

# The Unabomber (Episode 2 of Notorious)

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Explores the strange life of the college math professor who dropped out of his career, holed up in a one-room shack in Montana, and sent deadly mail bombs to victims around the country, ultimately becoming known as the Unabomber.

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufJUwso3LBM>

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**Voiceover:** Beginning in 1978, a string of bombings terrorized the country, injured 23 people, and left three dead.

Investigators, including former FBI Special Agent Jim Fitzgerald, chased down hundreds of leads, but for years, the bomber's identity remained a mystery.

The man behind the terror, tortured most of his life by social isolation and sexual frustration, was known to the public only as the Unabomber. But even without a name, this The real murderer was notorious.

For nearly two decades, the country was gripped with fear as a mysterious killer who came to be known as the Unabomber targeted victims from coast to coast.

Three were dead. 23 injured, and countless more worried they would be the bomber's next victim. Law enforcement seemed powerless to stop him.

Investigators had few answers, but many questions. What drove him? How did he choose his victims? When would he strike next? The pursuit of this serial killer was one of the most intensive manhunts in FBI history.

Operating out of a primitive cabin in the Montana wilderness, the Unabomber eluded law enforcement 17 years.

But despite his anonymity, the mystery, the violence, and an iconic sketch would make him infamous.

It began with a package, found on May 25th, 1978, in a parking lot at the University of Illinois, Chicago. The return address said it was from Professor Buckley Crist at nearby Northwestern University. So the package was delivered to his office.

**Jim Fitzgerald (Retired FBI Profiler):** Chris had no recollection of recently sending a package and was immediately suspicious.

When Campus Security Officer Terry Marker arrived to investigate and opened the package, it exploded.

**Voiceover:** Terry Marker was left with cuts and bruises, nothing serious.

Still, the bomber's victims were rattled, to say the least.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger (Forensic Psychologist):** These two men were caught completely off guard by this attack.

To their knowledge, they had no specific reason to be targeted, and not had angered anyone enough to warrant such an attack.

People who are victims of random assaults go through a great deal of grief, trauma, and a lot of anxiety because it comes out of nowhere.

**Karen Wentz (Assistant Prosecuting Attorney):** The way in which the Unabomber selected his victims was entirely random and at the time, authorities had no reason to explain why Buckley Crist had been targeted.

**Voiceover:** The explosion could have been fatal, but fortunately, the bomb was clearly the work of an amateur.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** The device itself was crudely made, and clearly whoever had crafted it only had a basic level of understanding as to how bombs were made.

**Voiceover:** Other than the initials FC scratched into the bomb, there was little physical evidence.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** There were no fingerprints or other forensic evidence found on the package, and the materials used to construct the bomb could have been purchased from any hardware store in the country.

**Voiceover:** This left investigators with little to go on.

The bomber remained on the loose.

Almost exactly one year later, he struck Northwestern again.

This time, the bomb injured a graduate student.

**Karen Wentz:** A package was found in the common area, and a student named John Harris found the package.

Only the detonator went off, not the main device and so, ultimately, Mr.

Harris' injuries could have been a lot more severe.

**Voiceover:** The devices were clearly made by the same hand.

Investigators were hunting a serial bomber, but they had no idea who he was, or when he'd strike next.

**Robert Thompson (Professor of Media Studies):** The thing about serial killers, before they're caught, is that you've got the added drama that this is going to happen again. And that puts a whole new dynamic out of things.

The drama of a serial killer is, until they get caught, and until you're sure you've caught the right person, There is this automatic element of fear that ratchets up every time another victim is attributed to that person.

**Voiceover:** Despite being one of the most intensive manhunts in FBI history, the bomber remained at large, his identity a mystery.

Investigators struggled to pinpoint the bomber's motives.

They knew only that he carved the initials FC into his bombs, and he seemed to have a vendetta against universities.

But six months later, the bomber set his sights on a bigger target, an airplane.

The American Airlines flight was en route from Chicago to Washington, D.C., when the cabin began filling with smoke.

**Karen Wentz:** As you can imagine, there's complete panic on.

**Voiceover:** The plane.

**Karen Wentz:** The bomb caused a small fire and a significant amount of smoke.

There were 12 passengers that had to be treated for smoke inhalation. But ultimately, there were no casualties, and this could've been a lot worse.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** The officers that responded to the scene found that there was a bomb in the cargo hold.

