

Gender Confusion, Sex Change Idea Fueled Kaczynski's Rage, Report Says

William Booth

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Convicted Unabomber Theodore J. Kaczynski considered having a sex change operation when he was in his twenties and his confusion over his gender identity filled him with a rage that contributed to his bombing spree, according to documents released today.

The new details about the mental health of Kaczynski, who pleaded guilty in January to a string of terrorist bombings that killed three people and injured 23 others, were part of 47-page forensic evaluation ordered by U.S. District Judge Garland Burrell Jr. during Kaczynski's January trial. The report was made public today in Sacramento. As part of a plea agreement, Kaczynski is serving life in a maximum-security prison without a chance of parole.

Sally Johnson, chief psychiatrist at the Federal Correctional Institution in Butner, N.C., conducted the evaluation in January after Kaczynski, frustrated that his defense attorneys planned to pursue a partial mental illness defense, requested that he be allowed to defend himself.

The psychiatric evaluation concluded that though Kaczynski suffered from paranoid schizophrenia, he was mentally competent to stand trial. The judge ordered that Kaczynski could not represent himself, however, a controversial decision that may still be challenged by Kaczynski.

In the psychiatric evaluation, Johnson reveals that Kaczynski had persistent and intense sexual fantasies about being a woman. While he was a graduate student at the University of Michigan in 1967, he went to a psychiatrist to discuss his wishes for a sex change operation. But in the waiting room, he decided he could not go forward. Instead, he told the psychiatrist he was depressed about the possibility of being drafted.

His near confession of his feelings so filled him with rage, in this case directed at psychiatrists, that he went through a major transformation.

"As I walked away from the building afterwards," Kaczynski wrote in documents released today, "I felt disgusted about what my uncontrolled sexual cravings had almost led me to do. And I felt humiliated, and I violently hated the psychiatrist. Just then there came a major turning point in my life. Like a Phoenix, I burst from the ashes of my despair to a glorious new hope."

Kaczynski's new hope? To take his rage out on others, including the psychiatrist. "I will kill," Kaczynski wrote. "But I will make at least some effort to avoid detection so that I can kill again."

The evaluation also states that Kaczynski was extremely angry with his family. Moreover, it concludes that much of Kaczynski's anti-technology views were developed while he was a young man and then essentially continued unchanged. Kaczynski, in his famous manifesto and in other writings, railed against technological society and said he believed that these forces would rob humankind of its freedom and dignity.

The psychiatric report concluded that Kaczynski "has intertwined his two belief systems, that society is bad and he should rebel against it, and his intense anger at his family for his perceived injustices. He talks openly about his ability to direct his anger from one set of ideas to the other fluidly."

A critique of his ideas & actions.



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