

COPS SEEK BOYFRIEND IN SLAYING QUESTIONS

Detroit Free Press (MI) - Tuesday, May 1, 1990
Author: ROGER CHESLEY Free Press Staff Writer

A man sought by police Monday for questioning in the slayings of his girlfriend and two young children was accused of raping the woman late last year, but prosecutors declined to issue a warrant because of a lack of evidence, police said Monday.

Viola Rivers, 21, filed a report Nov. 17 claiming that the 23-year-old man threatened to break all her windows unless he let her into the lower flat of a house in the 3000 block of Hurlbut Avenue. The man then allegedly forced intercourse, police said.

Rivers, her 2-year-old daughter Tywannia and 11-month-old son Darias were found slain in that same house about 5 p.m. Sunday, police said. A weapon possibly used in the slayings was recovered, police said, but they declined to elaborate.

A Wayne County morgue official said **Rivers** died of multiple stab wounds and blunt force injuries, and the children suffered blunt force injuries.

Homicide Inspector Gerald Stewart said Monday the man, **Rivers**' live-in boyfriend, was wanted for questioning.

Margaret Anzinger, a spokeswoman for the state Department of Social Services, said the 23-year-old was the legal father of Tywannia and Darius. "He was paying child support" of about \$100 a week for the two children, Anzinger said.

But police said that on Nov. 17, **Rivers** and the man weren't living together, and that **Rivers** referred to him as an "ex-boyfriend." Police said **Rivers** told them she allowed the man inside about 5 a.m. after his threats to break windows, then was assaulted.

The Wayne County Prosecutor's Office declined to press charges because of insufficient evidence, said police spokesman Sgt. George Anthony.

On Monday, neighbors of **Rivers** generally called her a quiet, nice woman who attended to her children. They painted a conflicting portrait of her boyfriend, however.

Nate Powell, 18, called **Rivers** -- whose nickname was Heidi -- quiet and friendly, but said it seemed she and her boyfriend often argued.

Another neighbor, Brenda Cowans, 32, said she never saw the two fighting. "He acted like he really loved those kids. He'd run around with them on his shoulder."

Powell said he called police Sunday after **Rivers**' mother came out of the house screaming. He said he then ran into the home and saw **Rivers** in the bathtub.

"Her chest had what looked like stab wounds," Powell said, and her hand was over her chest. He said the two children were in beds in different rooms.

Stewart confirmed the location of the bodies. Asked for a possible motive, he replied: "It's extremely difficult to establish a motive when you talk about kids this age."

Caption: Photo

: Clockwise, from above: **ViolaRivers** , Tywannia and Darius. ***

Edition: METRO FINAL

Section: NWS

Page: 1B

Index Terms: DEATH ; MULTIPLE ; DETROIT

Record Number: 9001170177

Copyright (c) 1990 Detroit Free Press