The bomb that they found was constructed in the same way as the one at Northwestern University, and had the same initials carved into the end of the pipe.

**Voiceover:** The bomber's motives were more puzzling than ever.

His targets now included airplanes, and his devices were getting more sophisticated.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** On this particular device, he had hooked an altimeter.

It was set to go off when the airliner reached a certain altitude.

It did, in fact, explode, however, not in the exact way the bomber intended it to.

**Voiceover:** Investigators were no closer to identifying a suspect.

After the airline bombing, the FBI took over, coordinating their efforts with the ATF and the US Postal Inspection Service.

They labeled the investigation Unabomb for university and airline bombings.

The unidentified perpetrator became known as the Unabomber.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** When the FBI got into this case, a behavioral analysis profiling unit had just begun, and they were developing profiles of serial sexual murderers.

What happened is they tried to use that type of approach to a serial bomber, and it really didn't fit.

A psychological profile or behavioral analysis concluded that the attacker was mostly a man with high intelligence and had connections to academia or a blue-collar airline worker, perhaps.

These descriptions were very broad and didn't really give investigators a lot to work with.

**Voiceover:** Throughout the early 80s, the bombings continued.

Unabomber targeted five universities, Boeing aircraft, and the home of an airline executive.

**Jeff Toorish (Emergency Response Expert):** People were afraid.

They were afraid just to go to their mailbox, and they were completely justified in that fear, especially when you consider the kind of injuries that we're talking about.

**Voiceover:** By 1985, seven people had been injured.

**Karen Wentz:** The earlier bombs had been relatively weak, but over time, the bombs got more powerful and the injuries more severe.

**Voiceover:** It was sheer luck that nobody had been killed.

That luck ran out on December 11th, 1985, when computer store owner Hugh Scrutton found what looked like a piece of wood in the parking lot of his store.

When he picked it up, it exploded, killing him.

Investigators were no longer searching for a serial bomber.

They were hunting a murderer.

**Karen Wentz:** What made the Unabomber so scary? was that there was no rationale for his attacks.

Typically, terrorists take responsibility.

They want to be known for their attacks.

But in this case, nothing.

**Jeff Toorish:** The Unabomber left false clues, including, in one case, a note that said, WU.

It works.

I told you it would.

RV.

The initials FC continued to be carved into bombs.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** On one occasion, there was a blonde hair found under one of the postage stamps and of course, people just assumed that it was one of the hairs belonging to the Unabomber, and the appropriate analysis was done at the laboratory.

Well, we all found out later on that was a hair found in a men's room in a public bathroom designed just to throw off the FBI.

They call that counter-forensic measures and that's how you know when you have a truly masterful criminal that you're working against.

**Voiceover:** The investigators ran down leads, but they came up empty.

Then, in 1987, the Unabomber targeted another computer store with another bomb disguised as a piece of wood.

This time, the store owner, Gary Wright, survived the blast, and investigators got a big break.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** For the first time, there was an eyewitness to the Unabomber's activities.

One of Wright's employees happened to be looking through the plate glass window and saw an individual wearing a hooded sweatshirt and aviator sunglasses place the device down on the ground.

The police were then called, a sketch artist brought in, and the iconic sketch was created that for the first time law enforcement could study and pass around to the general public and say, do you know this man? He's the Unabomber.

**Voiceover:** But what did the man behind the sunglasses want? The world would soon find out.

Starting in 1978, a rash of bombings swept across the nation, injuring 23 and killing three.

After 18 months, investigators concluded that the bombs were all built by the same suspect.

They called him the Unabomber.

Dozens of books and documentaries have sought to shed light on his life.

In 1987, Authorities released their first sketch of the suspect and after ten years of attacks the Unabomber went silent.

**Robert Thompson:** The rhythm of the activity I think really helped to sort of ratchet up some of the fear in that whenever anything new happened again It was oh, he's still out there.

He's back.

The danger is still there You just get them feeling comfortable and then you strike.

**Voiceover:** It was six tenths years before the silence was broken in 1999 In 1993, when a bomb was sent to California geneticist Charles Epstein, who was known for his work on Down syndrome.

