



## Biography of Jeffrey Dahmer, Serial Killer

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Jeffrey Dahmer (May 21, 1960–November 28, 1994) was responsible for a series of gruesome murders of 17 young men from 1988 until he was caught in Milwaukee on July 22, 1991.

### Fast Facts: Jeffrey Dahmer

- Known For: Convicted serial killer of 17 people
- Also Known As: Milwaukee Cannibal, Milwaukee Monster
- Born: May 21, 1960, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- Parents: Lionel Dahmer, Joyce Dahmer
- Died: November 28, 1994, at the Columbia Correctional Institution in Portage, Wisconsin
- Notable Quote: "The only motive that there ever was was to completely control a person; a person I found physically attractive. And keep them with me as long as possible, even if it meant just keeping a part of them."

## **Early Life**

Jeffrey Dahmer was born May 21, 1960, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to Lionel and Joyce Dahmer. From all accounts, Dahmer was a happy child who enjoyed typical toddler activities. It was not until the age of 6, after he underwent hernia surgery, that his personality began to change from a jubilant social child to a loner who was uncommunicative and withdrawn. His facial expressions transformed from sweet, childish smiles to a blank, emotionless stare – a look that remained with him throughout his life.

## **Pre-Teen Years**

In 1966, the Dahmers moved to Bath, Ohio. Jeffrey Dahmer's insecurities grew after the move, and his shyness kept him from making many friends. While his peers were busy listening to the latest songs, Dahmer was collecting road kill, stripping animal carcasses, and saving the bones.

Other idle time was spent alone, buried deep inside his fantasies. His non-confrontational attitude toward his parents was considered an attribute, but in reality, apathy toward the real world made him appear obedient.

## **High School and Army Service**

Jeffrey Dahmer continued being a loner during his years at Revere High School. He had average grades, worked on the school newspaper, and developed a dangerous drinking problem. His parents, struggling with issues of their own, divorced when Jeffrey was almost 18. He lived with his father who traveled often and was busy nurturing a relationship with his new wife.

After high school, Jeffrey Dahmer enrolled at The Ohio State University and spent most of his time skipping classes and getting drunk. He dropped out and returned home after two semesters. His father issued him an ultimatum: get a job or join the Army.

In 1979, Jeffrey Dahmer enlisted for six years in the Army, but his drinking continued and in 1981, after just two years, he was discharged due to his drunken behavior.

## **Jeffrey Dahmer's First Kill**

Unknown to anyone, Jeffrey Dahmer was mentally disintegrating. In June 1978, he was struggling with his homosexual desires, mixed with his need to act out his sadistic fantasies. Perhaps this struggle is what pushed him to pick up a hitchhiker, 18-year-old Steven Hicks. Jeffrey Dahmer invited Hicks to his father's home and the two drank alcohol. When Hicks was ready to leave, Dahmer bashed him in the head with a barbell and killed him.

Dahmer then cut up the body and put it in garbage bags, which he buried in the woods surrounding his father's property. Years later he returned to dig up the bags, crush the bones, and disburse the remains around the woods. As insane as Jeffrey had become, he had not

lost sight of the need to cover his murderous tracks. Later, his explanation for killing Hicks was simply that he didn't want him to leave.

### **Prison Time**

Jeffrey Dahmer spent the next six years living with his grandmother in West Allis, Wisconsin. He continued drinking heavily and often got into trouble with the police. In August 1982, he was arrested after exposing himself at a state fair. In September 1986, Dahmer was arrested and charged with public exposure after being accused of masturbating in public. He served 10 months in jail but was arrested soon after his release after sexually fondling a 13-year-old boy in Milwaukee. He was given five years probation after convincing the judge that he needed therapy.

His father, unable to understand what was happening to his son, continued to stand by him, making certain he had good legal counsel. He also began to accept that there was little he could do to help the demons that seemed to rule Jeffrey Dahmer's behavior. He realized his son was missing a basic human element: a conscience.

