

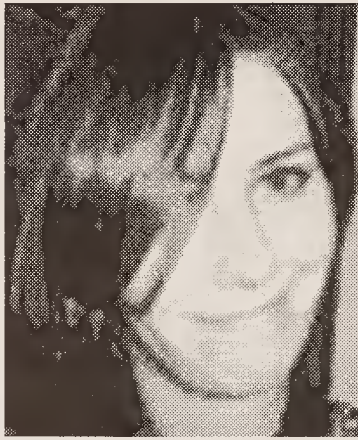
# Serial killer preys upon prostitutes, leaves their remains buried at beach

BY ANNA KANODE  
News Editor

Though serial killing is a rare occurrence, according to the article "Four prostitutes, one killer" in "News & Record" on January 30, the FBI claims less than one percent of murders taking place annually are a result of serial killers. However, police officers in Long Island, New York fear they are currently dealing with such a person after investigating the deaths of four prostitutes.

Melissa Barthelemy, Maureen Brainard-Barnes, Megan Waterman, and Amber Lynn Costello all offered their services on the website Craigslist or others like it, as call girls. These women hailed from four different states: New York, Connecticut, Maine, and North Carolina. At the time they were classified as missing, however, they all lived somewhere in the state of New York. Their bodies were found in mid-December of 2010 on Gilgo Beach in Long Island during a search for a missing Jersey City female. Police only recently released information about the discovery of the victims.

Barnes, a 25-year-old, was the first of the four women to disappear. She visited New York



New York prostitutes remain in constant danger from a possible serial killer. He already claimed the lives of the three women pictured above: (left-right) Maureen Brainard-Barnes, Amber Lynn Costello, and Megan Waterman. Costello, originally lived in North Carolina but moved up to North Babylon, New York. *Internet graphic*

City on July 9, 2007 after leaving her home in Norwich, Connecticut, supposedly making the trip to see a client as she planned to return to Connecticut the next day. She was one of two of the prostitutes who had a child, now motherless.

According to AOL News, the 24-year-old second victim, Barthelemy, was last seen on July 12, 2009, at which time she was living in the Bronx. She was training to be a hairstylist, but family attorney Steven Cohen explained to "News & Record" that she "was behind on rent from time to time." Barthelemy's mother was unaware of her daughter's actual

career; she believed her to be an exotic dancer.

"I had spoken to her a few times and told her I wasn't too happy about it. But I told her to be careful. She said, 'Mom, I'm never alone. I always have a friend, and it's just dancing,'" said Lynn Barthelemy to "News & Record."

Amanda, Melissa Barthelemy's 16-year-old sister, received six disturbing phone calls between July 16 and August 29, 2009. Authorities and the Barthelemy family suspected the caller to be the same person who killed Melissa since at one point the caller said, "Do you know

what your sister is doing? She's a whore."

Waterman was last seen in June of 2010 in Hauppauge, New York. A 22-year-old mother of a four-year-old, she traveled to New York on Memorial Day weekend with a 21-year-old man named Akeem Cruz, who was said to have been Waterman's boyfriend and is currently serving 20 months in a Maine prison due to drug trafficking.

Costello was last seen on September 2, 2010, making her the most recently sighted victim. Originally from Wilmington, North Carolina, Costello was married to a 41-

year-old man named Michael W. Wilhelm, who said he divorced her due to heroin use.

"I just don't put up with that," said Wilhelm to "News & Record." "I told her to hit the road."

After her marriage ended, Costello moved to North Babylon, New York, several miles north of where her body was found.

Police were unsure at first whether or not these murders were indeed a case of serial killing, but after noting so many similarities, they decided they were. The bodies were brought to Gilgo Beach as skeletons, buried in burlap bags, and strewn 500 yards apart.

"Both District Attorney Thomas Spota and myself have determined that this has all the marks of a serial killer," said Suffolk County Police Commissioner Richard Dormer to "Metro." "Four bodies of women all engaged in the same occupation, bodies dumped in the same area, same age range and all missing women."

Dormer and Spota do not, however, believe these murders are connected in any way to similar murders that occurred in 2006 in Atlantic City. Four missing Craigslist prostitutes were discovered, but the murderer was never apprehended.



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