**Karen Wentz:** Epstein received several injuries, including injury to his fingers and permanent nerve damage.

The Unabomber then sent letters to his victim, and he was taunting him, telling Epstein, You should have been smarter.

Why would you open a package that you didn't know who it was from, where it was sent from?

**Voiceover:** Only days later, another bomb targeted David Gelertner, a professor of computer science at Yale.

**Karen Wentz:** The bomb nearly took off Gelerner's hand, and he ended up going blind in one of his eyes.

The Unabomber continued his attacks on Gelerner with letters.

referring to him as a techno nerd, calling him dumb because he opened a package that he didn't know who it was from.

**Voiceover:** It seemed that with each bombing, the Unabomber was honing his craft.

He struck again after he was apparently angered by the Exxon Valdez oil spill that fouled 1,100 miles of Alaska coastline.

In December of 1994, the Unabomber targeted PR executive Thomas Mosser, who had worked to repair Exxon's image.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** The Unabomber didn't believe that Exxon deserved a second chance and targeted one of the people trying to give them one.

Thomas Moser, after opening a package mailed to his home, became the second fatality of the Unabomber.

**Karen Wentz:** When the bomb went off and his torso was blown open, it was his wife who rushed to his aid and with a baby blanket, she tried to stop the bleeding, but ultimately her husband died.

She was unable to save him.

**Voiceover:** The FBI offered a \$1 million reward and set up a toll-free tip line for information leading to the identification and arrest of the elusive Unabomber.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** People were calling the new 800 number set up by the FBI once the million-dollar reward was posted, calling in all kinds of people as the Unabomber.

However, with all these leads, all these possibilities, not one viable suspect was ever identified going into the middle of 1995.

**Voiceover:** And the bombings continued.

In April, another package, this time for forestry lobbyist Gil Murray.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** When Gil Murray saw the package that morning in his office, he joked with his secretary, Hey, look, this package may be from the Unabomber.

He then walked into his office, opened the package, and it exploded.

**Voiceover:** The blast killed Murray, the Unabomber's third fatality.

Yet after 17 years, investigators were no closer to identifying the killer.

But soon, they would hear from the bomber himself.

In April of 1995, packages arrived at the New York Times and the Washington Post.

In them was a manifesto and an offer from the Unabomber.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** He wanted them to publish his article.

It was 35,000 words, 56 pages of single-spaced typing.

Its title was Industrial Society and Its Future by F.C.

**Voiceover:** He vowed that if one of the papers published his manifesto, his campaign of death and destruction would end.

If they didn't, he'd start plotting his next attack.

The manifesto began, The Industrial Revolution and its consequences have been a disaster for the human race.

The Industrial Revolution's products, it said, networked computers, mass media, chemicals were destroying the planet.

The author called for a revolution against the technological basis of the present society, and he said the initials he'd carved into the bomb stood for Freedom Club.

But while the author's aims were extreme, the ideas weren't new.

**Robert Thompson:** A lot of it was the kind of thing that a lot of people probably would have agreed with.

It was kind of a cliché, actually, that the Industrial Revolution and the world afterwards has caused us to desecrate nature and end up living in crowded cities and all this kind of stuff and the only way you could really change that is to completely destroy it.

**Voiceover:** The text didn't give away the bomber's identity.

But the writing style was peculiar, and investigators hoped identifiable.

The FBI's Unabomb Task Force assigned Jim Fitzgerald to parse the text for leads.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** I arrived at the Unabomb Task Force in July of 1995, just about the same time the manifesto reached there.

One of the strongest clues we had within the manifesto was an unusual twist of a well-known proverb or axiom and I found that in paragraph 185 of the manifesto.

In fact, the first time I read through it, I didn't pick up on it.

But this expression was, Well, you can eat your cake and have it too and I thought, boy, I've used that term before in my life, but I've always said you can't have your cake and eat it too.

But this guy decided to reverse it, the verbs, for whatever reason.

I found it odd, but I put it in my notes.

We were hoping some turn of phrase like that, or the use of his word, cool-headed logicians, or describing women as broads or chicks, African-Americans as \*\*\*\*\* perhaps someone would pick up on this archaic writing style and know the author and maybe even know him by name.

**Voiceover:** In his letters to the newspapers, the Unabomber had been very clear. Publish the manifesto or there would be more bombings.

The newspapers and investigators had a dilemma.

