

# **DNA Hit of the Year 2019**

## **Top 7 Cases**

### **Judges Panel Review**

#### **1. *Filipino housemaid found headless and handless in Dubai***

Agency: Dubai Police General Head Quarter

Country/State: Dubai - United Arab Emirates

Year of Crime and Hit: 2016 and 2016

Executive Summary: A woman was found with her head and hands cut off. After 3 months of investigation Dubai police determined her identity by comparing her DNA to the personal belongings of a missing housemaid, a Filipino woman named Manormeeta Salwaro Dadi. The murder suspect's DNA was obtained from the dead body. Investigations revealed the murderer may have been relative. Police then profiled several of Dadi's relatives and a match was found. The relative confessed when confronted.

Scientific Importance: This woman was almost unidentifiable without a head and hands. Police cross-referenced the date and other details of this woman with active missing person cases throughout the country. This led investigators to the house where she was a housemaid, leading to DNA samples and a match.

Investigative Importance: Dubai police had to sift through 9,751 missing women (runaway maids) cases to find leads for this particular case.

Other: Murderer was a butcher who used his knowledge and expertise as a butcher to cut off the head and hands of the victim. The murderer claimed that he was influenced by "zombie movies" to murder the victim in a such a way.

Submitted Story:

On 25 May 2016, a gruesome discovery was made of a decapitated female body with severed hands and stab wounds to the torso, road-side in a desert area in Dubai. Neither the head nor the hands were found in the area, and so began the challenge of identifying the body. Due to the nature of this horrific case and lack of physical evidence including the murder weapon, answers were needed right away as a matter of public concern. Initially, no database matches were found for the DNA of the victim. To obtain as much information from the DNA, attempts to identify the body included ancestry analysis and facial reconstruction using DNA phenotype prediction-software.

The results indicated East Asian ancestry with a high probability that the victim's nationality is Filipino. Furthermore, male profile DNA was obtained from the clothing and leg of the dead body but did not match the DNA database at the time. We also analyzed Y-chromosome DNA of the unknown male DNA sample and found that the Y-STR haplotype on the global Y-STR database indicated origin of Filipino population, which helped narrow down the suspect search. This case triggered an expansive national search of suspects and missing people across the seven Emirates to identify the discovered body. After elimination of possible matches, it was found that 32 missing person reports had high-match-potential out of around 9000 reports.

The missing person's belongings were brought in for analysis and 322 samples were processed for DNA profiling. A breakthrough in the case was made when the DNA from one of the missing person's belongings of a Filipino woman employed in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi matched DNA in the database of the deceased. Once the victim's identity was known, it was time to focus on the suspect. Further investigations in the murder pointed to a relative of the deceased residing in the country, a nephew. After profiling 533 DNA samples, the case began to unravel when DNA obtained from the male relative matched the male DNA sample found on the body. During investigations, the suspect confessed that he murdered his aunt over pressure from a financial debt he owed her and led investigators to the severed hands and head, which he burnt and disposed of in a remote desert area in the Emirate of Ajman. A database search indicated that the DNA from the burnt remains (head and hands) matched the DNA of the female victim. The man was arrested on September 20th, 2016.

Links to Media Coverage:

<http://naradanews.com/2016/09/graphic-contentdubai-police-unravels-the-case-of-the-headless-body-of-a-filipino-woman/>

<http://gulfnews.com/news/uae/crime/i-knew-something-bad-had-happened-to-my-wife-1.1900149>

<http://naradanews.com/2016/09/graphic-contentdubai-police-unravels-the-case-of-the-headless-body-of-a-filipino-woman/>

<https://www.thenational.ae/uae/butcher-who-murdered-and-beheaded-filipina-relative-in-dubai-arrested-1.214745>

<http://www.emirates247.com/crime/local/dubai-police-nab-the-butcher-killer-confesses-zombie-films-influenced-him-2016-09-22-1.640823>

<https://www.khaleejtimes.com/news/crime/dubai-expat-buries-aunts-chopped-up-body-across-UAE-desert?X-IgnoreUserAgent=1>

## **ADDENDUM – Additional Information**

### Additional Narrative from Rashed Alghafri

“Also we would like to highlight some points which we can’t share the documents proofs for it. The most important thing in here, the justice system has taken their of conviction based on DNA evidence solely as there were no other evidences available. The criminal made sure to choose a blind area, not covered by CCTV, and also hiding the victim identify which usually achieved using traditional fingerprints. Therefore, the importance and advantages of DNA profiling are shown in here, were criminals maybe able to hide many different types of critical evidences but they will never be able to fully stop depositing biological cells wherever they go and with whatever they interact with.

I guess this shows how it is important for countries to accelerate passing legislations and enriching their DNA databases.”

### Additional Links

<https://gulfnews.com/uae/government/butcher-in-custody-for-filipinas-murder-1.1899929>

<https://www.thenational.ae/uae/butcher-who-murdered-and-beheaded-filipina-relative-in-dubai-arrested-1.214745>

<https://www.emirates247.com/crime/local/dubai-police-nab-the-butcher-killer-confesses-zombie-films-influenced-him-2016-09-22-1.640823>

<https://lovindubai.com/news/dubai-police-solve-headless-woman-case>

<https://filipinotimes.net/news/2016/09/22/butcher-held-for-relatives-murder-in-dubai/>

<http://naradanews.com/2016/09/graphic-contentdubai-police-unravels-the-case-of-the-headless-body-of-a-filipino-woman/>  
<https://www.moi.gov.ae/DataFolder/magazine2016/Nov/999%20NOVEMBER.pdf>

## **FINAL Additional Information**

### **What this case meant to the victim and/or their family?**

This case holds high importance to the victim and the family because the victim was a foreign domestic worker living with her employer away from her home country, the Philippines, and suddenly lost contact with her family back home. As a result, the case highlights the need to find answers for the family of foreign domestic workers, who more often are limited to travel/communication with their loved ones working abroad. In this case, identification of the homicide victim and linking their identity to that from the missing person report poses the most important challenge. Headless and handless, the killer went through major lengths to conceal the identity of the victim, however, justice would see it that the identity of the victim would soon be revealed.

Revealing the mystery behind disappearance of the human individual in this life is always a relief to all relatives and friends because it identifies the destiny of a person that means a lot to them, whether she/he was alive or deceased. More importantly knowing the fact that she/he is away from their home for work purposes and family might not afford travelling to UAE to check on their relative. Although it is hard to know that the disappeared individual has died but it will make their relatives know the truth and move on with life.

Another thing is the belief on large scale in the police force and justice system of the UAE. On micro scale, the belief in the technology and DNA profiling which the government does make sure to implement to aid investigation and solve crimes. Decades ago, DNA was not much known and accepted by the public, however, today DNA is an essential tool used for biological identification of individuals. This case is a great example of the effective use of DNA in solving crimes, identifying missing persons and other useful applications. Such justice means that more people may visit back their thoughts on DNA in solving crimes and help police achieving safe city strategic goal.

