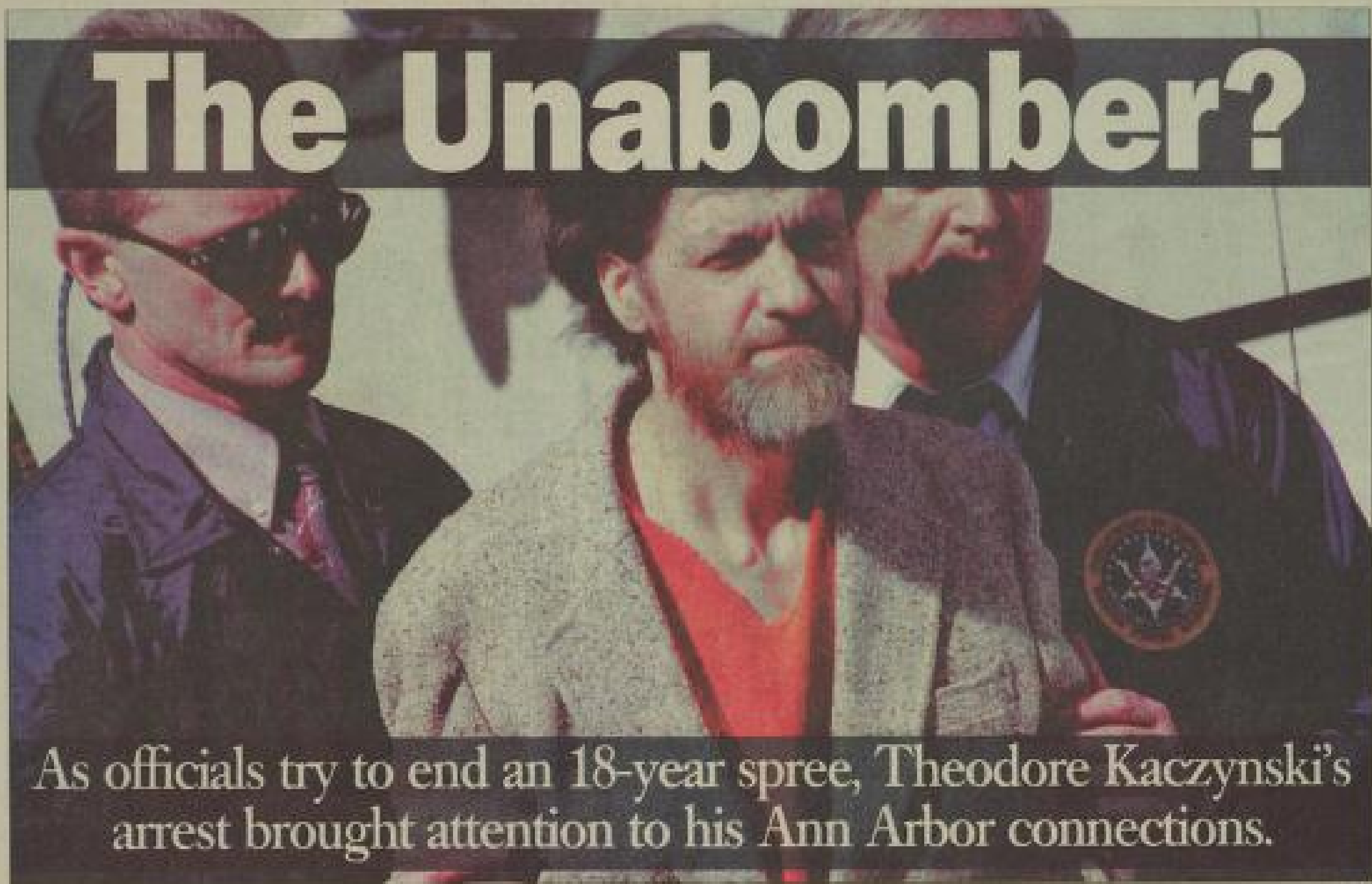


# The Unabomber?



As officials try to end an 18-year spree, Theodore Kaczynski's arrest brought attention to his Ann Arbor connections.

By Laurin Mayk  
Daily Staff Reporter

Childhood friends speculate. Acquaintances analyze chance encounters. Colleagues wonder what went wrong.

Through bits and pieces of memories and handwriting samples they look for answers to questions that have plagued the FBI for 18 years. But now it is closer to home. What links Theodore John Kaczynski, a promising University mathematician, to the sketch of a killer and a path of destruction?

Kaczynski's resume and the Unabomber legend collide on the Ann Arbor campus with an impact large enough to raise more than eyebrows.

When Kaczynski was first identified as a Unabomber suspect last week, Ann Arbor FBI Director Greg Segoski confirmed the local FBI office has been working on the Unabomber case in conjunction with the San Francisco task force for more than a month.

"It is a big puzzle, and there are pieces that fit in from here," Segoski said. "Our investigation was a factor; there were some pieces we were able to supply."

