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## **Term Paper #Part 2**

Richard Cottingham, known as the "Times Square Ripper," committed a series of heinous crimes during the late 1970s and early 1980s in New York City. His modus operandi typically involved preying on sex workers in the Times Square area. Cottingham would lure his victims with the promise of payment for their services, only to subject them to brutal assaults and ultimately murder them. The exact details of Cottingham's crimes are incredibly disturbing, involving elements of torture, mutilation, and dismemberment. However, focusing on the broader patterns of his behavior, it's evident that he targeted marginalized and vulnerable individuals, taking advantage of their precarious circumstances for his own sadistic purposes. Cottingham's crimes not only terrorized the Times Square community but also prompted widespread fear and outrage across the city. The brutality of his actions and the apparent lack of remorse underscored the severity of his psychopathy and the danger he posed to society.

Psychopathy is a complex and severe personality disorder characterized by a wide range of traits, including a notable lack of empathy and remorse, a superficial charm that can be used for manipulation, impulsive and often violent behavior, and a grandiose sense of self-worth. These characteristics were prominently displayed in the actions of

Cottingham, a notorious criminal whose crimes left a trail of devastation and fear. One of the key features of psychopathy is the ability to blend into society with a façade of normalcy and charm, allowing individuals like Cottingham to easily gain the trust of their victims. In Cottingham's case, this charm was used to deceive and lure vulnerable targets, such as sex workers, into dangerous situations before unleashing brutal and violent acts upon them. This manipulation and deceit are central to the manipulative nature of psychopaths, who often exploit others for their own gain without remorse. The lack of empathy and remorse displayed by Cottingham was disturbingly evident in the heinous crimes he committed. Not only did he violently end the lives of his victims, but he also engaged in acts of mutilation and dismemberment, showcasing a profound disregard for the suffering and humanity of others. This callousness and lack of empathy are hallmarks of psychopathic behavior, where the individual is unable to connect emotionally with others or comprehend the impact of their actions on those around them. Cottingham's impulsivity and disregard for consequences were prominently displayed in the frenzied and chaotic nature of his crimes. His actions often seemed to be driven by sudden urges and desires, with little to no consideration for the potential repercussions or long-term planning. This impulsivity is a common trait among psychopaths, who may act on their impulses without fully comprehending the risks or consequences involved.

Psychopaths typically possess a grandiose sense of self-worth and entitlement, viewing themselves as superior to others and believing that traditional rules do not apply to them. This inflated ego and sense of superiority can fuel their feelings of impunity and invincibility, allowing them to continue their harmful behaviors without fear of reprisal.

This sense of self-importance likely played a role in Cottingham's ability to evade capture and continue his reign of terror for an extended period of time. Cottingham's actions exemplify many of the defining traits of psychopathy, from his manipulative charm and lack of empathy to his impulsive and violent behaviors, all driven by a grandiose sense of self-worth and entitlement. Understanding these traits is crucial in recognizing and preventing the destructive impact of psychopathy on individuals and society as a whole.