*What does this case mean to the community?*

With the viral incident of the homicide, maintaining a safe community was challenging, where the citizens started to question their worries and concerns regarding their safety which pressured the team working on the case, also the intruding media pressure. Yet, the trust and cooperation of the citizens accelerated investigations and helped narrow the scale to the law enforcement. The major difficulty of the case was the lack of a reference DNA profile to identify the homicide victim. Reference profiles were obtained by laboriously sampling belongings of missing persons. To the community, this case emphasizes the importance of having a well-populated national database, in which individuals' DNA profiles would be added to the national DNA database following the legislations. DNA profiles aid investigation solving crime and eventually achieving justice. More importantly, access to advance technology and the exposure of criminals to up-to-date investigation methodologies means it is more likely to see such crimes on the rise as criminals get smarter and learn how to overcome it. For example, in this case the criminal had hidden the identity of the victim, and his identity cautiously not leaving any fingerprints on any item with or next to the victim. Also, the body was dumped in a carefully chosen remote area where no CCTV is available to conceal the crime. Despite all these attempts, Dubai Police was successful in identifying the perpetrator who was convicted based on DNA solely.

*What does this case mean to criminal justice personnel that worked on this case?*

This case highlights the forensic value of DNA profiling in cases that lack fingerprints, which are typically used for human identification. The criminal justice personnel, particularly the team worked on this case and the team working in the Biology and DNA section, take pride in the success of this case bringing justice to the victim's family. Again, the DNA found in this investigation is the only way police were able to identify the victim and was also the main evidence used to tie the perpetrator to the victim's body as unknown male DNA was found on the unknown female victim. This piece of evidence was critical to the case and formed the basis of the criminal court's decision to convict the perpetrator. It also shows that biological materials are very challenging to conceal in a forensic investigation especially with the advancement of technology and availability of various

recovery methods of human cells and analyzing them for DNA. The DNA experts working on this case collected critical samples from the crime scene without allowing disturbance of other factors despite the presence of other investigators and prosecutors whom are usually involved in crime scene inspection as well.

## **2. *The Bittrolff brothers***

Agency: Suffolk County (NY) Police Department

Country/State: New York

Year of Crime and Hit: 1994 and 2013/4

Executive Summary: Three prostitutes were found dead in a close time span. But the case went unsolved for 20 years. In 2014, the murderer's (Bittrolff) brother's DNA was entered into the state database for an unrelated criminal contempt case, leading to a match.

Scientific Importance: Match came from the murderer's relative being entered into the state database for an unrelated crime.

Investigative Importance: This DNA match solved three cases and revealed a modus operandi that could link the murderer to many more cases.

Other: Murderer was of particularly distraught nature. He had wrestled a pig down to the ground and slit its throat. He shot a deer in the woods, cut the heart out, and ate it raw. After Bittrolff's sentence, the case's prosecutor Robert Biancavilla announced that Bittrolff was also a suspect in at least one of the murderers attributed to the Long Island Serial Killer case.

### Submitted Story:

In November of 1993, two prostitutes, Rita Tangredi and Sandra Costilla, were murdered in Suffolk County and found posed in the woods in a similar fashion. In January of 1994, a third murdered prostitute, Colleen McNamee, was found in nearby woods. DNA evidence, namely semen, collected from Tangredi and McNamee's respective crime scenes were compared and the analysis revealed "a match". There was no DNA evidence found at Castilla's scene, but similarities between the three incidents led detectives to believe this murder was connected to the other two. A task force, which was formed in 1994, dedicated thousands of hours of manpower to attempt in identifying the perpetrator responsible for these murderers. Hundreds of suspects were investigated by the

task force and all leads were exhausted. Unfortunately, the case eventually grew cold.

The Suffolk County Crime Lab was able to enhance the DNA found at both scenes to create a single source. That DNA evidence was uploaded into CODIS and did not yield a match to any suspect in the database.

In 2013, the Suffolk County Crime Lab was informed by New York State Office of Forensic Sciences that a partial match to the DNA evidence had occurred when Timothy Bittrolff had been arrested and his DNA was collected and submitted.

In 2014, the Suffolk County Police Homicide Squad formed a second task force, and working in conjunction with the Crime Lab, began collecting discarded DNA evidence from the relatives of Timothy Bittrolff.

On 03/07/14, the Crime Lab informed the Homicide Squad that a DNA pseudo exemplar recovered from the garbage of JOHN BITTROLFF, Timothy's brother, was in fact a match; a "cold hit" to the DNA evidence recovered from the crime scenes in 1993 and 1994.

On 07/21/14, John Bittrolff was arrested for the two cold case murders of Rita Tangredi and Colleen McNamee. Although detectives were unable to charge John Bittrolff with the murder of Sandra Costilla due to a lack of evidence, he remains the prime suspect. A direct exemplar was taken from John Bittrolff at the time of his arrest and it was again confirmed to match the DNA evidence recovered in 1993 and 1994.

On 07/05/17, following a lengthy trial, John Bittrolff was found guilty by a jury for two counts of Murder 2nd Degree. He was subsequently sentenced to two consecutive terms of 25 years to life.

This case attracted significant media attention in the mid 1990's and again twenty years later, with the arrest and prosecution of John Bittrolff. At a press conference announcing the arrest of Bittrolff, former Suffolk County District Attorney Thomas Spota described this case as a "miracle of modern DNA science."

Links to Media Coverage:

<https://www.newsday.com/long-island/crime/john-bittrolff-charged-with-cold-case-murders-of-rita-tangredi-colleen-mcnamee-1.8867098>

<https://www.newsday.com/long-island/crime/john-bittrolff-faces-50-to-life-at-sentencing-in-double-murder-1.14146418>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Bittrolff](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Bittrolff)

<https://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/Man-Is-Convicted-of-Killing-Long-Island-Prostitutes-432739853.html>  
<https://web.archive.org/web/20170913232025/http://www.newser.com/article/64ad0c77a9ee4bdf9b1ec54425d42686/prosecutor-convicted-killer-may-be-tied-to-more-ny-slayings.html#>  
<https://nypost.com/2014/07/22/mar-arrested-in-gruesome-decades-old-cold-case/>

## **FINAL Additional Information**

The murders of Colleen McNamee and Rita Tangredi were devastating to their families. The arrest and conviction of John Bittrolff shocked his family and neighbors. His conviction was able in a small way to give closure not only to the families, but also to the detectives who originally worked the case and remained emotionally invested in it, and its outcome 24 years later.

Rita Tangredi left behind a son Anthony, who was 11 years old when she was murdered. After the murder he moved to New Jersey and eventually changed his last name to give himself a fresh start in life. Although the odds were against him, Anthony has become a productive member of society with a full-time job and a family. Anthony and members of Rita's extended family attended trial and the hearings. Anthony spoke at the sentencing saying "What do you say to the person who killed your mother?" Anthony also spoke of how his children never met their grandmother and he struggles with how to talk to them about her.

The murder of Colleen McNamee particularly devastated her family. Colleen was the youngest of three kids. Although she went down the wrong path in life she came from a solid family. Her father Larry is a US Navy Veteran of the Vietnam War, was very active in his V.F.W. post, was a baseball coach, and retired from an Aeronautical Radio company. After Colleen's murder, her parents were so devastated they sold their house and moved to North Carolina, rarely coming back to Long Island to visit either their friends or their older children and grandchildren. A good friend of the McNamee's wrote a letter to the Detectives who arrested Bittrolff shortly after his arrest. He wrote that when Larry and his wife Charlotte recently came to the V.F.W. Post for a ceremony honoring their grandson attaining the rank of Eagle Scout it was the first time he had seen them in decades and that he and his wife never were able to find the right words to comfort their friends. The McNamee's were in the courtroom for every minute of

the 7 week trial. Larry was 81 years old during the trial; he wore a shirt and tie every day he sat in court. He and his wife said that sitting in the courtroom and re-living those events and the outcome was cathartic for them because they kept expecting Colleen to walk into the courtroom.