Do they give in to the demands of a terrorist, or refuse at the potential cost of another life?

**Jim Fitzgerald:** Nobody doubted his word.

So that's why the decision was taken at the very highest levels of not only the media, but also the law enforcement industry.

What do we do with this guy? What do we do with this article? I felt this man was offering the general public his word, and I had a firm belief that he would, in fact, stick to it.

So I was one of the first people to step up and say, perhaps we should seriously consider having this article published.

It may save lives in the long run and also help us to identify its author.

**Voiceover:** In their hunt for the Unabomber, investigators' primary focus was on one city.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** As of '93, all the bombs and all the letters were being mailed from post offices in the General Bay Area and one of the early profiles was, at that time, that the Unabomber must live within 200 miles of San Francisco.

**Voiceover:** The New York Times was sold all over San Francisco, but the Washington Post was only sold in two stores.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** These types of killers, these types of bombers, they like souvenirs.

They want to get something they can put their hands on, maybe a picture, maybe a newspaper article, or for that matter, maybe their own manifesto being published in a newspaper.

**Voiceover:** Investigators made a plan.

They would lure him out of hiding with a souvenir.

On September 19th, 1995, the Washington Post would print the Unabomber's manifesto.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** It wasn't for any editorial or practical reason on their part.

It was actually a tactical reason on the FBI's part.

**Voiceover:** On the day the manifesto was published, agents watched the two San Francisco stores that sold the Washington Post and waited.

Who was this mass murderer? Before long, the world would find out.

After a 17-year bombing campaign that injured, maimed, or killed more than two dozen victims, the Unabomber sent a document to the New York Times and the Washington Post.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** It was 35,000 words, 56 pages of single-space typing.

Its title was Industrial Society and Its Future by FC.

**Voiceover:** Suspecting that the bomber lived near San Francisco, the FBI set a plan in motion, published the manifesto in the Washington Post, and watched the only two stores in San Francisco that sold the paper.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** We thought that perhaps the Unabomber himself would be standing in line to buy one of those newspapers.

So on that day, we followed everybody who bought the Washington Post.

**Voiceover:** Investigators hoped to arrest the killer and put an end to nearly two decades of terror.

But they came up empty.

The Unabomber had eluded them again.

Fortunately, the manifesto had been published in one other place.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** The internet was brand new in 1995.

The FBI.gov website only recently went online.

So along with the manifesto being published in the Washington Post, we also had it on the internet.

**Voiceover:** Ironically, the Unabomber's identity would finally be revealed when a college professor read his anti-technology manifesto on the web.

She thought the writing style seemed familiar.

It sounded like dozens of letters written to her husband, David Kaczynski, from his brother, Ted.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** David's reaction was, are you kidding me? My brother Ted, the Unabomber, he wouldn't hurt a fly.

**Voiceover:** Ted Kaczynski had always been different, but David found it hard to fathom that he was capable of such violence.

Born in 1942, Ted was raised in a close-knit Polish community in suburban Chicago.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** He was very shy, he was highly intelligent, but he kept to himself and his parents knew or felt that something was wrong, but they were hopeful that he would grow out of it, meet a girl, get married, and have a nice life, and so on.

**Voiceover:** He excelled academically, particularly at math, but he didn't form bonds with his fellow students.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** He had struggled to make interpersonal connections.

Other kids referred to him as a walking brain.

He didn't have any sort of emotional attachment to the other children, and they didn't really feel close to him either.

**Karen Wentz:** Kaczynski skipped two grade levels because of his intelligence, but ultimately that seemed to socially isolate him.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** He was detached and lived in his own world.

Someone who behaves this way in childhood and it persists needs to be taken for an evaluation.

**Karen Wentz:** Much later in life, Kaczynski was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, but during his youth, it went totally untreated.

**Voiceover:** Kaczynski finished high school two years early and enrolled at Harvard. Not surprisingly, his focus was on academics, not friendships.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** Ted made several acquaintances in the dorms at Harvard, but never really formed any close friendships with anybody.

**Voiceover:** He seemed to struggle, especially with women.

He did not date and never established a romantic relationship.

Feelings he had for women were never reciprocated.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** Ted had already lacked the ability to connect with his peers and was years behind everyone else emotionally.

