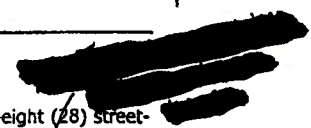




VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
Operational Support Division
Major Crime Section

Date: April 9, 1999
To: Attorney General Dosanjh
From: Detective Constable Lori Shenher
Missing Persons - Major Crime Section
Subject: Missing Women - Vancouver Downtown East Side

p



This is an overview of the investigation to date involving the disappearances of twenty-eight (28) street-involved women from the City of Vancouver.

Each of these disappearances has been investigated in the very same manner as we would approach a murder - minus a body and forensic evidence, witnesses, a crime scene, a crime time and any information that a murder has, in fact, taken place. The bulk of our work lies in interviewing people close to those missing and attempting to retrace their steps.

In each of these files, we have - through interviewing family, partners and friends - identified as many persons of interest as we can find. All of those people we have been able to locate have been interviewed by us, in some cases more than once. There are very few people of interest to us yet to be located and interviewed. Through our contacts in the social services field, we have accessed financial assistance files and determined when these women last picked up funds and if their files were terminated, why. Most had open, active files and simply did not cash or pick up a cheque, often in the same month we determined them to be last seen. Through these same contacts, we have done checks to determine what, if any, medical care they were receiving and when this ceased. We have also made contact with financial assistance agencies across the country and flagged these women's names in the event they tried to open new files in other provinces.

We have sent email posters to State mental hospitals in the United States and are currently in the process of doing the same for Canada for psychiatric hospitals, welfare intake offices, and other such facilities to rule out they could be in care somewhere either under a false name or through some form of memory loss. We have checked for these women at the border crossings from BC into the U.S. All other police departments in Canada have been advised we have a concern about the whereabouts of these women and have been directed to our website for photos. We have examined the known drug contacts of these women in an attempt to find a link, but none has arisen.

We are often in daily contact with the families of these women and none has had any word from any of them since the time they were reported missing. We have checked the bank accounts, where applicable, of these women and none has had any activity since before they were reported missing. Many have money sitting untouched.

Missing Women Commission of Inquiry	
EXHIBIT No: 84	
Date:	February 1, 2012
	Registrar

From a potential suspect standpoint, we have had very few leads. We are in regular contact with the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit, the serious crime sections of the RCMP and other municipal agencies across the country and in the Lower Mainland. There have not yet been any links between these women and known homicides in the area to date, but we are constantly monitoring this for new evidence. We have compiled files on numerous men who have shown the capacity for serious violence against women, unfortunately this is not a small number and more of these men are brought to our attention every day; we have yet to find any known links between them and these files. An added difficulty is that these women were often in contact with men we have no knowledge of. They did not leave any record of their customers and family and friends know of very few by name or vehicle. This leaves us with unknown numbers and identities of potential suspects or information sources.

AGAIN, IF THEY WENT TO THE HOTELS THEY WOULD HAVE LEARNED OTHERWISE

These cases are not being investigated any less strenuously because they involve women, nor are they taken less seriously because they are poor, but we hear these criticisms daily. Yes, the fact that they are lacking address books, known schedules, reliable routines and homes for us to search for clues does make this more difficult, but in no way does it mean we value them less or consider them throwaways. I truly believe we have done and are doing everything we can to find them in light of the information and evidence available to us.

As I write this report, there is no evidence of a person or persons preying on these women. That does not mean that we do not think it is a possibility, only that we have to weigh this with all other possibilities. We cannot investigate a murder without a body, witnesses, time of crime, scene of crime, or suspect and we have none of these things. Only one of these files even contains a person who can say they saw a woman on a corner one minute and she was gone the next - and we cannot even confirm that for certain.

We do not know if these cases are linked, but as time passes we view this as a stronger possibility. There are several common elements to all: the lack of any contact with family since their disappearances, they all lived in the Downtown Eastside, they were all drug addicted, they all supported themselves at various times through prostitution, most have children in care, most were on social assistance and all have concerned families. Unfortunately, the same could be said for several thousand people in Vancouver and if we did link these women merely for the above reasons, we are then accused of de-personalizing them by lumping them together or condemning them by defining their lives by these common elements. It is a no-win situation.