The two original detectives who worked on this case were both long retired when the arrest was made. However, they both came back and assisted the current detectives working the case any time they were asked. The lead detective on the case postponed his own retirement several times in order to stay involved and help with the trial preparation. Retired Detectives and Lab personnel attended the trial as spectators. The lead prosecutor's wife was in the courtroom offering him support. The jurors who heard the case, and had lengthy deliberations also deserve mention. A juror was quoted as saying the jury kept an open mind and all were allowed to argue their point of view in a respectful process. Another juror stated, "it took some of us longer than others. Once I put all the pieces together, I had no doubts."

### **3. *The Case of Jane Britton***

Agency: Massachusetts State Police & Middlesex District Attorney's Office

Country/State: Massachusetts

Year of Crime and Hit: 1969; and 2004 (warm hit date) & 2017 (familial testing confirmation date)

Executive Summary: Nearly 50 years ago, Jane Britton, a 23-year-old Harvard graduate student, was found beaten to death and sexually assaulted in her apartment. In the five decades since, investigators have been unable to pinpoint who killed her. In 2017, using new DNA technology, investigators derived a DNA profile from evidence taken from the 1969 killing. This led to a hit in CODIS to Michael Sumpter. But unfortunately, Michael had died in 2001 from cancer. Investigators used Ancestry.com to search for a relative of Michael Sumpter, his brother, to obtain enough familial DNA for a conclusive match, thereby resolving the case. Although the killer died long ago, DNA helped bring closure to Jane's family and helped link Sumpter to several other attacks/killings in the area.

Scientific Importance: The original DNA evidence was taken in 1969 and preserved until a profile could be extracted in 2017.

Investigative Importance: This is the oldest case that the Middlesex District Attorney's office has been able to bring to a resolution. New DNA technology, a hit in CODIS, and 'familial searching' using Ancestry.com all confirmed the identity of this killer. This DNA match also helped link Michael sumpter several other rape and murders throughout the area.

Other: Many speculated that Jane Britton was a victim of the Boston Strangler, or a copycat, since she was murdered in the same building as one of the other victims.

Submitted Story:

On November 20, 2018, District Attorney Marion Ryan publicly announced that the Homicide of Jane Britton on January 7, 1969 a graduate student of anthropology at Harvard University had been solved after 49 years. This officer

was assigned to investigate the cold case in 1997. At this time there was no physical evidence located either at the MSP or Cambridge Police Departments. This officer did locate the autopsy specimens of Jane Britton, which Dr. George Katsas had retained and stored at his office.

With the onset of DNA testing the autopsy specimens were subsequently sent out to Cellmark Diagnostics for testing (1998). A partial DNA profile was identified for use in the newly created CODIS system.

As capabilities in scientific testing increased, and mandated samples were uploaded into the Massachusetts Data Base, a “warm hit” was noted (2004) on a person later identified as Michael Sumpter. Sumpter had been incarcerated in Massachusetts numerous times and died in prison in 2001. Chemists began reworking and retesting available samples from the Britton specimens. In a final effort to locate an identifiable sample, an exhaustive sample was found in a previously analyzed micro tube and established an Y-STR profile of a yet unidentified male. YSTR is not compatible for input into the CODIS system to locate matches.

Having a usable complete YSTR sample for identification purposes, this officer was instructed to focus the investigation on obtaining DNA samples from male persons previously identified in the investigation. Travel across the United States to locations as far as Hawaii and to Canada was undertaken to obtain samples.

Each individual identified agreed to assist in the investigation, despite feelings that they had been “suspect” during their original dealings with law enforcement in 1969. All provided DNA samples for comparison in the case and were subsequently eliminated as the source of the Britton sample. Noting the previous “warm hit” on the Sumpter sample in CODIS. Permission was needed break down the Sumpter CODIS sample from STR to Y-STR for possible comparison. As Sumpter was now deceased, authorization was permitted.

A new updated search on Michael Sumpter revealed that in 2002, the Boston Police Department identified Sumpter from a sample in their department DNA data base as the suspect in the unsolved 1985 rape in the city of Boston. In 2010 Boston Police again identified Sumpter as the suspect in the 1972 unsolved Murder of Ellen Rutchnick from their DNA data base. In 2012, Boston Police again identified Sumpter as the suspect in unsolved murder of Mary Lee McClain in 1973.

Following breakdown of the Sumpter CODIS sample to Y-STR, the Massachusetts State Police Crime Lab was able to identify that Michael Sumpter

or a male relative matched the Britton sample. In order to validate, a living male relative would be needed.

This officer traveled to Florida and encountered a very uncooperative brother who wanted no involvement in the Britton investigation. A DNA sample was finally obtained, which was used both to verify Michael Sumpter as the CODIS Source, and later after breaking it down to STR to eliminate the brother.

Michael Sumpter a person unknown to Jane Britton, broke into her apartment on the Night of January 6/7, 1969, sexually assaulted her and violently beat her about the head and killed her. This was the first of 3 murders and other sexual assaults Sumpter would commit, but not be held accountable for until the advent of DNA testing. To date, this is the oldest case solved at the SPDU-Middlesex.

Links to Media Coverage:

<https://www.boston.com/news/crime/2018/11/20/jane-britton-harvard-cold-case-solved>

<https://www.boston25news.com/news/who-killed-jane-britton-50-year-murder-investigation-finally-closed/875994868>

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2018/11/26/nearly-years-harvard-was-haunted-by-an-unsolved-murder-dna-now-points-serial-rapist/?utm\\_term=.283a039c20ec](https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2018/11/26/nearly-years-harvard-was-haunted-by-an-unsolved-murder-dna-now-points-serial-rapist/?utm_term=.283a039c20ec)

## **FINAL Additional Information**

“The following is from a Facebook post by Don Mitchell, Jane Britton’s friend who found her body with Jim Humphries”

(Information produced below as given to Kyle at GTH-GOV)

Early in the morning on January 7th, 1969, my friend Jane Britton – a fellow graduate student in Harvard’s anthropology department – was murdered in the apartment next to mine. Her boyfriend and I found her body the next morning. Her skull had been beaten in, probably by a Lower Paleolithic stone tool that happened to be in her apartment.

Several of us were grilled by the police, given lie detector tests, and had our pictures splashed across the pages of the Boston papers, and even the New York Times. We testified before a Grand Jury.

It was clear to me that, at least for a time, I was a suspect. But I was not the only one. An archaeologist connected with the Peabody Museum (which housed

the Anthropology Department) was also a candidate. There was no evidence; no one was arrested, although over many years those of us close to the case continued to believe that he was the killer. In the 1990s, he died.

So far as any of us knew, the case – though never closed by the Massachusetts State Police – had become inactive. My last contact with Lt. Frank Joyce, the lead MSP investigator, was in the late 1970s.

In 2017 a young woman named Becky Cooper, a New Yorker writer and Harvard graduate, located me in Hilo, and told me she was writing a non-fiction book about Jane. I agreed to help her with her book in any way that I could. Becky came to Hilo and spent several days interviewing me.