**Voiceover:** Despite his worrisome personality traits, Kaczynski was accepted into a psychological study, one of many during that time, with a dark side.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** Studies in college are done all the time.

There's a whole history of doing studies in college that are extraordinary.

This took it to another level.

**Voiceover:** Kaczynski He was told the study would involve his opinions and philosophies and those of other students.

First, he would write an essay detailing his personal beliefs.

Next, he was told, he would debate those beliefs with his peers, but that was a lie.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** The essays were actually given to an attorney who would then use the essays to berate and belittle the subjects.

**Karen Wentz:** Today's studies like this...

would be unethical and probably wouldn't have even been allowed.

But at the time, there was no problem with them.

**Voiceover:** Although records of the Harvard experiment have been sealed, it involved vehement attacks on students, including Kaczynski.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** While the study was very harsh and aggressive towards the students, it involved intense amounts of stress that were deliberately put on the students, and people running the experiment taped it all.

**Voiceover:** The goal? To find out how much they could take before breaking.

At least one participant said the study left him scarred for life.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** Ted endured this study for three years and probably suffered great amounts of emotional stress during that time.

Everything that he believed in was attacked and used as fuel to break down his defenses.

**Voiceover:** The experiment seemed to have been designed to push participants to their psychological limits.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** You have to make sure that the student's pre-morbid personality is within the normal spectrum somewhere.

Any type of stress on a person with an underlying schizophrenic process developing is unhelpful.

**Voiceover:** After earning his bachelor's degree, Kaczynski moved on to graduate school.

He expected to be offered a scholarship to an Ivy League college.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** He believed he deserved to go to a top university for his master's degree, but was not offered top scholarships for many of them.

The University of Michigan offered him the most money for his schooling, so he chose to go there and the University of Michigan has one of the top mathematics departments in the world.

**Voiceover:** But Kaczynski seemed to feel slighted.

For him, Michigan wasn't enough.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** He was bitter that he didn't get into what he initially wanted, but he decided that the University of Michigan wasn't good enough for him academically, and he vocally expressed how easy he thought their program was, which is incorrect.

It's just that Ted was exceptionally gifted.

**Voiceover:** In addition to his academic frustrations at Michigan, Kaczynski's social isolation and sexual frustration tormented him as well.

**Karen Wentz:** So Kaczynski actually went to a psychiatrist to have a conversation about having a sex change operation, but ultimately he couldn't have the discussion.

Instead, he lied and simply said he was worried about being drafted and so he never talked about it.

Instead, he just left the office full of rage.

**Voiceover:** He later told a psychiatrist, What was entirely new was the fact that I really felt I could kill someone.

Yet he continued with his studies.

After earning his PhD, Kaczynski was hired by the University of California at Berkeley, becoming their youngest ever assistant professor.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** University of California at Berkeley is a top school, and to get in there at his relatively young age, tenure track, he could have had a great academic life for himself.

**Voiceover:** But Kaczynski wasn't suited to teaching.

His students gave him bad reviews, saying he was nervous while teaching and unresponsive during office hours.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** And after a couple of years at Berkeley, he quit.

Nobody quits after a couple of years of an academic job like this without having something else to go to.

**Voiceover:** But Kaczynski had no career plans.

After spending some time in Chicago with his brother David, he gave up on academia and disappeared into the woodlands of rural Montana.

where the isolation seemed to feed his inner demons.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** Kaczynski used survivalist skills that he picked up as hobbies during his teenage years to build himself a home where he could be happy.

**Jeff Toorish:** At his cabin, Kaczynski learned how to grow his own food and live a self-sustainable lifestyle.

For fun, he would hike throughout the area, and when the trails became too busy, he would hike through the backcountry until he reached this very specific, peaceful plateau.

**Voiceover:** But even in Montana, Kaczynski could not find the solace he was looking for.

After hiking elsewhere for several months, Kaczynski returned to his favorite plateau and found a road had been cut through it.

**Jeff Toorish:** To him, this defiled that sacred place that he loved and needed so much.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** When you're by yourself, you turn inward, and all of his delusional ideas then began, I think, to blossom.

**Voiceover:** These delusions would drive Kaczynski to a 17-year bombing spree, culminating in a manifesto that left one person holding the key to his identity, his brother, David.