I hope this outlines our efforts to date. We feel there is information out there with respect to the locations of these women but for various reasons, it is not reaching us. It is my hope that in time, more information will come to light that will enable us to determine the whereabouts of these women and hopefully bring these cases to a positive conclusion.

How many street-involved women are missing in the City of Vancouver?

- 5 street-involved women are missing from between 1978 and 1992
- 23 street-involved women are missing from between 1995 and present - 3 in '99, 10 in '98, 5 in '97, 2 in '96, 3 in '95
- Does not include 7 missing women who are suspected homicide victims and not street-involved
- Does not include 12 missing women likely suicides and not street-involved
- Three outstanding missing men from 1998 versus 10 women
- Those categorized as "street-involved" are long-term residents of the Downtown Eastside
- Our office took 3199 missing persons reports in 1998, but fewer than 20 remain missing to date

Can we statistically expect to find them soon or are these numbers unusually high?

- This is a question we are currently trying to answer through the collection and analysis of data from the RCMP Missing Persons' Registry

Murders of sex trade workers

- No sex trade workers have been found murdered in the City of Vancouver in '99 or '98.
- One was murdered in '97, one in '96, 2 in '95 and 2 in '94 - all were solved
- In '93, 4 sex trade workers were murdered in Vancouver, 2 remain unsolved.

What else has been done?

- All cases have been entered on CPIC/NCIC
- VICLAS books have been done on each one
- Dental charts have been requested for each; 95% have available dental records and those are entered on CPIC/NCIC
- Several persons of interest are flagged by us and entered on CPIC for observation
- Liaison with investigators dealing with known sexual predators is done on an on-going basis to determine any links between these files and those parties

Det/Cst Lori Shenher 1621
Vancouver Police Department
Major Crime Section - Missing Persons

Meeting 99.04.21
6:14:00 HRS.

Kelsey, Leah
From: Kelsey, Leah
Sent: Monday, April 12, 1999 10:41 AM
To: McGuinness, Brian
Subject: RE: Missing Women DES

LEAH
TO: DIST. 2 FILE
PLS.
[Handwritten initials]

I have discussed this issue with Insp. Beach and we agree that Cst. Dave Dickson 1028 from the 12 East Hastings C.P.C. will be provided to assist in any further investigations. This will be the second occasion that Cst. Dickson has been assigned with information that relates to "Missing Women D.E.S."

Cst. Shenher has prepared an informative report that outlines our position clearly. On page (2) the sentence I have highlighted, *We cannot investigate a murder without a body, witnesses, time of crime, scene of crime, or suspect and we have none of these things* - are we safe saying such a thing? You can better answer this from an investigative point of view than I.

-----Original Message-----

From: McGuinness, Brian
Sent: Friday, April 09, 1999 9:11 AM
To: Chambers, Bruce; Blythe, Terry; Battershill, Paul
Subject: Missing Women DES

Please find attached a copy of a memo that we will be leaving with the Attorney General today regarding what has been done to investigate missing women from the DES. I would appreciate any comments you have where you think we could be doing something further.

One of the concerns all of the investigators have is if a reward is offered it would have to be offered to encourage the confirmed whereabouts of a missing person as we do not have any evidence that a crime has been committed. If you both support a reward which by the way our Division doesn't we will require staffing from your Divisions to do any follow ups on the tips received. In the past of all the rewards we have offered none have been paid out. I would appreciate your responses by next Wednesday if possible.

Thanks,
 Brian << File: DOSANJH 68.doc >>



VANCOUVER POLICE DEPARTMENT
Operational Support Division
Major Crime Section

Date: April 12, 1999
To: Attorney General Dosanjh
From: Detective Constable Lori Shenher
Missing Persons - Major Crime Section
Subject: Missing Women - Vancouver Downtown East Side

FILE COPY

Sir:

This is an overview of the investigation to date involving the disappearances of twenty-eight (28) street-involved women from the City of Vancouver.

Each of these disappearances has been investigated in the very same manner as we would approach a murder - minus a body and forensic evidence, witnesses, a crime scene, a crime time and any information that a murder has, in fact, taken place. The bulk of our work lies in interviewing people close to those missing and attempting to retrace their steps.