Around the same time, Becky and three other people had begun filing Freedom of Information Act requests to examine the case records. One, Alyssa Bertetto, a private investigator in Colorado, put me in touch with another, a reporter for the Boston Globe named Todd Wallack, who was writing an article about the case. Todd interviewed me for his article, which can still be found on the Globe's website. Becky was in contact with a man named Michael Widmer, who had been in the higher levels of Massachusetts politics and was interested in the case in part because Jane's murder had been his first story as a cub reporter. All of their FOIA requests and appeals were denied, on the grounds that the case was still active. And yet the case did not appear to be active.

I think it's fair to say that those four effectively put pressure on the Middlesex County DA and the Massachusetts State Police to work again on the case.

One of the results of their pressure was that Detective Sergeant Peter Sennott came to Hilo to talk to me and to collect a sample of my DNA, so that I could be "excluded." He never said what the source of the DNA that mine would be tested against was, and I didn't expect him to. He was professional and personable and we got along well. We had a semi-formal interview and then a couple of days later we knocked around on Mauna Kea in my 4Runner.

But after Sgt Sennott left and I heard nothing, I was discouraged. I began to think that it was what in Hawai'i we sometimes call "shibai," a sham, a front, pretense, putting on an act.

I had suspected that the investigation restarted because the law holds that if an investigation is active, then no FOIA requests need be granted.

But I was wrong about shibai. In fact, Sgt Sennott was doing some amazing detective work, though of course that's not something he would have revealed to me; I only learned about his investigations recently.

During the next year I thought a lot about Jane and I stayed in close contact with Becky, while trying to work on my own fictional treatment of the murder. So I decided to plant a tree in Jane's memory. I chose a yellow 'ōhi'a; Ruth and I had already planted an 'ōhi'a for Becky, who had become a good friend and was so closely linked to Jane, to me, and to Ruth.

And then I waited. Recently, there were rumblings that the killer had been found and that at some point there would be an announcement. Last Friday I heard that on Tuesday, there would be a press conference at which the killer would be named.

Jane's 'ōhi'a was already in the ground. It came to me that – just as I had wreathed the calabash containing my father's ashes with a maile lei, and later did the same with my mother's – that placing a maile lei around Jane's 'ōhi'a would be a fitting tribute.

I also decided to place one on Becky's 'ōhi'a, to signify her link to Jane, and her importance in helping bring about the solution to the crime. And that's why I started looking for maile here on Facebook.

This is what happened: a man named Michael Sumpter raped and murdered Jane Britton. He was not connected with Harvard or Jane's circle of friends in any way. An evil man, he had killed before Jane and may have killed after her. He died in 2001.

Here are some things I need to process:

For almost half a century I suspected that certain man killed my friend, but now I know he was innocent. I owe him an apology that I can't give to him because he is no longer alive. Having a strongly-held belief like that turned upside down is humbling.

For almost half a century I believed that Jane had somehow gotten herself into a situation that unexpectedly and lethally turned bad. Mainly this was because most of us only looked for suspects within our own crowd, the anthropologists and archaeologists, and none of us seemed to be violent killers. So we thought Jane must have died because something unexpectedly escalated into lethal violence.

For all those years, though, I never could come up with a possible situation that didn't seem strained or flawed. And when, working on the novel, I tried to imagine a fictional situation, nothing seemed to work. I don't think that any of us who knew Jane ever thought that her death was a random act of violence. I know I didn't.

But it was, and so that's another thing I have to process. Don't cling to a hypothesis that doesn't seem quite right just because it's the only one you can think of. But that's what I did and it's a sobering thought.

People talk about closure, and I guess that's what I have now. I know how Jane Britton died which means I now know something I deeply wanted to know for half a century. And, to tell the truth, I always wondered whether I was still considered a suspect, particularly when Sgt. Sennott came to collect DNA from me. Over the years, I've wondered how many people out there thought I might have been the killer; now, if they're paying attention to the news, they know I'm not.

Jane's story needs to be told – and not just the story of the crime, although that's the nexus. The Anthropology Department, all of us, the Cambridge community and how it was in the late sixties and the ways that Jane's story has endured and has been passed from student to student all these years. And more subtly, the ways Jane and her story have influenced our lives over the years – well, I should only speak for myself. I don't think two months have ever gone by that I didn't think of her. And the ways those of us who never forgot her, who, like me, never completely abandoned hope that the case could be solved, helped keep her memory alive.

<https://www.websleuths.com/forums/threads/ma-jane-britton-22-harvard-student-cambridge-7-jan-1969.189878/>

#### **4. Rape in a Dental Office**

Agency: Brazilian Federal Police

Country/State: Brazil

Year of Crime and Hit: 2012-15 and 2018

Executive Summary: DNA links several rapes committed throughout Brazil to a single suspect.

Scientific Importance: This is the first case in Brazil in which the author of serial sexual crimes was identified through DNA examination, with the assistance of the National DNA Database. This also involved the sharing of DNA profile data directly between Brazilian states before submission to the national DNA database.

Investigative Importance: This DNA match connected to the suspect not only directly to four similar rapes, but also indirectly as a suspect in over 50 different crimes.

##### Story:

Between the years of 2012 and 2015, several women were raped in the states of Amazonas, Mato Grosso, Rondônia and Goiás. The aggressor acted in the same modus operandi: he attacked the victims at home after pretending to ask for some information or a glass of water. Although he acted always in the same way, he was constantly changing city and committing crimes in locations up to 2,000 km distant from each other.

In September 2015, in the state of Rondônia, after committing robberies and a rape to a secretary of a dental office, Célio Roberto Rodrigues, 35, who also used the name of Herley Nascimento Santos, was arrested. At this time the state of Rondônia still did not have DNA laboratory. Despite this, the biological material of the suspect was collected and his profile was compared with cases investigated in the neighboring state of Mato Grosso. The comparison immediately confirmed the involvement in four rapes within that state. When the genetic profiles were uploaded to the National DNA Database, new compatibilities were found with three genetic profiles inserted by the database of the state of Amazonas.

In February of 2018, analyzing samples collected from two victims of rapes in the city of Goiânia (in the state of Goiás), the Goiás' DNA laboratory obtained two similar genetic profiles. Both were inserted in the local database and uploaded to the National DNA Database, being detected coincidences with the genetic profiles of the traces of the crimes attributed to Célio Roberto Rodrigues.

So far, the Brazilian National DNA Database already has 10 hits among genetic profiles of sexual crimes attributed to Célio Roberto Rodrigues. He is currently being investigated for the sexual abuse of more than 50 victims in the states of Amazonas, Rondônia, Mato Grosso and Goiás. 23 of them occurred in the city of Manaus (Amazonas), where he is accused of rape of children, adolescents and adult women

This is the first case in Brazil in which the author of serial sexual crimes was identified through DNA examination, with the assistance of the National DNA Database. The large distance between crime sites and the lack of evidence linking the abuser to the crimes made it difficult to resolve them, which would probably be unsolvable if it were not for the existence of DNA Databases. As a serial rapist, we believe that it is still possible to elucidate other sexual crimes of this same perpetrator as sex crime backlog samples are being processed.