But would David reveal the truth? After a short tenure of teaching at the University of California, Berkeley, Professor Ted Kaczynski abruptly quit his job and moved to a small cabin deep in the Montana woods.

For the next half decade, he would live alone in near total isolation.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** He's totally isolated, a hermit and when you're by yourself, you turn inward and all of his delusional ideas then began, I think, to blossom.

**Voiceover:** Starting in 1978 and over the course of the next 17 years, Kaczynski terrorized the country with a string of bombings without connection, reason, or cause.

Infamous around the world as the Unabomber, a German film titled *The Net* and a stage play, *P.O.*

Box *Unabomber*, sought to romanticize his life.

But in reality, he was a ruthless killer who eluded capture.

Law enforcement had only a sketch to go on until 1995.

when Kaczynski sent a manifesto to the *New York Times* and *Washington Post*.

When the *Post* and *FBI.gov* published his letter, the world learned what drove the Unabomber.

At his wife's urging, Kaczynski's brother David read the document on the FBI's newly created website.

**Karen Wentz:** At some point, as he's reading it, he begins to register for him.

This sounds a lot like my brother and at that point, he was...

faced with an incredibly tough challenge, and that challenge was whether or not he went to the authorities.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** You want to believe it's got to be a mistake, it's got to be someone else.

People's writing can sound alike, but as he thought about it more, he really knew that it was Ted who was doing this.

**Voiceover:** This realization meant David was faced with a terrible dilemma.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** Does he turn in his brother, who maybe is the Unabomber, or take a chance and not want to embarrass the family or Ted himself, and just let this Unabomber guy go and do his thing?

**Voiceover:** David Kaczynski contacted the FBI and sent them a letter written by his brother, Ted.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** It shows the strength of character in David to take really action, incredibly difficult action, and do what he did and if there was a hero in the whole Unabomber tale, it's really David who recognized the manifestos as being written by Ted and turned him in, even though his brother could potentially face the death penalty.

**Voiceover:** To pursue Ted as a suspect, the Bureau first needed to analyze the letter.

They gave it to Jim Fitzgerald.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** In mid-February of '96, I got called by one of the bosses at the UTF and said, can you look at a document? It's 23 pages long.

We're not going to tell you anything else about it.

Just compare it to the manifesto.

Let us know what you think.

The 23-page document was a summary outline of the manifesto.

The topics and themes were the same.

Much of the language was the same.

I even told my UTF boss over the phone, We have either an elaborate plagiarism here of some sort, or you've got your man.

**Voiceover:** It was the lead the task force had been looking for.

But to get an arrest warrant, the FBI needed more, and they were in luck.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** As it so happens, David's...

Mother, Wanda, had saved all the letters Ted ever wrote to her from his Montana cabin and as it turns out, David also saved all the letters and articles and other things that Ted wrote.

At the FBI's request, they turned over those documents to us, and that became my task at that point.

to head up the Comparative Analysis Project.

We had 178 different documents written by Ted Kaczynski.

It was my job, with my team, to analyze each and every one of those letters and look for some kind of similarity in word usage, language choices, punctuation, grammar, certainly topics and themes and try to make a match somehow.

**Voiceover:** Language analysis evidence was new and unfamiliar.

It had never been used as the basis for an arrest warrant or even a search warrant. Investigators were facing an uphill battle.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** We were working with a prosecutor.

He was a good lawyer, and he wanted the grounds, he wanted the probable cause for an arrest at most, a search warrant at a minimum and we kept telling him what we had in language findings, and it just wasn't quite enough.

There was not quite that smoking gun that we had come upon yet.

**Voiceover:** Without a warrant, there was little the task force could do to pursue Ted Kaczynski.

Agents continued to pore over his letters.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** Then one day I was reading a letter that the mother had saved all these years.

Lo and behold, as I'm reading this letter to the editor to the Saturday evening magazine from the early 70s, The topic and the theme is about the environment, the evils of technology, so on and so forth, similar in and of itself to the manifesto.

But what do I read in the very last sentence? Well, you can't eat your cake and have it too.

This time, I didn't read it twice.

I knew right away what I had.

I brought out my well-worn copy of the manifesto, turned it to paragraph 185.

There it was, well, you can't eat your cake and have it too, by F.C and now I have a document in my hand, signed by Theodore J.

Kaczynski, in which that same expression was used, but once again, with the verbs transposed.