In each of these files, we have - through interviewing family, partners and friends - identified as many persons of interest as we can find. All of those people we have been able to locate have been interviewed by us, in some cases more than once. There are very few people of interest to us yet to be located and interviewed. Through our contacts in the social services field, we have accessed financial assistance files and determined when these women last picked up funds and if their files were terminated, why. Most had open, active files and simply did not cash or pick up a cheque, often in the same month we determined them to be last seen. Through these same contacts, we have done checks to determine what, if any, medical care they were receiving and when this ceased. We have also made contact with financial assistance agencies across the country and flagged these women's names in the event they tried to open new files in other provinces.

We have sent email posters to State mental hospitals in the United States and are currently in the process of doing the same for Canada for psychiatric hospitals, welfare intake offices, and other such facilities to rule out they could be in care somewhere either under a false name or through some form of memory loss. We have checked for these women at the border crossings from BC into the U.S. All other police departments in Canada have been advised we have a concern about the whereabouts of these women and have been directed to our website for photos. We have examined the known drug contacts of these women in an attempt to find a link, but none has arisen.

We are often in daily contact with the families of these women and none has had any word from any of them since the time they were reported missing. We have checked the bank accounts, where applicable, of these women and none has had any activity since before they were reported missing. Many have money sitting untouched.

From a potential suspect standpoint, we have had very few leads. We are in regular contact with the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit, the serious crime sections of the RCMP and other municipal agencies across the country and in the Lower Mainland. There have not yet been any links between these women and known homicides in the area to date, but we are constantly monitoring this for new evidence. We have compiled files on numerous men who have shown the capacity for serious violence against women, unfortunately this is not a small number and more of these men are brought to our attention every day; we have yet to find any known links between them and these files. An added difficulty is that these women were often in contact with men we have no knowledge of. They did not leave any record of their customers and family and friends know of very few by name or vehicle. This leaves us with unknown numbers and identities of potential suspects or information sources.

These cases are not being investigated any less strenuously because they involve women, nor are they taken less seriously because they are poor, but we hear these criticisms daily. Yes, the fact that they are lacking address books, known schedules, reliable routines and homes for us to search for clues does make this more difficult, but in no way does it mean we value them less or consider them throwaways. I truly believe we have done and are doing everything we can to find them in light of the information and evidence available to us.

As I write this letter, there is no evidence of a person or persons preying on these women. That does not mean that we do not think it is a possibility, only that we have to weigh this with all other possibilities. We cannot investigate a murder without a body, witnesses, time of crime, scene of crime, or suspect and we have none of these things. Only one of these files even contains a person who can say they saw a woman on a corner one minute and she was gone the next - and we cannot even confirm that for certain.

We do not know if these cases are linked, but as time passes we view this as a stronger possibility. There are several common elements to all: the lack of any contact with family since their disappearances, they all lived in the Downtown Eastside, they were all drug addicted, they all supported themselves at various times through prostitution, most have children in care, most were on social assistance and all have concerned families. Unfortunately, the same could be said for several thousand people in Vancouver and if we did link these women merely for the above reasons, we are then accused of de-personalizing them by lumping them together or condemning them by defining their lives by these common elements. It is a no-win situation.

I hope this outlines our efforts to date. We feel there is information out there with respect to the locations of these women but for various reasons, it is not reaching us. It is my hope that in time, more information will come to light that will enable us to determine the whereabouts of these women and hopefully bring these cases to a positive conclusion.

How many street-involved women are missing in the City of Vancouver?

- 5 street-involved women are missing from between 1978 and 1992
- 23 street-involved women are missing from between 1995 and present - 3 in '99, 10 in '98, 5 in '97, 2 in '96, 3 in '95
- Does not include 7 missing women who are suspected homicide victims and not street-involved
- Does not include 12 missing women likely suicides and not street-involved
- Three outstanding missing men from 1998 versus 10 women
- Those categorized as "street-involved" are long-term residents of the Downtown Eastside
- Our office took 3199 missing persons reports in 1998, but fewer than 20 remain missing to date

Can we statistically expect to find them soon or are these numbers unusually high?

- This is a question we are currently trying to answer through the collection and analysis of data from the RCMP Missing Persons' Registry

Murders of sex trade workers

- No sex trade workers have been found murdered in the City of Vancouver in '99 or '98.
- One was murdered in '97, one in '96, 2 in '95 and 2 in '94 - **all were solved**
- In '93, 4 sex trade workers were murdered In Vancouver, 2 remain unsolved.