Links to Media Coverage:

<http://g1.globo.com/ro/rondonia/noticia/2015/09/preso-por-estupro-em-ro-e-suspeito-de-violentar-cerca-de-40-mulheres.html>

[https://www.apcf.org.br/horus/arquivos/revistas/revista\\_apcf\\_37\\_web.pdf](https://www.apcf.org.br/horus/arquivos/revistas/revista_apcf_37_web.pdf)<http://www.gazetadigital.com.br/editorias/cidades/banco-de-dna-identifica-suspeito-de-crimes-sexuais-em-serie/471940>

## **ADDENDUM – Additional Information**

Additional Narrative from Aline Costa Minervino

In June 2004, Célio Roberto Rodrigues, robbery a beauty salon in Rondônia. He was arrested but he escaped from the prison in Rondônia. A few years later, he started a series of crimes in Amazona

- In November 2010, he raped a 16-year-old victim.
- In January 2012, he and another criminal raped a woman. Twelve days later, he raped another woman.

- In March 2012, he raped two children (13 and 14 years-old) and, four days later, stole a car.
- In April 2012, he raped a 12-year-old child.
- In June 2012, he stole a car and raped a beauty salon employee.
- In July 2012, he robbed a dental office and raped the secretary.
- In August 2012, he raped two girls (11 and 14 years-old). Fifteen days later, he robbed a house, raped two women and murdered the owner.

Still in August 2012, he was arrested, but he escaped from Amazonas' prison four months later. In January 2013, he raped more two women. In February 2013, he stole a drugstore. We were a time without information of crimes committed by the individual, but, at the end of 2014, a rape committed by Célio arises in Mato Grosso. In 2015, there were three more rapes in Mato Grosso. In May 2015, he raped a woman in Goiás. Twenty five days later he raped another one. In September 2015, he robbed a dental office and raped the secretary in Rondônia. He was arrested and the Mato Grosso's police chief went to Rondônia and collected a biological sample of the criminal for inclusion in DNA databases. From there, most of the traces of the crime sites reported above could be related.

### **FINAL Additional Information**

For reasons of Brazilian law, rape victims have their identity protected and their names are not disclosed. On the other hand, they rarely speak in public about the violence they have suffered. Thus, we have no personal testimony about the meaning of this for abused women. However, intimately, we imagine how important it is for the victims to know that their perpetrator was arrested and convicted of the crime he committed. This Wednesday, May 8, soon after receiving the news of the 2019 DNA Hit of the Year, we identified a new match in the Brazilian National DNA Database, involving this same criminal. We were filled with happiness and pride to know that one more victim would have solved their case and that this information could help other investigations. This is another case of the state of Amazonas that has just been included in our database.

We transcribe below some testimonies of the experts who analyzed the case in the laboratories of Goiás, Amazonas, and Mato Grosso:

*"In February 2018, after insertion of the male genetic profile obtained from samples collected from two rape victims in the city of Goiânia/GO, the Brazilian National DNA Database detected coincidences with three rape victims in Manaus/AM and a victim of Cuiabá/MT. Analyzing the history of the cases, it was found to be a serial criminal. According to data collected among the laboratories involved, in March, April and August 2012, three victims were raped in the city of Manaus. There was inclusion of the suspect referred to the time, who was arrested for these crimes. But in December 2012 the individual fled and committed a rape in March 2015 in Cuiabá, being referred as a suspect, but presenting another name, and also there was included in the database. Finally, in May 2015, two victims were raped in Goiânia and no suspects were presented. [...] When inserting the male profile obtained from these victims in the DNA Database a coincidence was detected with the male profile obtained from the three victims of Manaus and the victim of Cuiabá, that is, the six victims of the three Were raped by the same individual.*

*It is important to note that the cases of Goiás victims were cold cases (i.e., no suspects presented by the investigation) and were processed during a pilot project of sexual crimes backlog processing. The result obtained and the help given to the investigation rejoices us by solving crimes that could hardly be solved without the use of genetic profiling banks, gives us the sense of accomplishment and that we are contributing to the reduction of crime, to the punishment of the true culprit and helping new victims not to be violated. In addition, the case demonstrates the importance of sexual crimes backlog processing and the insertion of these profiles into DNA Databases. For the victims, the case certainly helped in the sense of justice and security. "*

- Mariana Flavia da Mota, Goias DNA Database

*"He was very violent, beat a lot in the victims and one of them ended up dying after the violence. In addition to the rapes, Herley also authored crimes of robbery and murder. He was arrested in August 2012. In addition to the Amazon, he committed crimes of the same nature in Mato Grosso, Goiás and Rondônia. Without the forensic science and the work done on the victims, it would be very*

*difficult to prove that he was the perpetrator of all such crimes, because crimes against sexual dignity have no witnesses and only the author's facial identification is very fragile as evidence during a trial. "*

*"Feeling of justice fulfilled by the identification of the fugitive author"*

*- Daniela Koshikene, Amazonas DNA Database*

*"It was an exhaustive process that counted with the collaboration of many members of the Brazilia Integrated Network of DNA Databases and also of the Deputy Director of Politec-MT, as well as the Metropolitan Forensic Laboratory Board, discussion of the results, in the establishment of new administrative procedures.*

*[...]*

*However, it was very special to have the announcement of this result just on the 2016 International Women's Day! Let this result come to the victims as our message that they have not been forgotten and that we work for justice to be done.*

*I hope, in fact, that in the near future, this wonderful tool that we have in hand, database of genetic profiles, allow us to achieve results like this in a routine way and that we, the expertise in Forensic Genetics of Brazil, stand out for us proactivity in investigative processes and doing justice. "*

*- Ana Cristina Lepinsk Romio, Mato Grosso DNA Database*

## **5. *The Golden State Killer***

Agency: Ventura County District Attorney's Office and Sacramento County District Attorney's Office

Country/State: Ventura and Sacramento County, California

Executive Summary: Joseph DeAngelo had committed a spree of rapes (more than 50) and murders (12). For over 30 years, investigators struggled to develop a suspect. In 2001, investigators using DNA evidence linked the crime to others committed in the Bay Area and to murders throughout Southern California, thereby linking DeAngelo's crimes and further revealing his modus operandi, victim profiles, geographical reach, etc. Then, California police recently found an unusually well-preserved sample from one of the crime scenes, but could not find a match in the traditional database. But a near-match was eventually found on a genealogy website, called GEDmatch. GEDmatch led to one of DeAngelo's relatives. Because the site provides family trees, detectives were able to look for relatives who might not have uploaded genetic data to the site themselves.

Scientific Importance: This case used the breakthrough new method of using genetic genealogy via GEDmatch and other ancestry databases to find a criminal suspect.

Investigative Importance: The detectives in the Golden State Killer case uploaded the suspect's DNA sample. But they would have had to check a box online certifying that the DNA was their own or belonged to someone for whom they were legal guardians, or that they had "obtained authorization" to upload the sample.

Other: Residents of the neighborhoods stalked by the killer said he changed the way they lived their lives. A carefree California lifestyle of open doors and children riding their bicycles to school was forever changed with the knowledge that a rapist now lurked. The case had a profound impact not just on fear and public safety in California, but also on the way that rapes were investigated and how rape victims were treated.

Submitted Story:

On April 23, 2018, criminalists at the Sacramento County Laboratory of Forensic Science compared an abandoned DNA sample obtained from Joseph James DeAngelo to unknown samples collected from multiple crime scenes linked to the notorious Golden State Killer. The results indicated that it was at least 1.10 x 10<sup>10</sup> more likely that Mr. DeAngelo was the contributor to crime scene unknown samples than a random unrelated individual. After forty-four years of exhaustive investigation, law enforcement agencies across the state of California had finally found the needle in the haystack.

