



## **B.T.K.**

From 1974 to 1991, Dennis Lynn Rader murdered at least 10 people in and around Wichita, Kansas. From 1974 to 2004, he wrote letters taunting police and the media, describing his crimes. B.T.K. stands for BIND TORTURE KILL, his modus operandi in using a self-titled “hit kit” on his victims, or as he described, “projects.”

Rader often strangled his victims until they lost consciousness, only to revive them and repeat the process until the victims’ death. He then sexually abused the bodies, often keeping “trophies” and sometimes making polaroids of himself with the bodies and in the victims’ clothing.

From a floppy disk document that would become Rader’s last communication before his arrest, police were able to extract metadata they traced to the church where Rader was president of the congregation council. After obtaining a DNA sample from Rader’s daughter, police matched Rader’s DNA to that recovered at a crime scene. On February 25, 2005, Dennis Rader was taken into custody.

Rader had been a member of the Christ Lutheran Church for 30 years, a Cub Scout Leader and, for a period of years, worked for ADT Security Services installing home security systems people had purchased to protect themselves from the BTK killer. After ADT, Rader was a Compliance Officer for Park City, Kansas. Rader was known for being abusive and overzealous, often using his position to harass specific people within his community.

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Once such incident involved using his role of Animal Control Officer to have his neighbor’s dog euthanized. It is commonly believed this neighbor was to be his next victim: his continuing harassment of her was an attempt to have her boyfriend move out so she would be home alone at night, allowing him to more easily overpower her. It is also rumored that his position as a Park City Compliance Officer helped feed his desires for control over people and could be one reason the killings had slowed until his capture.

1/19/06 - 1/21/06

I was asked by the ABA Journal to photograph Police Lt. Ken Landwehr, head of the BTK Task Force, Deputy District Attorney Kevin O’Connor and the houses still remaining where the attacks took place in Wichita, Kansas.

When I returned to NYC, the story of BTK was on television. Still lost in a fog of the experiences I had in Wichita, I started photographing all the things I couldn’t in Wichita, the faces of the victims and Rader himself.



Dennis Lynn Rader







The home of  
Dennis Rader.

6220 Independence St.

For the 25+ years the BTK serial killer was not caught, many residents of Wichita cut or removed all shrubbery from around the house. All the houses on Rader's street had no vegetation or plants of any kind anywhere near the house itself, while the Rader home remained overgrown.











Joseph Otero, age 38  
Julie Otero, age 34  
Joseph II, age 9  
Josephine, age 11

January 15, 1974

Rader kills 4 members of the Otero family between 8 a.m. and 3 p.m.

The bodies were discovered when the three surviving Otero children returned home from school.



The Otero family crime scene.

803 North Edgemoor Street







Kathryn Bright, age 21

3217 East 13th Street North

April 4, 1977

Rader stalked Kathryn Bright and then broke into her home and waited for her to come home on April 4, 1977. Upon entering the home with her brother Kevin, age 19, they were confronted by Rader with a gun who then forced Kevin to help tie up his sister Kathryn. Rader then tied up Kevin in a separate room and attempted to strangle Kevin with a pair of stockings. Kevin broke free and grabbed Rader's gun and pulled the trigger twice, the gun didn't fire and Rader wrestled the gun back from Kevin and shot him the head. Rader then went to the other room and began to strangle Kathryn. Kevin survived the shot and began to break his bonds again, Rader heard this and shot Kevin a second time in the head. Rader returned to Kathryn's room and started stabbing her repeatedly until he heard the front door of the house open, Kevin had survived the second shot and escaped. Rader panicked and fled the scene. Kevin never saw his sister's body and didn't learn of her death for days.





Shirley Vian Relford, age 24

1311 South Hydraulic Street

March 17, 1977

Rader followed her son home and forced his way into the home with a pistol. Rader then forced Shirley to help tie up her three children, age 4,6,8 and lock them in bathroom. Rader tortured and killed Shirley Vain Relford until the noise of a ringing telephone, the children escaping out the bathroom window and the threat that a neighbor was suppose to visit finally made Rader flee.





Nancy Jo Fox, age 25

843 South Pershing Street

December 8, 1977

Rader spotted Nancy Fox, stalked her, went through her mail and even found out where she worked and visited her there, learning her schedule. On December 8, 1977, Rader broke into Nancy's home, cut the phone lines and waited for her in her kitchen. When Nancy entered her home, Rader confronted her, explained that he had a sexual problem and that he planned to have sex with her. Nancy became upset and Rader allowed her to smoke a cigarette and go to the bathroom, when she came out of the bathroom Rader began the attack by handcuffing her, binding her and strangling Nancy.





Marine Hedge, age 53

6254 Independence Street

April 27, 1985

Marine Hedge lived just a few houses away from Dennis Rader on the same street. On the night of April 27, 1985 Rader broke into Marine's home and waited for her return. She returned home with a man so Rader hid until he left and waited for her to fall asleep. Once Marine was sleeping, Rader emerged, turned on the light and began strangling her when she began screaming. Rader then stripped the body, wrapped the body in a blanket and took it to his church where he photographed the body in bondage. Rader then dumped the body at a random location, covering the body with brush.





Vicki Wegerle, age 28

2404 West 13th Street

September 16, 1986

Rader, during his lunch break from ADT Security Systems, disguised himself as a telephone repair man and talked his way into the home of Vicki Wegerle, age 28. When Vicki turned her back on Rader as he pretended to work on the phone, Rader pulled a gun and forced Vicki into the bedroom where he tied her up and began strangling her with her two year old son on the floor nearby. Vicki fought back and in the commotion Rader panicked and fled, eventually returning to his job later that day. Vicki was fatally wounded in the attack and later died from her injuries.







Dolores Davis, age 62

6226 North Hillside

January 19, 1991

Rader entered the home Dolores Davis at night by smashing the rear patio glass door with a concrete block he found nearby. When Dolores approached Rader, he cuffed her and tried to calm Dolores with the ruse of being on the run from the police and that he only needed her car, clothes and some food. After calming Dolores down and gathering some of her personal effects, Rader strangled Dolores with panty hose, placed the body in the victims car and dumped the body under a bridge. Rader left a half eaten bowl of cereal in the sink of the house, a cereal box and yet a second cereal box in the area he dumped Dolores's body. These boxes contained dolls depicting how Rader bound and killed his victims, jewelry from multiple victims and one victims driver's license.



**Police Lieutenant  
Kenneth Landwehr  
BTK Serial Killer Task Force  
  
Commander  
Wichita Police  
Homicide Division  
  
455 North Main Street**







**Deputy District Attorney**

**Kevin O'Connor**

**Sedgwick County Courthouse**

**535 North Main Street**



Dennis Rader has two children and until his arrest, was married 34 years.

Rader was convicted for 10 counts of first degree murder and received a life sentence for each murder, requiring a minimum of 175 years in prison.

The Rader house was demolished on March 7, 2007, with the debris being buried at one undisclosed location and burned at yet another undisclosed location.

Some debris from the house as well as tickets Rader wrote as an Animal Control Officer have appeared on EBAY only to be removed by authorities.

A movie by Ridley Scott is in production with Eric Bana as Police Lt. Ken Landwehr.





**B.T.K**

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