I actually constructed a 50-page affidavit of 600 different language examples between the Unabomber's writings and the writings of Ted Kaczynski.

Some of the sentences matched word for word, some were very similar in context and content, and lo and behold, A federal judge looked at it, and for the first time in legal history in the U.S., a search warrant was granted, based almost solely on language evidence.

**Voiceover:** Investigators made plans to raid Kaczynski's Montana cabin.

On April 3, 1996, hundreds of agents quietly surrounded Kaczynski's remote home, and with the help of some neighbors, lured him out of his front door.

When he tried to prevent agents from searching his home, he was arrested.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** He put up a bit of a struggle, but he was overpowered.

He never really did provide any information to investigators, never talked to them other than acknowledging his name.

**Voiceover:** Locals had no idea that a murderer had been living among them.

He was a hermit-type fellow.

**Karen Wentz:** He only came into town once, twice a month.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** Came in, did his laundry, got a few groceries.

**Jeff Toorish:** He always...

rode his bicycle and had his backpack.

He's very quiet, you know, soft-spoken.

He'd like to read stuff that you and I never even heard of.

It's a remote area.

People in Montana are private.

They will leave you alone.

They won't get into your business unless you ask them to get into your business and then only because you need help.

Kaczynski looked like everybody else in town, so those folks had no reason to think that they were living next door to the most wanted man in America.

**Voiceover:** But if there was any doubt that Kaczynski was the Unabomber, it was put to rest by what agents found in his cabin.

**Jeff Toorish:** Inside the cabin, they found all kinds of paraphernalia for making bombs, the raw supplies necessary, 40,000 pages of detailed bomb-making notes, and an unexploded bomb.

This is volatile material, and every one of the people that were going in there knew that this thing could go off at any time.

But it did show them that, without a doubt, they had found the Unabomber.

**Karen Wentz:** So up to this point, the victims of these attacks, other than a sketch, didn't have a face for the Unabomber.

But when the police raided the cabin, and they arrested Kaczynski.

The victims then for the first time saw his face.

This man that had carried out these heinous crimes against them and their family members and they were likely still left wondering why.

This wild man in the woods, no relationship, sought them out and sought to harm them, and for some of them, to kill them.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** Probably the most valuable evidence from a language perspective was the entire manifesto written out longhand on yellow legal paper.

**Voiceover:** It was a victory for investigators, but for Kaczynski's family, the discovery was devastating.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** David Kaczynski read the manifesto with the idea that he would be able to immediately discount any connection between his brother and the Unabomber.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** Unfortunately for Mr.

David Kaczynski, When he read the manifesto, he was unable to do that and, in fact, was left with considerable unease.

Ted's mother was shocked and totally heartbroken.

I mean, you could imagine her firstborn son with one such a promising future turned out to be such a disaster.

**Voiceover:** In the end, the FBI's million-dollar reward for information leading to the arrest of the Unabomber was collected by the bomber's own brother, David.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** To his credit, After paying off a few legal fees, he donated the entirety of the rest of that money to the victims of the Unabomber.

**Voiceover:** Ted Kaczynski was finally under arrest, but the task of bringing him to justice was far from over.

Kaczynski went on trial.

He faced the death penalty.

But would his plea of insanity spare him? After the Washington Post printed the Unabomber's manifesto, David Kaczynski read it and recognized his brother's ideas and writing style.

David contacted the FBI, and in April of 1996, federal agents arrested his brother, Theodore Kaczynski, the Unabomber, in a remote cabin in Montana.

The public could finally see who was behind a string of bombings stretching back to the late 70s.

**Robert Thompson:** The response of people, I think, was surprised.

Everybody had this, I think, idea of the standard serial killer monster and instead, we find out his biography.

He was at Harvard.

He was an instructor at Berkeley.

He was a smart guy.

So there really was a sense that what we expected from this suspect was very different than what we got.

**Voiceover:** His trial began in January of 1998.

Nearly 20 years after his first bomb shook the campus of Northwestern University, he faced a long list of charges, including transporting and mailing explosive devices with the intent to kill or injure and three counts of murder.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** Upon going to court and facing a judge and jury, he was certainly eligible to be given the death sentence himself.

**Jeff Toorish:** Prosecutors.

Victims.