The scope of Joseph DeAngelo's alleged crime spree is staggering, encompassing 13 murders, more than 50 rapes and over 100 burglaries between 1974-1986. His monikers reflect the sweeping geographical impact of his crimes – the Visalia Ransacker, the East Area Rapist, the Original Night Stalker and the Golden State Killer. In total, 11 counties felt the brunt of his crimes: Sacramento, Yolo, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, Alameda, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, Tulare, Santa Barbara, Ventura and Orange County. Joseph DeAngelo is currently charged with 13 murders and 13 counts of kidnapping for robbery.

Victims alleged to have been murdered by Mr. DeAngelo include Professor Claude Snelling in Visalia on September 11, 1975; Brian and Kattie Maggiore killed while walking their dog in Rancho Cordova on February 2, 1978; Dr. Robert Offerman and Debra Manning in Goleta on December 30, 1979; Lyman and Charlene Smith in Ventura between March 13-16, 1980; Patrice and Keith Harrington in Dana Point on August 21, 1980; Manuela Witthuhn in Irvine on February 6, 1981; Cheri Domingo and Greg Sanchez in Goleta on July 27, 1981; and Janelle Cruz in Irvine on May 5, 1986. Modus Operandi and DNA evidence from many of the crime scenes established a case-to-case link over the years.

In early 2018, law enforcement turned to Investigative Genetic Genealogy to finally identify the individual responsible for these horrific crimes. Using genealogy websites to help identify the suspect through biological relatives, Joseph DeAngelo was developed as a suspect and ultimately arrested for these offenses. To our knowledge, this was the first successful law enforcement utilization of the genetic genealogy investigative technique in the United States. Since the arrest of DeAngelo, the technique has been used to solve approximately 40 additional cold case murders and rapes.

The unanswered questions from a cold case murder linger on for years, haunting the victim's family and the investigators who work tirelessly to solve the crimes. Whatever the killer touched, wherever he walked, whatever he left

behind will one day bear mute witness against him. Through investigative genetic genealogy justice will finally have its day in a court of law.

Links to Media Coverage:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/25/us/golden-state-killer-serial.html>;

<https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/04/26/606060349/after-arrest-of-suspected-golden-state-killer-details-of-his-life-emerge>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/27/health/dna-privacy-golden-state-killer-genealogy.html?module=inline>

**FINAL Additional Information**

“May 13, 2019

Trying to explain the impact the Golden State Killer had on his victims, their families, law enforcement, crime lab personnel, prosecutors and the community is like trying to explain what it is like to live through a magnitude 8.0 or greater earthquake that lasted for over 40 years. Understanding the impact these crimes had on these people is best described by their own words, both before and after the arrest.”

BEFORE THE ARREST:

Crime Victims and Their Families:

“I was afraid - is he going to come back, is he stalking me, does he live down the street?”

- Victim Jane Carson-Sandler

“I resigned myself to never ever knowing what really happened. There are hundreds and hundreds of lives that have been ruined by this guy. I don’t care how long it has been, we need an answer, we need to know who he was, who he is.”

- Debbie Domingo, daughter of Victim

“That attack wasn’t one day and three hours. That attack has lived for 42 years.”

- Victim Kris

“As much as I was a victim, all of Sacramento was a victim even if you weren’t attacked personally by this guy.”

- Victim Margaret Wardlow

### Law Enforcement:

“I was working this case 24/7/365 - I’d be home in the evenings working this case, I’m working on the weekends, I’m waking up in the middle of the night and getting on my computer because I had a thought.”

- Retired Contra Costa County DA Investigator Paul Holes

“Each time a newspaper article came out, it was rape #7, rape #8, rape #9 all the way up until we’re in our 20s of these rapes that are occurring. I have never worked a case that took its physical and mental toll on me as all of the cases of the East Area Rapist.”

- Retired Sacramento County Sheriff’s Undersheriff Carol Daly

“For years I would wake up at 3 o’clock in the morning - what did I miss, what did I do wrong, why didn’t I catch him?”

- Retired Contra Costa Sheriff’s Investigator Larry Crompton

“We’re all so dedicated and we worked so much on this case – it becomes your life.” “I have never been the same since I started working these cases, it’s like an obsession...it does change your life.”

- Orange County DA Investigator Erika Hutchcraft

### AFTER THE ARREST:

#### Crime Victims and Their Families:

"For the 51 ladies who were brutally raped: Sleep better tonight. He isn’t coming through the window. He is now in jail and he is history."

- Bruce Harrington, brother of Victim

"I just found out this morning. I'm overwhelmed with joy. I've been crying, sobbing." "I feel like I'm in the middle of a dream and I'm going to wake up and it's not going to be true.

- Victim Jane Carson-Sandler

"I barely slept that night because I was so ecstatic."

- Victim Margaret Wardlow

"I took roses and went to Keith's and Patty's grave, just said we finally got him."

- Ron Harrington, brother of Victim

"The fact that they continued, dead end after dead end after dead end - I don't even know how to express that gratitude."

- Victim Kris

#### Law Enforcement:

"My cell phone rang and it was Sheriff Scott Jones. He said I just wanted to let you know that we have identified who the East Area Rapist is, and my first comment back to him was 'You are kidding.' This was something I had never ever expected to be hearing about during my lifetime."

- Retired Sacramento County Sheriff's Undersheriff Carol Daly

"Since we announced solving the Golden State Killer using this genealogy technique, I have been contacted by law enforcement not just across the nation but across the world in terms of exactly how did we do this. Now that we've got this tool that genealogy has provided, we're seeing law enforcement solving other cases using this tool. Once again, the Golden State Killer series is leaving its mark."

- Retired Contra Costa County DA Investigator Paul Holes

## **6. Upper Austria**

Agency: Institute of Legal Medicine

Country/State: Austria

Year of Crime and Hit: 1989 and 2014?

Executive Summary: In 1989, 81-year-old retiree Angela Fritsch was raped and strangled in her apartment. After her case was declared a cold case two separate times, investigators revisit the case in 2014. Upon review, they find new sources of DNA (semen). Two profiles are found and sent to the Austrian database. The second profile came back as a match to a man with an extensive criminal record who had already been seen serving jail time. On the day he came out of jail, police stopped him and presented the evidence against him for the 1989 rape and murder. He confessed within 6 hours.

Scientific Importance: This case involved mixed DNA profiles. Advanced in DNA technology and forensic evidence allowed the recovery of additional DNA evidence from the victim's garments previously thought to be lost.

Investigative Importance: This was a direct hit to a convicted offender, who confessed within 6 hours. This solved an almost 30-year-old cold case.

### Submitted Story:

On June 15<sup>th</sup>, 1989, the 80-year-old Angela F. was found murdered in her apartment in Steyr, Upper Austria. She was lying in supine position in her living room with bare lower body and pieces of clothes wrapped around her head. Around her neck there was a strangulation tool knotted from a belt. The victim had been punched in the face, followed by a fall on the back of the head as well as an attack against the neck. Semen was detected in the vaginal swabs.

In summary, death was caused by strangulation with multiple blunt force impact to the face and falling on the back of the head. The victim was raped, no defense violations were found. After the crime, the perpetrator ransacked the apartment for cash and stole 1,000 shillings from the victim's purse. More than 40 potential suspects were intensively interrogated. With very strong suspicion

against two persons from the close environment of the victim, however, no evidence could be provided.

