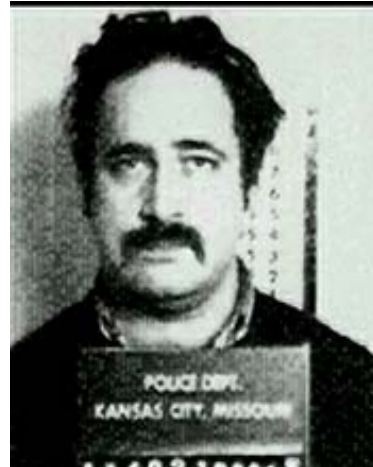


## Robert Berdella

### *The Butcher of Kansas City, Missouri*



#### Information researched and summarized by

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Date	Age	Life Event
01-31-1949	0	Robert Berdella was born in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio.
May 1956	7	Brother, Daniel, was born
1961	12	Berdella was baptized as a Catholic
Dec 1965	16	Father dies of a sudden heart attack at age 39. Mother remarries soon after. Berdella resented it.
1965		Raped by a man he worked with in an Ohio restaurant.
		Stopped attending church services
		Watched the movie "The Collector" which was about a man who kidnapped a woman and kept her captive. He would later admit that this movie left a lasting impression on him.
Aug 1967	18	Enrolled in the Kansas City Art Institute.
1967		Began to abuse and sell drugs and alcohol.
Jan 1968	19	Arrested, and plead guilty, for selling amphetamines to an undercover agent. He received a five year suspended sentence.
Feb 1968		Arrested for possession of LSD and marijuana. After spending 5 days in jail the charges were dropped for lack of evidence.
1968		Began to work as a short-order cook.
Sep 1969	20	Bought a house where he would live until his arrest
Dec 1969		Dropped out of art school
1970's	20-30	Became more accomplished as a chef and worked for many well-known restaurants and country clubs. Joined local chefs association where he helped set up training classes for aspiring chefs.
		Helped organize local crime prevention and neighborhood watch association
		Began renting space at the local flea-market where he sold oddities, antiques, and

		artifacts.
		Became open about his homosexuality
1981	32	Quit work as a cook and begin to work full time at his shop, which he named "Bob's Bazaar Bizarre".
1982	33	Became seriously emotionally involved with an unstable Vietnam veteran, however, the relationship did not last long. Began picking up young male prostitutes. He would become a friend with many of them, often allowing them to live with him in exchange for helping with housework. He tried to get many of them to quit prostituting and get their lives in order.
1984	35	Began hanging out with 19-year-old Jerry Howell, one of the young prostitutes.
07-04-1985		Drugged Howell with animal tranquilizers. Bound and gagged him to a bed and sodomized him repeatedly. During this time, and subsequent crimes he took numerous pictures and kept a detailed log.
07-06-1984		Howell died from asphyxiation. Berdella hung Howell upside down in his basement and cut slits in the body in order to drain the blood. He then dismembered the body, put the pieces in trash bags, and left them on his curb. Garbage men then unwittingly took the trash to the dump never to be found again.
04-10-1985	36	Allowed an acquaintance, Robert Sheldon to stay at his house for a couple of days. Injected him with drugs with the intention of "keeping him" like he did to Howell.
04-11-1985		Decided not to "keep" Sheldon and took him to the doctor because Sheldon was complaining of soreness from the drugs.
04-12-1985		Sheldon got drunk and Berdella again decided to "keep" him. He then drugged him with sedatives and tranquilizers and then bound and gagged him as he had done with Howell. He then sodomized and tortured him repeatedly for days.
04-15-1985		A workman arrived to do some roofing work for Berdella. Berdella then suffocated Sheldon with a plastic bag so that the workman would not hear him. He then placed the body in his bathtub and made incisions to allow the blood to drain. He then dismembered and disposed of the body as he had done with Howell, except this time he kept the head and buried it in his backyard.
1985		Met Mark Wallace after he had help with some yard work for him.
06-22-1985		Berdella found Wallace in his tool shed seeking shelter from a violent storm. He invited Wallace inside and drugged him.
06-23-1985		Berdella tortured and sodomized Wallace for several hours until he died from asphyxiation. Berdella then disposed of the body as he had done before.
09-26-1985		Picked up an acquaintance, James Ferris, at a gay bar and took him back to his house.
09-27-1985		He then drugged, bound, and tortured Ferris as he had with the others until he died from asphyxiation. He disposed of the body as he had before.
06-17-1986		37
07-01-1986	Stoops died from blood loss as a result of the torture. Berdella disposed of the body as had the others.	
06-05-1987	38	Bailed a friend, Larry Pearson, out of jail and invited him to live with him.
06-23-1987		Drugged and tortured Pearson in his basement for 6 weeks.
08-05-1987		Berdella went to the hospital after Pearson had bit his penis. Berdella was told that he would have to stay in the hospital for a couple days. Before his stay, he went home and suffocated Pearson with a plastic bag.
07-07-1987		Returned home from the hospital and disposed of Pearson's body. He kept his head and buried it in the backyard. He also removed Sheldon's previously buried skull and put it on display in his house.
03-29-1988	39	Picked up a 22 year-old male prostitute, Chris Bryson, and took him back to his house. He drugged and tortured him as he had done with the others for 5 days.
04-02-1988		While Berdella was at work, Bryson freed himself by burning through the ropes that bound him, and jumping out of the second story window. Bryson then ran to a

