

{ Interview blurb }

From February 1976 to March 1977, in Oakland County, Michigan, four children were kidnapped, held for up to 19 days, and then murdered. The killer would then dress them in their freshly pressed clothing, and leave their bodies carefully positioned on blankets of snow or laying in full sight next to a road. The killer was dubbed the Oakland county child killer, or the babysitter and their killings were also dubbed the snow killings. The murders resulted in the largest murder investigation in U.S. history at that time, but it failed to produce a suspect.

Intro

Interview Blurb

In the afternoon on Sunday, February 15, 1976, 12-year-old Mark Stebbins disappeared after leaving the American Legion Hall to go home to watch television.

Interview Blurb

Four days later, on February 19, his body was found around 12 miles from his home, laying in a snowbank in a parking lot in Southfield. He was dressed in the same clothes that he was wearing on the day that he was abducted, and they were cleaned and pressed. An autopsy determined that he had been strangled to death. Rope burns were discovered on his wrists, indicating that his hands had been tightly bound.

Interview Blurbs

In the late afternoon of Wednesday, December 22, 1976, 12-year-old Jill Robinson, got into an argument with her mother and decided to pack a bag and run away from home. It was the last day that she was seen alive.

Interview Blurb

The next day, on December 23, her bicycle was discovered behind a store. Three days later, her body was found lying on the side of Interstate 75 within full sight of the Troy police station.

Interview Blurb

Like Mark Stebbins, she was fully clothed in the clothing that she had worn when she disappeared. Placed next to her body, police found her backpack which was intact. Like Mark, her body appeared to be carefully placed on a pile of snow.

On Sunday, January 2, 1977, at around 3 p.m., 10-year-old Kristine Mihelich went to the nearby 7-Eleven and bought some magazines. She was never to be seen alive again.

Interview Blurb

Kristine was fully dressed and her body positioned in the snow. The killer had also closed Kristine's eyes and folded her arms across her chest. Although her body was left along a rural road in Franklin Village, it was left in full view of several homes. An autopsy later revealed that she had been smothered.

Interview Blurb

Following Kristine murder, authorities announced that they believed that the children had been murdered by stalking the area. An official task force was formed specifically to investigate the murders. It was made up of law enforcement from 13 communities and led by the Michigan State Police.

On Wednesday, March 16, 1977, at around 8 p.m., 11-year-old Timothy King left his Birmingham home with about \$0.30 cents to buy candy, his skateboard tucked under his arm. He was headed to a drugstore near his house in Birmingham. After making his purchase, he left the store through the back exit which led to a parking lot where he seemed to disappear into thin air.

Interview Blurbs

Timothy King's father appeared on television, pleading with the kidnapper to not hurt his son and to let him go.

Interview Blurbs

Marion King, Timothy's mother, wrote a letter that said she hoped she would see Timothy soon and that she could give him his favorite meal, Kentucky Fried Chicken. The letter was printed in The Detroit News.

On the night of March 22, 1977, Timothy King's body was found in a ditch alongside a road in Livonia. He was fully clothed, but it was obvious that his clothes had been cleaned and pressed. His skateboard had been placed next to his body.

An autopsy report showed that Timothy had been sexually assaulted with an object and smothered to death. It was also revealed that he had eaten chicken before he was murdered.

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Before Timothy King's body was found, a woman came forward with information about the missing boy. She told the task force that on the same night that boy went missing, she saw him talking to an older man in the parking lot behind the drugstore. She described Timothy and his skateboard.

Not only had she seen Timothy, but she also got a pretty good look at the man he was talking to, as well as his car. She told the authorities that the man was driving a blue AMC Gremlin with white stripes on the side. With her help, a police sketch artist was able to do a composite drawing of the older man and of the car he was driving. The sketch was released to the public.

The task force developed a profile of the bases on the descriptions given by witnesses who saw Timothy talking to a man on the night that he was abducted. The profile described a white male, dark complected, age 25 to 35, with shaggy hair and long sideburns. Because the person seemed to be able to gain the trust of children, the task force believed that the killer was possibly a police officer, doctor, or a priest.

The profile went on to describe the killer as someone who was familiar with the area and probably lived alone, possibly in a remote area, since he was able to for several days hold people without friends, family or neighbors knowing.

Over 18,000 tips came into the task force, and all of them were investigated. Although there were other crimes that the police discovered while doing their investigations, the task force had not gotten any closer to capturing the killer.

Detroit psychiatrist Dr. Bruce Danto and a member of the task force team received a letter a few weeks after Timothy King was murdered. The letter was written by someone who called themselves Allen. and claimed to be one of his roommates 'Frank' who was the Oakland County Child Killer.

In the letter, Allen described himself as guilt-ridden, remorseful, scared, suicidal, and on the brink of losing his mind. He said that he had been on many road trips looking for boys, but that he was never present when Frank abducted the children or when he murdered them

Allen also wrote that Frank drove a Gremlin, but that he had "junked it in Ohio, never to be seen again."

To offer investigators a motive for the murders, Allen said that Frank killed children while fighting in Viet Nam and was traumatized by it. He was taking revenge on rich people so that they would suffer like he did while in Viet Nam.

Allen wanted to work out a deal and offered to turn over incriminating pictures that could be used as evidence against Frank. In exchange, he wanted the Governor of Michigan to sign an

agreement that would give him immunity from prosecution. Dr. Danto agreed to meet Allen at a bar, but Allen did not show up and he was never heard from again.
In December 1978 the decision was made to discontinue the task force and the state police took over the investigation.

Recap

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Research From

<https://listverse.com/2018/08/28/10-horrific-facts-about-the-oakland-county-child-killer/>

<https://www.thoughtco.com/the-unsolved-case-of-the-oakland-county-child-killer-4129777>

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