The families of victims, the friends of victims, and in point of fact, the American people wanted to see Ted Kaczynski brought to justice.

If that meant the death penalty, so be it.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** Kaczynski's lawyers knew they had few options in how to save him, so they argued that he suffered deep psychological problems.

He was ordered to be evaluated by a court-ordered expert.

**Voiceover:** The expert told the court that Kaczynski suffered from paranoid schizophrenia.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** Paranoid schizophrenics.

have unreasonable suspicions of others, including the government, and they can't relate to people in a normal way.

They believe things are real that aren't and because they believe it's real, and because they often see it as a personal threat, they act out very often in an aggressive way.

Paranoid schizophrenia, and particularly untreated paranoid schizophrenia, is extremely dangerous.

**Voiceover:** Even with the diagnosis, The prosecution's case was strong.

Kaczynski's defense team was left with few options.

**Karen Wentz:** The evidence collected in this case, when presented to a jury, would have been very persuasive.

From the cabin they collected, the handwritten manifesto, they collected a bomb and in the eyes of a juror, considering that and reaching a verdict would have been very persuasive.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** The defense was not necessarily getting its way in terms of certain legal maneuvers they were attempting.

They realized that there was a very strong case against Kaczynski, and he most likely would have been convicted by a jury of his peers.

Before long, they talked to the prosecutors, and a deal was arranged.

**Voiceover:** On January 22, 1998, Theodore Kaczynski pleaded guilty to sending mail bombs that killed three people and injured 23.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** This plea, advised by his lawyers, was his only saving grace in avoiding the death penalty.

Kaczynski was ordered to serve his life sentence without parole in a maximum-security facility in Florence, Colorado.

**Voiceover:** But Kaczynski's conviction and imprisonment seem to have left his sense of purpose undiminished.

**Karen Wentz:** Kaczynski may have pled guilty, but he never showed any remorse. He believed the world was foolish for not seeing things his way.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** Years later, Ted saw his situation as a joke and used it to ridicule the idea that he had done anything wrong.

In 2012, Ted submitted a response to the Harvard Alumni Directory about his current whereabouts, and he listed his occupation as prisoner and his eight life sentences as awards.

**Voiceover:** Kaczynski seems to be sorry, only that the wider world hasn't embraced his views.

**Jeff Toorish:** He had ideas, views, thoughts and when technology intruded in that, when technology defiled that land that he loved, that's when he decided to take action and the action he decided to take, in his mind, was to try to save humanity and that meant if he had to kill humanity to save it, that's what he was going to do.

**Voiceover:** Kaczynski is still opposed to technology and forbidden from using the Internet, but he collects and shares e-mail addresses.

in an apparent attempt to build an anti-technology movement.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** The University of Michigan currently houses over 400 letters written to very individuals by Kaczynski.

Many of these letters were written from behind prison bars, trying to reach out to those who may believe in his cause and his reasons.

**Voiceover:** Even with no hope of a life outside of prison, Kaczynski remains steadfast in his beliefs.

**Dr. Louis Schlesinger:** I mean, you have these beliefs going back to Thoreau, saying we should, you know, go back to nature and these sorts of beliefs have been around since the beginning of man.

But that's not the problem with Kaczynski.

The problem with Kaczynski was he was sick.

He was delusional.

It just wasn't a philosophy of life.

It just wasn't a position, an academic position, that he could write in a journal and have a debate about the evils of technology.

He was mentally ill and saw himself on a mission.

**Voiceover:** Over the course of his 17-year career, Ted Kaczynski or mailed at least 16 bombs, injuring 23 people and killing three.

**Jim Fitzgerald:** Ted Kaczynski's brilliant mind and self-righteous path of revenge created a mastermind that stumped the country's most skilled investigators.

Hundreds of people spent years of their lives trying to track down the Unabomber, and Ted Kaczynski, in a cabin in the woods, was able to evade them for decades.

**Voiceover:** The target of the country's most intensive manhunt Theodore Kaczynski and his 17-year crime spree changed the country, perhaps forever.

The Ted K Archive

Rob Cousineau  
The Unabomber (Episode 2 of Notorious)  
2019

Notorious, Series 1, Episode 2. <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufJUwso3LBM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ufJUwso3LBM)> &  
<[en.kinorium.com/2112026](http://en.kinorium.com/2112026)>

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