While Kaczynski was earning a doctorate in mathematics and completing a teaching fellowship at the University, two of the Unabomber's future victims were also on campus. Years later, University psychology Prof. James McConnell and Vanderbilt Prof. Patrick Fischer, the son of University math Prof. Carl Fischer, were targeted by the bomber.

McConnell, who died in 1990, was a controversial figure in the national spotlight and was openly criticized for his research and theories concerning technology and behavior modification. A Michigan Daily article published after the McConnell bombing quoted a source who speculated the bomb was sent by an opponent of McConnell's theories.

Prof. Charles Morris said the bombing may have stemmed from "the concern about technology and behavior modification. What (the perpetrator) potentially could have seen as a tool for controlling other people."

Following the bombing, FBI agents showed McConnell the now-infamous Unabomber composite sketch, but he said the image didn't look familiar. McConnell was not injured in the blast, but his assistant, Nicklaus Sisco, suffered flesh wounds.

"I think the bomber feels — forgive me for saying this — like the judge in Alabama who hated the books, feels like he has the moral right to impose his standards on other people. And if he doesn't like it, he can kill them," McConnell said in an article published in *The Ann Arbor News* in 1985.

References to the conformity of the human race discussed in McConnell's research and essays can be found in the Unabomber's Manifesto.

"Somebody who is very concerned about the humanistic side of human nature ... would probably find this very disturbing," Morris said.

The Manifesto also outlined the inevitable destruction of humanity if the power and dependence on technology continues to expand.

"Human freedom mostly will have vanished, because individuals and small groups will be impotent vis-a-vis large organizations armed with supertechnology and an arsenal of advanced psychological and biological tools for manipulating human beings," states the manifesto.

Several bombing victims linked to the Unabomber had expertise in computer and technology fields. McConnell's background fits this criteria for a target as well; he took a deep interest in the new wave of micro-computers.

Tracing the Unabomber's explosive past, McConnell said "he got annoyed with computers. He got annoyed and keeps trying to be a Luddite and blow them up or the people associated with them. I presume I was a target because he had read something I had written," McConnell said in the interview with the News.

Years after the attack, Morris speculated it was McConnell's theories on human behavior that spurred the bombing.

"It was probably his behaviorist orientation that this person somehow found out about," Morris said last week.

Even if Kaczynski had no direct contact with McConnell at the University, McConnell's theories were readily available and prevalent in the national media. A 1982 *People* magazine article profiling McConnell highlighted his unconventional teaching methods and controversial textbook, "Understanding Human Behavior."

McConnell also published an essay the month before the bombing, charging university professors with a responsibility to "practice what we preach" in the realm of behavior modification.

Although there is no evidence Kaczynski had direct contact with the Unabomber's other University-connected victims, FBI agents list Patrick Fischer as one of four victims, including McConnell, who could have

easily crossed paths with the suspect. Fischer's father was a math professor at the University during Kaczynski's stint as a graduate student in the department. Fischer reported visiting his father, now deceased, on campus occasionally.

Prof. Carl Fischer, who was employed jointly by the Business and LS&S schools, was involved with actuarial studies at the University and in programs reaching as far as the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He taught "long-term actuarial mathematics" courses, said Prof. Cecil Nesbitt, who worked with Fischer at the University. Actuarial mathematics is used in private life insurance, pension funds and social insurance, as well as fire, car and life insurance, Nesbitt said.

Unless Kaczynski took some of those courses, he wouldn't have had contact with Prof. Fischer.

Nesbitt said "I doubt if Kaczynski got across to the Business School."

When Kaczynski left Ann Arbor in 1967 for a job at the University of California, Berkeley, University faculty in contact with him had high opinions for their "meticulous and neat" student.

"He was the prize for the best dissertation in the department," said mathematics Prof. Peter Duren. "He was considered to have a lot of promise."

Kaczynski's research was impressive, but lacked an understanding of more central mathematical applications, Duren said. All of Kaczynski's research centered on the mathematical idea of boundary functions.

Allen Shields (Kaczynski's thesis adviser) tried to persuade him, even while he was still at the University, to widen his horizons a bit, to broaden his interests, so that he could have a broader basis for future research," Duren said.

Duren said the job at Berkeley was a "pious position" and that members of the department hoped the atmosphere would curb some of Kaczynski's stubbornness

about his field.

"The hope was that he would broaden (at some and ... apply his talents to things that were a little more central," Duren said.

The high expectations evoked by diligent work and a completed dissertation never came to fruition. When Shields inquired about his former student to a friend at Berkeley, he learned of Kaczynski's sudden departure from the department in 1969 and from the field of mathematics.

"He submitted his resignation last year quite out of the blue," wrote John Addison, who served as chair of Berkeley's math department at the time of Kaczynski's employment there, in response to the inquiry.

Addison said attempts to convince the tenure-track assistant professor to stay were in vain.

"I do have some regret that if I had been more persuasive there's a chance that he would have stayed and this wouldn't have happened," Addison said this week.

In his letter, Addison called Kaczynski "pathologically shy" and noted he didn't socialize with others in the department.

"The 'pathologically shy' probably came from a combination of observations — of my own observations and those who were closer to him mathematically," Addison said.