In 1999, the case was reinvestigated as a "cold case". Unfortunately, the sperm traces sampled during the autopsy were no longer findable. The further investigation of the presence of sperm on the garments was negative. On several contact traces only the victim's DNA could be found.

In December 2013, the case was again reinvestigated as a "cold case". Upon a close inspection of the crime scene photos, potential further trace carriers could be identified in a joint work between the DNA laboratory and the investigating officers. For example, it could be seen that the bra has been pushed up by the perpetrator. After the public prosecutor's office was initially opposed to another investigation due to a lack of prospects for success, it could be persuaded in several discussions that currently much better investigation methods are available than during the first investigations. Thus, another examination was arranged, in which in particular the bra and the strangulation tool should be examined.

DNA was sampled from a total of 38 different areas, and a mixture of victim's DNA and male DNA was detected in 5 areas. It was the DNA of two different men (person 1, person 2). DNA of person 1 was detected in four areas, DNA of person 2 in only one area (bra, bottom of the cups). After sending the mixed DNA profiles to the Austrian DNA database on February 6th 2014, the mixed profile with person 1 did not give a match. However, the mixed profile with person 2 matched the DNA of a convicted offender.

The person in question was 20 years old at the time of the crime, has 22 criminal records, has just served a 4-year prison sentence for rape, was a so-called "temporary releaser" and was due to be released in February 2014. He was interrogated on February 10th 2014 when coming back from temporary release and confessed three hours later. He had never been considered as a potential suspect, there was no relation to the victim. According to the perpetrator, it was a chance meeting. He watched the victim unlock the front door, asked if he could help her, escorted her to the apartment, raped her, and murdered her.

Links to Media Coverage:

<https://www.heute.at/oesterreich/oberoesterreich/story/Sexualmord-in-Steyr-nach-25-Jahren-geklaert-10178706>

<https://derstandard.at/2000008378284/Oberoesterreicher-25-Jahre-nach-Mord-in-Steyr-verurteilt>

<https://www.nachrichten.at/oberoesterreich/Sex-Mord-nach-25-Jahren-geklaert-U-Haft-verhaengt;art4,1319764>

## **ADDENDUM**

### **Additional Narrative from Franz Neuhuber**

“The offender was 20 years old when committing the crime. He decided spontaneously to commit the crime, the victim was selected purely by chance. In 2010 he was sentenced to prison for abusing the authority relationship and rape of his stepdaughter in about 100 (!) cases. He would have been released from prison on 2014-02-28, but on 2014-02-06 we got the DNA-match, so he was sent back to custody. At this time he had 22 previous convictions. On 2015-01-28 he was sentenced to prison for 17 years 4 months and in addition was classified as mentally abnormal lawbreaker with an extremely high chance of committing further crimes when set free again.

He saw the old woman - who was completely unknown - after a local visit on the street and offered her his help in unlocking the front door and asked her to use the toilet in her apartment. That was her death sentence. After the murder he also searched the flat for about half an hour for valuables and stole money. He also made a confession to the murder after the DNA hit and stated to have been drugged (Speed) at the time of the crime.

He was not a blank slate even before this rape and murder. Overall, he had 21 convictions, starting from the age of 15, for property offenses but also violent offenses against, among others, female partners. He was repeatedly relapsed immediately after release and again criminal. In the psychological assessments, he was rated as above average risk of relapsing back for sexual offenses and as highly relapsing dangerous (most likely relapse probability) for violent crime. He refuses psychological treatment attempts in detention. If he were ever released, he would soon be back in those directions.

Without the DNA match, he would never have been convicted for this murder.

It should be mentioned, that initially the public prosecutor's office was initially opposed to another investigation due to a lack of prospects for success. Only after several discussions they were convinced that there is a chance. And it should also be mentioned that a large number of suspects have been checked, even international. Among them, in particular relevant penalized offenders (sex

offenders or convicted for a homicidal offense, etc.). The main suspicion was directed for years against twin brothers from the wider family environment of the victim (grandnephew), as well as their mother, who were interrogated again and again. This suspicion lasted practically until the final clarification of the case.”

### **FINAL Additional Information from Franz Neuhuber**

After the second investigation in 2000, which brought no useful results, the case was closed. A few years later, the disposal of the evidence was ordered already due to lack of space. Fortunately, that did not happen because it was a murder case. In 2013 a friend of a leading police officer became seriously ill. So he told the police officer, he remembers that one of his employees took a vacation on the afternoon of the murder, and he believed there was a connection to the crime. So the case was re-opened, police came to us, we checked all the details again and decided to try once again. In fact, this guy didn't have to do anything with the case, it was pure coincidence, but it opened the way to the new investigation.

The prosecutor was very sceptic about the re-opening of the case, but after several talks he agreed and of course was overwhelmed when we got the DNA-match, especially because the perpetrator, who obviously was a time bomb, was to be released a few days later. The victim had almost no relatives, she was rather lonely and withdrawn. Her only relatives were two grandnephews (twins), who were urgently suspicious for years (or even decades). In fact, almost all of the police officers were convinced that one of them killed her, but they didn't have enough evidence. So of course they were relieved when the case was cleared and proved to be innocent.

Most of the police officers involved in that case in 1989 were retired already. Nevertheless, they were extremely happy about the clarification, even decades later. They were particularly pleased that they didn't overlook anything and used all the opportunities and possibilities they had during that time. There was absolutely no link between the perpetrator and the victim and there was no single indication of the true perpetrator. The clarification of the case is therefore the exclusive merit of the DNA-match.

#### **Additional Links**

<https://www.nachrichten.at/oberoesterreich/80-Jaehrige-vergewaltigt-17-Jahre-fuer-den-Angeklagten;art4,1542409>

<https://www.krone.at/428096>

<https://ooe.orf.at/news/stories/2630959/>

<https://www.nachrichten.at/oberoesterreich/Mord-an-Steyrer-Pensionistin-nach-25-Jahren-geklaert;art4,1305976>

<https://derstandard.at/2000008378284/Oberoesterreicher-25-Jahre-nach-Mord-in-Steyr-verurteilt>

## **7. *Sikhangele Mki – Sentenced for 15 life terms***

Agency: Deputy Chair: National Forensic Oversight & Ethics Board (South Africa NFDD)

Country/State: Cape Town, South Africa

Year of Crime and Hit: 2011-15 and 2015

Executive Summary: In 2014, Sikhangele Mki was sentenced to 11 months of prison for assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. Under South Africa's recently passed DNA Act, police collected Mki's DNA sample. His DNA profile was in turn submitted to the national DNA database matching him to a large series of rapes committed between 2011 and 2015 affecting dozens of girls and women. Overall, that DNA profile match linked him to 84 charges, which included 30 counts of rape, 27 of kidnapping, 12 of robbery with aggravating circumstances, and four of assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. Mki admitted to raping some his victims more than once. Nine were under the age of 16, with his youngest victim being just 11 years old.

Scientific Importance: This rape spree was solved via aggressive DNA database legislation requiring convicted to offenders to submit a sample.

Investigative Importance: Judge: "[This case] falls into the category of the most serious cases this court has ever dealt with. The crimes were heinous in the extreme." This is the classic DNA database hit case, where a profile entered for a qualifying crimes links the arrestee/offender to multiple other crimes.

Other: Mki had a particular affinity towards young girls. He was legally branded as a pedophile and added to the national sexual offender registry by the trial judge.