		neighbor's house wearing nothing but a dog collar around his neck. Police began to care for Bryson and listen to his story of repeated torture when Berdella arrived home.
Apr 2-4		Police searched Berdella's house and found his torture logs and pictures. Berdella was arraigned on seven counts of sodomy, one count of felonious restraint and one count of first degree assault. Initially, bail was set at \$500,000.
Apr 5-Sep 13		Bail was revoked when an officer testified that one of the men in the photographs from Berdella's house appeared to be dead. Berdella remained in jail while police found more evidence of his crimes; this included digging up his backyard where they found Pearson's partially decayed skull.
07-02-1988		Grand jury indicts Berdella for the murder of Larry Pearson
08-03-1988		In order to avoid the death penalty Berdella pleads guilty to Pearson's murder.
09-02-1988		Grand jury indicts Berdella for the murder of Robert Sheldon
09-13-1988		Berdella plea-bargains to life in prison in exchange for a full confession of his crimes.
Dec 13-15		Berdella confesses to investigators to his crimes in vivid detail.
12-19-1988		Berdella pled guilty to 1 <sup>st</sup> degree murder in the death of victim Robert Sheldon and to 4 counts of 2 <sup>nd</sup> degree murder involving additional male victims. Berdella confesses in court and is sent to the state penitentiary in Jefferson City, Missouri for the rest of his life. He also announces that he has set up a trust fund in the amount of \$50,000 for the families of his victims.
Jan. 1989	40	Gives an interview with a local television channel in which he blames police and media for distorting him and his crimes.
Jan. 1992	42	Todd Stoops' mother wins wrongful death civil suit against Berdella, and is awarded a record \$5 billion. Because Berdella can't pay this amount, Stoops' mother would have a claim on any future earnings Berdella might make.
10-08-1992	43	Berdella dies in prison from a heart attack.

### General Information

Sex	Male
Race	White
Number of victims	Suspected of 6, Confessed to 6, Convicted of 6
Country where killing occurred	United States
States where killing occurred	Kansas City, Missouri

### Childhood Information

Date of birth	January 31, 1949
Location	Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio
Birth order	1 <sup>st</sup> of 2
Number of siblings	1
XXX?	Unknown
Raised by	Both parents
Birth category	Oldest
Parent's marital status	Married
Family event	Death of father (Heart Attack)
Age of family event	16
Problems in school?	Yes, teachers felt that he was hard to teach, though he earned excellent grades
Teased while in school?	Yes
Physically attractive?	No
Physical defect?	Severe near sidedness, forced to wear thick glasses sense age 5. Also spoke of having surgery to improve his jutting jaw
Speech defect?	Yes, he had a slight lisp
Head injury?	None
Physically abused?	Yes, father would beat him with a leather strap