Over the years, there was speculation that Jeffrey Dahmer may have been involved in the kidnapping and murder of Adam Walsh, son of TV personality John Walsh.

### **Murder Spree**

In September 1987, while on probation on the molestation charges, Jeffrey Dahmer met 26-year-old Steven Toumi and the two spent the night drinking heavily and cruising gay bars before going to a hotel room. When Dahmer awoke from his drunken stupor, he found Toumi dead.

Dahmer put Toumi's body into a suitcase, which he took to his grandmother's basement. There, he discarded the body in the garbage after dismembering it, but not before gratifying his sexual necrophilia desires.

Unlike most serial killers, who kill then move on to find another victim, Dahmer's fantasies included a series of crimes against the corpses of his victims, or what he referred to as passive sex. This became part of his regular pattern and possibly the one obsession that pushed him to kill.

Killing his victims in his grandmother's basement was becoming increasingly difficult to hide. He was working as a mixer at Ambrosia Chocolate Factory and could afford a small apartment, so in September 1988, he got a one-bedroom apartment on North 24th Street in Milwaukee.

Dahmer's killing spree continued and for most of his victims, the scene was the same. He would meet them at a gay bar or a mall and entice them with free alcohol and money if they agreed to pose for photographs. Once alone, he would drug them, sometimes torture them, and then kill them usually by strangulation. He would then masturbate over the corpse or have sex with the corpse, cut the body up, and get rid of the remains. He also kept parts of the bodies, including the skulls, which he would clean—much like he did with his childhood

roadkill collection—and often refrigerated organs, which he would occasionally eat.

### **Known Victims of Jeffrey Dahmer**

Stephen Hicks, 18: June 1978  
Steven Tuomi, 26: September 1987  
Jamie Doxtator, 14: October 1987  
Richard Guerrero, 25: March 1988  
Anthony Sears, 24: February 1989  
Eddie Smith, 36: June 1990  
Ricky Beeks, 27: July 1990  
Ernest Miller, 22: September 1990  
David Thomas, 23: September 1990  
Curtis Straughter, 16: February 1991  
Errol Lindsey, 19: April 1991  
Tony Hughes, 31: May 24, 1991  
Konerak Sinthasomphone, 14: May 27, 1991  
Matt Turner, 20: June 30, 1991  
Jeremiah Weinberger, 23: July 5, 1991  
Oliver Lacy, 23: July 12, 1991  
Joseph Bradeholt, 25: July 19, 1991

### **The Jeffrey Dahmer Victim who Nearly Escaped**

Jeffrey Dahmer's murdering activity continued uninterrupted until an incident on May 27, 1991. His 13th victim was 14-year-old Konerak Sinthasomphone, the younger brother of the boy Dahmer was convicted of molesting in 1989.

Early in the morning, the young Sinthasomphone was seen wandering the streets nude and disoriented. When police arrived on the scene there were paramedics, two women who were standing close to the confused Sinthasomphone, and Jeffrey Dahmer. Dahmer told police that Sinthasomphone was his 19-year-old lover who was drunk and the two had quarreled.

The police escorted Dahmer and the boy back to Dahmer's apartment, much against the protest of the women who had witnessed Sinthasomphone fighting off Dahmer before the police arrived.

The police found Dahmer's apartment neat and other than noticing an unpleasant smell, nothing seemed amiss. They left Sinthasomphone under Dahmer's care.

Later, police officers John Balcerzak and Joseph Gabrish joked with their dispatcher about reuniting the lovers. Within hours, Jeffrey Dahmer killed Sinthasomphone and performed his usual ritual on the body.

### **His Killings Escalate**

In June and July 1991, Jeffrey Dahmer's killing escalated to one each week until July 22 when Dahmer was unable to hold captive his 18th victim, Tracy Edwards.

