

## CONFESSED KILLER CHARGED IN DEATHS OF 7 MORE WOMEN

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Confessed serial killer **Benjamin** (Tony) **Atkins** was arraigned Tuesday on seven more counts of murder in Highland Park, bringing to 11 the number of homicide charges he faces.

Judge William Bledsoe of 30th District Court scheduled a preliminary hearing on the first-degree murder charges for Sept. 8, but hearings to determine whether **Atkins** is competent to stand trial will cause a delay.

As Bledsoe read each charge and the names of the victims in court, **Atkins** stared ahead. Bledsoe ordered him held without bond.

**Atkins** shook his head when asked for comment outside court.

Police said the 24-year-old Detroiter has confessed to killing all the women, whose bodies were found in or near vacant buildings along a 1.4-mile stretch of Woodward Avenue. Eight bodies were found in Highland Park, three in Detroit.

**Atkins** said he killed the women because he hated prostitutes, police said. He told police that when he was a child, his mother turned tricks in front of him and his older brother.

**Atkins** ' alleged victims were believed to be crack cocaine addicts. Police said the victims were lured into vacant buildings with crack, then raped and strangled.

**Atkins** was charged Tuesday with killing Valerie Brown- Chalk, 34; JoAnn O'Rourke, 40; Brenda Mitchell, 38; Juanita Hardy, 23; Vicki Beasley-Brown, 43; and two others who are unidentified.

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