Psychologically abused?	Yes, it also appears that his father liked his younger brother more than him.
Sexually abused?	Not by parents, but claims to have been victim of homosexual rape at age 16 by a co-worker.
Father's occupation	Dye setter for the Ford Motor Company
Age of first sexual experience	Raped at 16
Age when first had intercourse	No record found, however he was rarely sexually active until after age 30.
Mother's occupation	Homemaker
Father abused drugs/alcohol	No
Mother abused drugs/alcohol	No
<b>Cognitive Ability</b>	
Highest grade in school	Junior year of Art School in Kansas City
Highest degree	High school diploma
Grades in school	Excellent
IQ	Unknown
<b>Work History</b>	
Served in the military?	No
Branch	N/A
Type of discharge	N/A
Saw combat duty	N/A
Killed enemy during service?	N/A
Applied for job as a cop?	No
Worked in law enforcement?	No, but did help organize, and chair, his neighborhood crime prevention association
Fired from jobs?	No record
Types of jobs worked	Cook, shopkeeper
Employment status during series	Self employed, owned an antiques and artifacts shop called, "Bob's Bazaar Bizarre"
<b>Relationships</b>	
Sexual preference	Homosexual
Marital status	Single
Number of children	0
Lives with his children	N/A
Living with	Mostly by himself, though occasionally he would take on roommates for brief periods of time.
<b>Triad</b>	
Animal torture	Yes, killed a chicken and a duck while in Art School. Also tested various drugs on a stray dog prior to killings
Fire setting	No record
Bed wetting	No record
<b>Killer Psychological Information</b>	
Abused drugs?	Yes
Abused alcohol?	Yes
Been to a psychologist?	No
Time in forensic hospital?	No
Diagnosis	N/A
<b>Killer Criminal History</b>	
Committed previous crimes?	Yes, arrested at age 19 for selling amphetamines to undercover agents. Also arrested one month later for possession of marijuana and LSD, but charges were dropped

Spend time in jail?	5 days for the second drug charge
Spend time in prison?	No
Killed prior to series? Age?	No
<b>Serial Killing</b>	
Number of victims	6 killed, 1 escaped
Victim type	Male prostitutes and drug abusers
Killer age at start of series	35
Gender of victims	Male
Race of victims	White
Age of victims	20-30
Method of killing	Asphyxiation and drug overdoses
Type of serial killer	Disorganized thrill
How close did killer live?	Generally would pick up victim in his car and entice them into his home with drugs.
Killing occurred in home of victim?	No
Killing occurred in home of killer?	Yes
Weapon	Generally, used drugs to knock the victim unconscious
<b>Behavior During Crimes</b>	
Rape?	Yes, repeatedly and with various methods
Tortured victims?	Yes, repeatedly and with various methods
Stalked victims?	No
Overkill?	No
Quick & efficient?	No
Used blindfold?	Yes, sometimes
Bound the victims?	Yes
<b>After Death Behavior</b>	
Sex with the body?	No
Mutilated body?	Yes
Ate part of the body?	No
Drank victim's blood?	No
Posed the body?	Yes
Took totem – body part	Yes, kept two of the victim's skulls.
Took totem – personal item	Yes, kept wallets and identification
Robbed victim or location	Yes
<b>Disposal of Body</b>	
Left at scene, no attempt to hide	Not usually, however he did put one skull on display in his house after it was buried for years.
Left at scene, hidden	No
Left at scene, buried	Not usually, however he did bury two skulls in his backyard.
Moved, no attempt to hide	No
Moved, buried	No
Cut-up and disposed of	Yes, left for garbage man to unwittingly take away
Moved, too home	N/A
<b>Sentencing</b>	
Date killer arrested	April 2, 1988
Date convicted	Plead guilty on December 19, 1988
Sentence	2 life sentences, no parole. 4 life sentences, with parole.
Killer executed?	No
Name and state of prison	Jefferson City, Missouri. Maximum Security Facility
Killer committed suicide?	No
Killer killed in prison?	No, Died of a heart attack in 1992, though there is speculation that he was poisoned.
Date of death	1992

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