### Submitted Story:

The accused conducted a reign of terror over a four-year period. His Modus Operandi, described as "the signature of a person who is cruel, vicious and lacking any sense of empathy", was as follows:

During the evenings, or early mornings of his attacks, he would follow his victims, grab hold of them, threaten them at knifepoint by holding a knife to their

necks and would demand money and cellular phones. He would then take them to an isolated place and rape them. Where a victim would resist or try to call for help, he either punched them or hit them with the back of the knife handle or in some cases he stabbed them to stop them from struggling or crying for help.

Some of his victims were raped more than once. Nine of his 30 victims were under the age of 16, and the youngest victim was just 11. Some victims just happened to be walking in the area where Mki was lurking in the shadows, one was sent to the shop by her mother, one was waiting outside her house for her husband, one was walking home from church, one was returning from choir practice, another from netball practice. One victim was even dragged to a space behind a police station.

The breakthrough in the investigation happened when Mki was arrested and convicted for an unrelated charge of assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm in 2014 for which he subsequently served 11 months in prison. Whilst serving time in prison and in terms of the recently passed DNA Act in South Africa, police were mandated to collect DNA samples from all convicted offenders, retrospectively and run the resultant forensic DNA profile through their National Forensic DNA database for a comparative search against all other indices, including the crime scene index which in this case contained the forensic DNA profiles of an unknown male in 30 separate rape cases: this is what fortuitously linked Mki to the 30 unsolved rapes, albeit the DNA sample was obtained from Mki as result of an unrelated conviction for common assault.

The case was brought before the High Court of the Western Cape where Deputy Judge President Patricia Goliath compared the modus operandi of Mki to a monster lurking in the shadows, attacking, robbing and raping girls, exploiting the vulnerability of his unsuspecting victims. She went on to say that Mki derived pleasure in the degradation and pain inflicted his victims and his crimes “fell into the category of the most serious cases this court has ever dealt with” and that the crimes were “heinous in the extreme.”

All the victims were emotionally, physically and psychologically severely traumatized by the attacks and they verbalized their feelings eloquently in court: One stopped playing netball, because the incident happened after netball practice; one stopped going to church because the incident happened on her way home from church; another was attacked when she came from a group study and subsequently hated her books following the incident. The victim expressed feelings of being unable to trust and sustain meaningful relationships with men, fear of walking alone in public spaces. One of the victims attempted suicide. They

experienced emotions ranging from shock, fear, grief, shame, embarrassment, anxiety, depression, anger and feelings of alienation and loss of control over their lives.

Victim impact assessments submitted to the Court described the devastating physical and psychological effects the attacks had on them: “They knew me as this sweet determined and goal orientated girl, but that is not anymore”; “I am damaged”; “The crime broke my spirit”; “My life changed from happiness to bitterness”; “It is a pain that can never be taken away - a pain that has taken my freedom”.

Due to the overwhelming DNA evidence against the accused, Mki pleaded guilty to 84 charges which included 30 counts of rape, 27 of kidnapping, 12 of robbery with aggravating circumstances, and four of assault with intent to cause grievous bodily harm.

Captain Myburg, a police psychologist attached to the Investigative Psychology Unit of the South African Police Services with extensive experience in the investigation, research and analysis of the phenomenon of serial murders and serial rapists, compiled a report for the court for sentencing purposes. The report pointed to Mki’s predilection for young girls, stating he should also be regarded as a pedophile. She stated that pedophiles and rapists have the highest rates of re-offending even after interventions aimed at addressing the issue and indicated that research has shown that serial rapists do not stop raping women by themselves and the only way they will stop is by arrest.

DJP Goliath ultimately sentenced Mki to 15 life terms and an additional 120 years, to run concurrently.

Without the power of the NFDD and the DNA legislation which allowed DNA samples to be collected from the accused whilst he was serving time in prison as a convicted offender, it is unquestionable that Mki would have continued his reign of terror.

Who knows how many more vulnerable women and girls lives he would have violated and devastated in the future had he not been linked by the NFDD?

By linking Mki to his crimes through the NFDD, who knows how many vulnerable lives have been saved in the future....

Links to Media Coverage:

<https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/news/monster-serial-rapist-mki-gets-15-life-terms-extra-20-years-11218652>

<https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/watch-celebrations-as-serial-rapist-handed-15-life-terms-11212309>

## **ADDENDUM – Additional Links**

### **FINAL Additional Information**

The rapes occurred between 2011 and 2015. The Serials Task Team suspected from the MO in a few cases of reported rapes in the Delft area that there was a serial rapist but had only linked approximately 6 out of the 24 cases based on the MO of the rapist. A few suspects had been arrested during this time but the arrests were based on incorrect pointing out by the victims and were released when no further evidence against them was found. During this time the communities in Delft and Khayelitsha also tortured and killed 5 innocent people in separate attacks based on incorrect identification of the perpetrator by victims.

It was only when the DNA Database managed issued a match report to the serials task team in 2016 which report linked 26 cases of rape to one perpetrator that they realized the scale of the investigation. Despite the DNA match report the investigation did not proceed much further as besides DNA linking the rapes to the same perpetrator they had no other concrete leads as to who that was. The breakthrough came when an unrelated case of attempted rape was investigated where Mki was the suspect and his DNA profile was taken as a reference sample to compare to crime scene evidence. The DNA report in that case was an exclusion and he was charged with a lesser crime (common assault) to which he pleaded guilty. His profile was then included on the database first as an arrestee profile and then migrated to the CO index. It was when it was loaded onto the Database that the match to the other unsolved rape cases was made.

Following Mki's conviction of common assault he was given a suspended sentence which meant he did not have to serve time in prison as the sentence is not enforced unless a further crime is committed during that specified period. Mki then returned to working as a security guard where he had also recently been shot in a robbery at his place of work. The police traced Mki to his place of work and under the pretenses of investigating the case where he had been shot, they arranged to meet him at work where he was arrested for the rapes and ultimately pleaded guilty to 30 counts of rape (some victims were raped more than once).

I have attached a few of the many hand-written Victim Impact Statements presented in court. [NOT INCLUDED IN JUDGES REPORT]. The statements speak

volumes for how deeply the young women were affected. WO Villet said that some of the victims were in court when Mki was sentenced - Villet spent a lot of time tracking down and supporting the victims in preparation for the trial - you can read from attached screenshot of his report on the matter the response of the victims to his work as well as the State Prosecutor. (He is Afrikaans speaking which is why the English report reads as it does).

I have also found a few additional video links to the Mki case which show the reaction of the community to the sentencing of Mki as well as the NPA's view on the case:

Video of The National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) led by Advocate Mbewana-Mthelelo who explained that were it not for the recently introduced DNA Act, which allowed random testing of DNA of any accused against unsolved cases, Mki's crime spree may have continued.:

<https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-Africa/2017-09-14-mpa-welcomes-sentencing-of-serial-rapist-warns-against-vigilantism/>

Video of the National Prosecuting Authority spokesperson commenting on the sentencing of the accused, as well as the community showing their support of the conviction.

<https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/watch-celebrations-as-serial-rapist-handed-15-life-terms-11212309>

<https://www.video360.co.za/home/eric-ntabazalila-welcomes-the-15-life-terms-for-cape-town-serial-rapist-sikhangele-mki/>

Video of the community demanding justice

<https://www.video360.co.za/home/sikhangele-mki-faced-with-85-charges/>