What has been done?

- All cases have been entered on CPIC/NCIC
- VICLAS books have been done on each one
- Dental charts have been requested for each; 95% have available dental records and those are entered on CPIC/NCIC
- Several persons of interest are flagged by us and entered on CPIC for observation
- Liaison with investigators dealing with known sexual predators is done on an on-going basis to determine any links between these files and those parties

Respectfully submitted:

Det/Cst Lori Shenher 1621
 Vancouver Police Department
 Major Crime Section - Missing Persons

From a potential suspect standpoint, we have had very few leads. We are in regular contact with the Provincial Unsolved Homicide Unit, the serious crime sections of the RCMP and other municipal agencies across the country and in the Lower Mainland. There have not yet been any links between these women and known homicides in the area to date, but we are constantly monitoring this for new evidence. We have compiled files on numerous men who have shown the capacity for serious violence against women, unfortunately this is not a small number and more of these men are brought to our attention every day; we have yet to find any known links between them and these files. An added difficulty is that these women were often in contact with men we have no knowledge of. They did not leave any record of their customers and family and friends know of very few by name or vehicle. This leaves us with unknown numbers and identities of potential suspects or information sources.

These cases are not being investigated any less strenuously because they involve women, nor are they taken less seriously because they are poor, but we hear these criticisms daily. Yes, the fact that they are lacking address books, known schedules, reliable routines and homes for us to search for clues does make this more difficult, but in no way does it mean we value them less or consider them throwaways. I truly believe we have done and are doing everything we can to find them in light of the information and evidence available to us.

As I write this letter, there is no evidence of a person or persons preying on these women. That does not mean that we do not think it is a possibility, only that we have to weigh this with all other possibilities. We cannot investigate a murder without a body, witnesses, time of crime, scene of crime, or suspect and we have none of these things. Only one of these files even contains a person who can say they saw a woman on a corner one minute and she was gone the next - and we cannot even confirm that for certain.

We do not know if these cases are linked, but as time passes we view this as a stronger possibility. There are several common elements to all: the lack of any contact with family since their disappearances, they all lived in the Downtown Eastside, they were all drug addicted, they all supported themselves at various times through prostitution, most have children in care, most were on social assistance and all have concerned families. Unfortunately, the same could be said for several thousand people in Vancouver and if we did link these women merely for the above reasons, we are then accused of de-personalizing them by lumping them together or condemning them by defining their lives by these common elements. It is a no-win situation.

I hope this outlines our efforts to date. We feel there is information out there with respect to the locations of these women but for various reasons, it is not reaching us. It is my hope that in time, more information will come to light that will enable us to determine the whereabouts of these women and hopefully bring these cases to a positive conclusion.

How many street-involved women are missing in the City of Vancouver?

- 5 street-involved women are missing from between 1978 and 1992
- 23 street-involved women are missing from between 1995 and present - 3 in '99, 10 in '98, 5 in '97, 2 in '96, 3 in '95
- Does not include 7 missing women who are suspected homicide victims and not street-involved
- Does not include 12 missing women likely suicides and not street-involved
- Three outstanding missing men from 1998 versus 10 women
- Those categorized as "street-involved" are long-term residents of the Downtown Eastside
- Our office took 3199 missing persons reports in 1998, but fewer than 20 remain missing to date

Can we statistically expect to find them soon or are these numbers unusually high?

- This is a question we are currently trying to answer through the collection and analysis of data from the RCMP Missing Persons' Registry

Murders of sex trade workers

- No sex trade workers have been found murdered in the City of Vancouver in '99 or '98.
- One was murdered in '97, one in '96, 2 in '95 and 2 in '94 - all were solved
- In '93, 4 sex trade workers were murdered in Vancouver, 2 remain unsolved.

What has been done?

- All cases have been entered on CPIC/NCIC
- VICLAS books have been done on each one
- Dental charts have been requested for each; 95% have available dental records and those are entered on CPIC/NCIC
- Several persons of interest are flagged by us and entered on CPIC for observation
- Liaison with investigators dealing with known sexual predators is done on an on-going basis to determine any links between these files and those parties

Respectfully submitted:

Det/Cst Lori Shenher 1621
Vancouver Police Department
Major Crime Section - Missing Persons