiked his coffee and later strangled him.

A few months in prison for his "minor offence", interrupted Dahmer's spree. After his release, he rented an apartment in Milwaukee and continued to hunt victims. Dahmer was a predator, his favoured hunting grounds were local gay bars and cafés. Sometimes he would approach people on the street, offering them money if they would pose in his flat, while he photographed them. When he particularly liked a victim, he would decapitate the head and boil it in bleach to remove the flesh. He wanted to keep these skulls as souvenirs.

In a flash of crazed inspiration, he hit upon the idea of creating his own shrine.

Murders became more regular and the treatment of bodies, increasingly wierd. He procured a black coffee table for an altar, kept the complete skeletons of two victims and spray painted his collection of skulls. Dahmer experimented with chemicals, both to destroy unwanted body bits, and preserve the occasional scalp or penis which he found aesthetically pleasing. Moving on from masturbating over corpses, he discovered new sensual pleasures from slicing bodies open and fucking the internal organs. Unwanted body parts were chopped into little bits and deposited in refuse sacks for garbage collection.

When it suddenly occurred to him that living bodies might broaden the sexual possibilities, he tried to turn his sleeping victims into zombies. He drilled holes into their skulls and injected bleach into the brain. One naked, dazed and bleeding "zombie" (Konerack Sinthasomphone) staggered outside. Luckily for Dahmer, the police

helpfully escorted him back to Dahmer's apartment. After seeing the cops out, Dahmer bagged his zombie.

By 1991, Dahmer's miserable life was falling apart. He grew petulant and suffered from mental fits. All he wanted to do was find sexy guys, kill them and fuck the corpses.

Having totted-up a body count of sixteen, Tracy Edwards became the last man Dahmer attempted to murder. He escaped wearing one handcuff. A police car spotted him and he took the cops to Dahmer's place. During a discussion with the cops, Dahmer almost bluffed his way out. But one cop found a pile of Polaroid photographs, depicting Dahmer, posing with artistically arranged sections of human bodies... What's more, the fridge and freezer were full of heads and bagged body bits, which Dahmer probably put aside for his Christmas dinner !

Jeffrey Dahmer's state-of-mind and self-control were the main issues during his trial. He was judged to be in control and incarcerated. Inside he was targeted by other convicts - including Christopher Scarver, who murdered Dahmer on 28th November, 1994. Scarver claimed, "God told him to"!

POST MORTEM

Women serial killers are extremely rare. Some argue that none have been strictly motivated by sexual desire. But we want a token lesbian and here she is.

Between 1989 and 1991, Aileen Wuornos picked-up and shot dead six men, stealing their cash. She had a sordid childhood, fucked-up by sadistic parents. After bumming around as a cheap prostitute, she joined a gang of bikers. In Florida, she first had sex with a woman and fell in love. The couple remained lovers, but were impecunious. Determined to improve their lot, she killed and robbed until she was arrested.