

'RIPPER' TV LINK POSSIBLE IN SLAYING 4 ARRESTED IN FATAL SLASHING OF WOMAN

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Four Detroit men who may have been inspired by recent television shows about Jack the Ripper were named in murder warrants Friday for the slashing death of a woman in Balduck Park on the city's east side.

The four were arrested after at least one of them bragged about the killing in a neighborhood bar, unwittingly within earshot of an off-duty police officer, investigators said. They said the boasting included references to recent TV broadcasts marking the 100th anniversary of the unsolved Ripper murders of prostitutes in Victorian London.

"It's my understanding that the movie prompted them in some way," said one of the investigators, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Named in first-degree murder warrants issued by the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office were Matthew Copeland, 19; **Mark Barrera** , 20; Fred Johnson, 21, and Patrick Musal, 17.

The four were described by police as members of a loosely knit gang headed by Copeland.

The victim was identified as Deborah Luisa Haynes, 25, of Detroit. Her body was found the morning of Oct. 28 near the closed ice-skating rink in Balduck Park at Chandler Park Drive and Chester.

Haynes' throat was slit and she also suffered knife wounds to the face, chest and abdomen, according to the autopsy report.

"She was cut up pretty badly," said an official involved in the case. "She probably put up quite a struggle because there are a number of wounds to her arms and hands she probably got trying to protect herself."

Richard Padzieski, the prosecutor's chief of operations, said the case is being handled as any other first-degree murder charge.

"This is not a Satanic cult kind of thing," he said. "What we have is a woman who had her throat slit and was stabbed."

Some officials involved in the case said that some of the alleged killers had talked in their neighborhood of the Ripper programs.

But other investigators said that when confronted with their alleged boasting, all four denied ever talking about the Ripper programs in connection with Haynes' death.

Jack the Ripper, considered the prototype of modern serial killers, slashed five prostitutes to death in the tawdry Whitechapel section of London in the summer and fall of 1888. The brutality of the murders shocked England and the mystery of the Ripper's identity still fascinates students of crime.

A two-part dramatization of the crimes was broadcast on CBS Oct. 21 and Oct. 23; WXYZ-TV (Channel 7) in Southfield broadcast a syndicated Ripper special Oct. 26.

Haynes is believed to have been killed the night of Oct. 27 or the early morning of Oct. 28.

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