Although this image coincides with the description of a reclusive, quiet character offered by colleagues and acquaintances, Addison said there is one characteristic he is surprised to hear pointed to Kaczynski.

Addison said he found a sample of Kaczynski's handwriting on a report describing his field of specialty — classical analysis.

"It was not all that neat ... he just sort of scratched out part of it," Addison said.

With his resignation in 1969, he abandoned a career in mathematics but left traces of his work in obscure mathematics journals and an 80-page dissertation on boundary functions at the University.

"He said he didn't know what he wanted to do," Addison said. "He could have been lying, but I suspect he wasn't lying. I suspect it was an honest decision."

These said he suspects Kaczynski's departure was sparked by a realization that after two years at one of the most respected mathematics research universities, "he really wasn't leading anywhere."

"He didn't really leave this narrow area (of study); he stayed with it," Duren said. "After a while it just went stale."

Kaczynski's presence in Berkeley provides two more links with Unabomber victims. Hugh Scruton, who was killed by a bomb in 1985, attended classes at Berkeley while Kaczynski was on the university payroll. Scruton's transcript includes a "History of Mathematics" course, as well as classes in computer science, anthropology and philosophy, the university reported.

United Air Lines President Percy Wood, a member of the Bay Area Air Pollution Control Board advisory committee during Kaczynski's stay in California, was injured by a bombing in 1980.

— Daily Staff Reporters Jeff Ellbridge and Josh White  
contributed to this report.



## Theodore John Kaczynski

Born: May 22, 1942  
in Eastgreen Park, Ill.



**High School Education:** Graduated from Evergreen Park High School in 1960 after skipping a year.

**Undergraduate Education:** Received a bachelor's degree in mathematics from Harvard University in 1962.

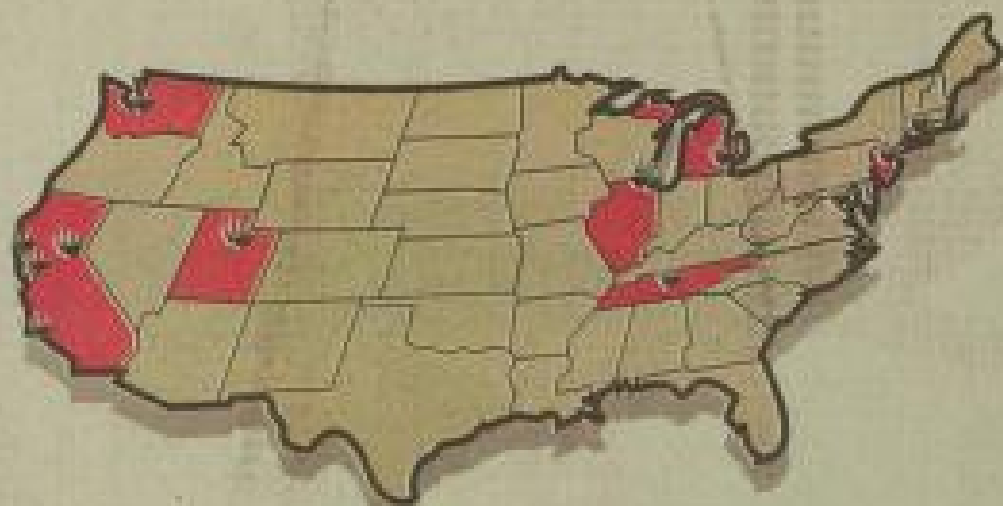
**Graduate Education:** Held post-teaching fellowships at the University after entering in 1962. Earned a master's degree in mathematics in 1964 and a Ph.D. in mathematics in 1967.

**Assistant Professorship:** Worked as an assistant mathematics professor at the University of California at Berkeley from July 1, 1967-June 30, 1969. His specialty was classical analysis. He quit during the summer of 1969 saying that he wanted to get out of the field of mathematics.

## TRAIL OF TERROR: 23 INJURED, 3 DEAD

The following are the times and locations of the bombings the FBI has linked to the Unabomber.

- May 25, 1978: Northwestern University. A police officer was injured when a bomb was detonated.
- May 9, 1979: Northwestern University. One person injured.
- Nov. 15, 1979: 12 people were injured when a bomb went off in an airplane near Washington, D.C.
- June 10, 1980: Lake Forest, Ill. One person injured.
- Oct. 8, 1981: University of Utah. Bomb was defused before it detonated.
- May 5, 1992: Vanderbilt University. A secretary in the computer science department was injured.
- July 2, 1992: University of California at Berkeley. One person was injured.



- June 13, 1985: No one was injured in a blast at the Boeing Co. in Washington.
- May 15, 1985: Berkeley. One injured at the university.
- Nov. 15, 1985: University of Michigan. One injured.
- Dec. 11, 1985: Sacramento, Calif. Unabomber claims his first victim.
- Feb. 20, 1987: Salt Lake City. One injured.
- June 22, 1989: One injured in Tlaxton, Calif.
- June 26, 1993: Yale University. One injured.
- Dec. 10, 1994: New Jersey. One person is killed.
- April 24, 1995: Sacramento. Family lobbyist killed.