

## Warren James Bland



Serial killer researched and summarized by  
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Date	Age	Life Event
1/21/1937	0	Warren James Bland was born.
1949	12	Father dies of heart attack.
7/1/1955	18	Marries Sue Ellen Sweeney, raped her on their wedding night then continuously for their marriage 2 months 10 days.
9/11/1955	18	Sue Ellen files for annulment citing grounds of extreme cruelty and grievous mental suffering.
9/30/1955	18	Bland enlisted for a 3 year stint in the Marine Corps, immediately shipped to San Diego for basic training. 5 weeks later went AWOL, found one month later, sent to the brig for 6 months of hard labor, brought back for basic training.
4/19/1956	19	AWOL second time, classified a deserter.
8/7/1956	19	Arrested, court-martialed, sentenced to another 6 months of hard labor, discharged for bad conduct from the Marine Corps.
7/12/1957	20	Released from US Marines.
7/1957	20	Suspect in murder case of an officer on duty, never charged with crime.
9/1957	20	Arrested for taking a 1956 Thunderbird for a test drive and keeping it.
10/18/1957	20	Pleaded guilty to grand theft auto, sentenced to 30 days in county jail and 3 years probation.
5/1958	21	Took Dorothy Cobb to Las Vegas and married her, after raping her a few months earlier.
Spring 1959	22	Found guilty of assault with a deadly weapon but lessened to assault with force likely to produce great bodily injury after slicing a man in the abdomen with a bayonet for trying to talk to his wife, Dorothy, who was 7 months pregnant at the time.
4/14/1959	22	\$250 fine, pay medical expenses, 5 years probation for the stabbing.
Early 1959	22	Bland's daughter, Debbie Ann Bland born.
9/1959	22	Dorothy left Bland, fleeing to Alaska for 6 months to live with cousin, returned to

		file for divorce when read in the papers Bland had been arrested for rape.
12/21/1959	22	Raped Iris Thompson.
1/4/1960	22	Raped a 46 year old secretary.
1/9/1960	22	Raped a 40 year old woman.
1/11/1960	22	Charged with forcible rape, robbery, kidnapping, kidnapping for the purpose of robbery, 3 counts of attempted rape.
2/8/1960	23	Pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity and denied any prior offense. Evaluated by several psychologists who received very different accounts of the crimes from Bland
Early 1960	23	Committed to Atascadero State Hospital for 90 day observation period, in June determined to commit Bland to the hospital for an indeterminate period.
1965	28	Head of hospital recommends that Bland be sent back through the criminal justice system because he was not benefiting from treatment at the hospital.
9/19/1967	30	Bland released, put on 5 years probation.
11/21/1968	31	Bland behind bars again, after two women were raped, two had fought off attacker, and 15 year old girl left for dead after her throat was slit. Attacks were from August to November.
4/3/1969	32	Sentenced 3 years to life for one rape count, 1 to 25 years on kidnapping charge, and 5 years to life for burglary counts, all sentences to run concurrently. Officially a first timer in the penal system.
8/22/1975	38	Bland paroled. One year later, almost to the day, Bland arrested again for assaultive sexual conduct. For the first time ever his victim was a young girl.
4/6/1980	43	Released from prison again after incarcerated for above crime.
12/30/1980	43	Attacked, tortured, and raped an 11 year old boy.
1/217/1981	44	Arrested for suspected child molestation, released on \$35,000 bail.
07/24/1981	44	Plead guilty to 2 counts of child molestation with the use of a deadly weapon and admitted to prior convictions. Sentenced to 9 years in prison and sent to the California Men's Institution in Chino, east of Los Angeles. When speaking with prison psychologists, admitted for the first time of being a lifelong drinker.
1980	43	During time between prison terms, moved in with a woman and her three daughters, which he molested.
1/1981	44	Norma Williams (woman he lived with) felt she could turn him around with Christianity and married Bland.
1981	44	Bland attacked in prison by fellow inmate, neck split open from ear to collarbone, almost bled to death.
01/20/1986	48	Bland paroled again.
12/18/1986	49	Phoebe Ho's body found (abducted on December 11)
1/3/1987	49	Search warrant obtained to search Bland's house. Forensic matches for a fiber from Bland's car and a hair found in search
1/1987	49/50	Bland goes on the run, changes name to James Thaddeus Sterling and Charles St. Germain.
02/1/1987	50	Body of Wendy Osborn found, Bland suspected of murder, never charged.
02/3/1987	50	Charges filed for the murder of Phoebe Ho.
2/1987	50	Bland found in Pacific Beach, CA. Tried to flee cops, was shot and almost died when captured.
2/1987	50	Also suspected but never charged with murder of Ruth Ost.
1/1993	56	Trial finally set for murder of Phoebe Ho.
02/24/1993	56	Bland found guilty and sentenced to death.
08/30/2001	64	Died in prison from natural causes.
<b>General Information</b>		
Sex	Male	
Race	White	
Number of victims	One confirmed, several more suspected	
Country where killing occurred	United States	
States where killing occurred	California	

