

COPS EXPLORE POSSIBLE SERIAL LINK IN KILLINGS

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Highland Park police said Tuesday they are investigating whether the deaths of four women might be linked to a reputed **serial** killer believed to have stalked suburban communities since 1985.

"Maybe there ain't nothing to it, but we just want to check," Lt. Donald Roberts said.

Police are also trying to determine whether they may be seeking a killer who seeks out prostitutes, though police have not been able to confirm that all victims are prostitutes.

The bodies of three unidentified women were discovered Monday **in** different rooms of the abandoned Monterey Motel at 12100 Woodward. Another woman, whose name was not released, was found dead Dec. 14 **in** a building about a block west of the motel, on Elmhurst near Second.

In January 1990, State Police and police **in** Inkster, Romulus and Ypsilanti investigated whether a **serial** murderer was responsible for 10 unsolved slayings of women dating back to 1985. Four of the slayings, which included three prostitutes, were **in** Inkster.

The Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office said Tuesday the three women found Monday had been strangled, the same method used to kill the other woman and at least three others found recently **in** Detroit. Most of the women were found naked, with their hands tied behind their backs.

The morgue had not yet identified the three Monterey women late Tuesday, Roberts said, but he hopes to get that information "within the next day or two."

Officials cautioned Tuesday that there is no evidence linking the cases other than that the young black women were strangled.

Detroit Police Inspector Gerald Stewart, head of the homicide section, said, "At this point, we have not established any **link** ."

Roberts said the bodies at the Monterey were found **in** the bathrooms of different rooms and had been there more than two weeks.

Besides the three women found at the Monterey, these slayings are unsolved:

* Dec. 14: Debbie Ann Friday, found strangled at 170 Elmhurst near Second, Highland Park.

* Dec. 30: Bertha Jean Mason, 26, found strangled with her hands tied behind her back and naked, **in** an apartment at 12 Alger, Detroit.

* Jan. 3: an unidentified woman found **in** a vacant field **in** the rear of a home at 74 Kenilworth, Detroit.

* Jan. 25: Vicky Truelove, 39, found **in** an abandoned building at 9520 Woodward, Detroit.

Anyone with information about the slayings **in** Highland Park can call 252-0139, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., or 252-0116, anytime. Anyone with information about the slayings **in** Detroit can call 596-2260, anytime.

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