According to Edwards, Dahmer tried to handcuff him and the two struggled. Edwards escaped and was spotted at around midnight by

police with the handcuff dangling from his wrist. Assuming he had somehow escaped from the authorities, police stopped him. Edwards immediately told them about his encounter with Dahmer and led them to his apartment.

Dahmer opened his door to the officers and answered their questions calmly. He agreed to turn over the key to unlock Edwards' handcuff and moved to the bedroom to get it. One of the officers went with him and as he glanced around the room, he noticed photographs of what appeared to be parts of bodies and a refrigerator full of human skulls.

The officers decided to place Jeffrey Dahmer under arrest and attempted to handcuff him, but his calm demeanor changed and he began to fight. With Dahmer under control, the police began their initial search of the apartment and quickly discovered skulls and other various body parts, along with an extensive photo collection Dahmer had taken documenting his crimes.

### **The Crime Scene**

Details of what was found in Dahmer's apartment were horrific, matching only to his confessions as to what he did to his victims.

Items found in Jeffrey Dahmer's apartment included:

A human head and three bags of organs, which included two hearts, were found in the refrigerator.  
Three heads, a torso, and internal organs were inside a free-standing freezer.  
Chemicals, formaldehyde, ether, and chloroform, plus two skulls, two hands, and male genitalia were found in the closet.  
A filing cabinet that contained three painted skulls, a skeleton, a dried scalp, male genitalia, and various photographs of his victims.  
A box with two skulls inside.  
A 57-gallon vat filled with acid and three torsos.  
Victims' identification.  
Bleach used to bleach the skulls and bones.  
Incense sticks. Neighbors often complained to Dahmer about the smell coming from his apartment.  
Tools: Clawhammer, handsaw, 3/8" drill, 1/16" drill, drill bits.  
A hypodermic needle.  
Various videos, some pornographic.  
Blood-soaked mattress and blood splatters.  
King James Bible.

### **The Jeffrey Dahmer Trial**

Jeffrey Dahmer was indicted on 17 murder charges, which were later reduced to 15. He pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity. Much of the testimony was based on Dahmer's 160-page confession and from various witnesses who testified that Dahmer's necrophilia urges were so strong that he was not in control of his actions. The defense sought to prove he was in control and capable of planning, manipulating, and covering up his crimes.

The jury deliberated for five hours and returned a verdict of guilty on 15 counts of murder. Dahmer was sentenced to 15 life terms, a

total of 937 years in prison. At his sentencing, Dahmer calmly read his four-page statement to the court.

### **Jeffrey Dahmer apologized for his crimes and ended with:**

"I hated no one. I knew I was sick or evil or both. Now I believe I was sick. The doctors have told me about my sickness, and now I have some peace. I know how much harm I have caused...Thank God there will be no more harm that I can do. I believe that only the Lord Jesus Christ can save me from my sins...I ask for no consideration."

### **Life Sentence**

Dahmer was sent to the Columbia Correctional Institute in Portage, Wisconsin. At first, he was separated from the general prison population for his safety. But by all reports, he was considered a model prisoner who had adjusted well to prison life and was a self-proclaimed born-again Christian. Gradually, he was permitted to have some contact with other inmates.

### **Jeffrey Dahmer Death**

On November 28, 1994, Dahmer and inmate Jesse Anderson were beaten to death by fellow inmate Christopher Scarver while on work detail in the prison gym. Anderson was in prison for killing his wife and Scarver was a schizophrenic convicted of first-degree murder. For reasons unknown, the guards left the three prisoners alone for 20 minutes. They returned to find Anderson dead and Dahmer dying from severe head trauma. Dahmer died in the ambulance before reaching the hospital.

### **Legacy**

In Dahmer's will, he requested upon his death that his body be cremated as soon as possible, but some medical researchers wanted his brain preserved so it could be studied. Lionel Dahmer wanted to respect his son's wishes and cremate all remains of his son. His mother felt his brain should go to research. The two parents went to court and a judge sided with Lionel. After more than a year, Dahmer's body was released from being held as evidence and his remains were cremated.