Type of killer	
Height	About 6 feet
<b>Childhood Information</b>	
Date of birth	January 21, 1937
Location	Culver City, CA
Birth order	Second (had an older half brother)
Number of siblings	One half brother, but raised as an only child
XYX?	
Raised by	Both parents until 12, then father died, raised by mother
Birth category	
Parent's marital status	Father had a previous marriage, Bland raised by father and mother (father's 2 <sup>nd</sup> marriage) until father died when Bland was 12.
Family event	
Age of family event	
Problems in school?	Dropped out 3 weeks before graduation
Teased while in school?	
Physically attractive?	Yes
Physical defect?	
Speech defect?	
Head injury?	
Physically abused?	Yes. He claimed he was pinched by clothes pins.
Psychologically abused?	
Sexually abused?	
Father's occupation	Maintenance mechanic for the American Legion
Age of first sexual experience	
Age when first had intercourse	
Mother's occupation	Worked at a local rubber plant
Father abused drugs/alcohol	
Mother abused drugs/alcohol	
<b>Cognitive Ability</b>	
Highest grade in school	11 (dropped out three weeks prior to graduation)
Highest degree	Prison adult high school diploma achieved at age 32
Grades in school	
IQ	107
<b>Work History</b>	
Served in the military?	Yes
Branch	Marine Corps
Type of discharge	Bad conduct discharge
Saw combat duty	No
Killed enemy during service?	No
Applied for job as a cop?	No
Worked in law enforcement?	No
Fired from jobs?	
Types of jobs worked	Handyman
Employment status during series	Handyman for a painter
<b>Relationships</b>	
Sexual preference	Heterosexual
Marital status	Married several times
Number of children	Stepdaughters whom he molested and tortured
Lives with his children	No
Living with	When married with wives, some with his mother, and alone
<b>Triad</b>	

Animal torture	Yes
Fire setting	Not reported
Bed wetting	Not reported
<b>Killer Psychological Information</b>	
Abused drugs?	Denied use
Abused alcohol?	Yes. He attended AA meetings, but denied use on several occasions
Been to a psychologist?	Yes, when ordered by the court, not on own
Time in forensic hospital?	Hospitalized several times, longest was 7 years
Diagnosis	Several conflicting, some psychiatrist said malingering, some said he was a sexual psychopath, then mentally disordered sex offender
<b>Killer Criminal History</b>	
Committed previous crimes?	Child molestation, rape, torture, kidnapping, robbery, assault
Spend time in jail?	Yes
Spend time in prison?	Yes, throughout his life
Killed prior to series? Age?	Never able to prove other than Phoebe Ho, first suspected one was when he was 21
<b>Serial Killing</b>	
Number of victims	One confirmed, several more suspected
Victim type	Women, then young girls and one young boy
Killer age at start of series	51 when killed Phoebe Ho, first suspected killing at age 21
Gender of victims	Girl (Phoebe Ho)
Race of victims	Caucasian and Asian (Phoebe Ho)
Age of victims	7 years old
Method of killing	
Type of serial killer	Disorganized lust
How close did killer live?	Within a few miles of her home and school
Killing occurred in home of victim?	no
Killing occurred in home of killer?	no
Weapon	Killer brought with him, killer found at scene, no weapon
<b>Behavior During Crimes</b>	
Rape?	Raped and sodomized
Tortured victims?	Yes, with pliers and surgical tools
Stalked victims?	
Overkill?	
Quick & efficient?	
Used blindfold?	
Bound the victims?	yes
<b>After Death Behavior</b>	
Sex with the body?	
Mutilated body?	
Ate part of the body?	no
Drank victim's blood?	no
Posed the body?	No
Took totem – body part	no
Took totem – personal item	yes
Robbed victim or location	yes
<b>Disposal of Body</b>	
Left at scene, no attempt to hide	yes

Left at scene, hidden	no
Left at scene, buried	no
Moved, no attempt to hide	Tossed the body down the hill
Moved, buried	no
Cut-up and disposed of	no
Moved, too home	no
<b>Sentencing</b>	
Date killer arrested	1987?
Date convicted	1993
Sentence	Death in the gas chamber
Killer executed?	No, he died of natural causes before the execution.
Did killer plead NGRI?	To other crimes, not this one
Was the NGRI plea successful?	no
Name and state of prison	San Quentin
Killer committed suicide?	No
Killer killed in prison?	No
Date of death: August 30, 2001	Died in prison of natural causes before he could be executed.

### **References**

Braidhill, K. (1996). *Evil Secrets*. New York, NY: Pinnacle Books.

De Atley, R. K., & Hill, L. O. (2005, May 17). Abuse defense often fails in murder cases. *The Press Enterprise*. Retrieved October 25, 2006, from [http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE\\_News\\_Local\\_D\\_abuse17.587b8.html](http://www.pe.com/localnews/inland/stories/PE_News_Local_D_abuse17.587b8.html)

We also searched library databases related to psychology and criminal justice and the Internet, but did not find any information. The book we used is where most of our information came from. There were not many additional resources about W. James Bland.