

## Worksheet 9.2 Part A

### Cold Cases

#### Amy Hurst, 1982

Almost 30 years ago, when Jeff Earley and his sister Lisa Beebe were 9 and 11, their mother Amy Hurst disappeared from New Port Richey, Florida. She had moved there from Michigan with new husband William Hurst. Shortly after the move, she stopped communicating with family members and disappeared. The family suspected that William Hurst was involved. According to her sister Judy Briggs, Amy Hurst seemed different when he was around, quiet and withdrawn.

In September 2011 police received a break in the case. William Hurst, 59, was arrested on charges of first-degree murder in the death of his wife Amy Hurst in 1982. Jeff Earley was primarily responsible for re-opening his mother's case. Doing his own investigation, he came across a missing person's Web site called the Doe Network. This site posts photos, descriptions, and other relevant information on unidentified bodies in hopes that family members or law enforcement can match them to cases.

One entry had meaning for Earley. It was for a woman found in the Gulf of Mexico Sept. 5, 1982, a few months after Amy Hurst's last communication. The description included details about turquoise jewelry found on the body, and an afghan and green comforter that were used to wrap the body. Earley knew his mother loved turquoise jewelry and recognized the afghan and comforter. He then contacted police in Florida who confirmed that the body was Hurst by using the son's DNA. Investigators ruled it a homicide by blunt force trauma to the head. They had no suspects, but the family did. Based on the family's suspicions, detectives tracked down William Hurst at his home in Kentucky. He was interviewed, arrested, and extradited to Florida.

For Amy Hurst's family, the arrest provided some relief, but the anger and sense of loss will probably always remain. "I always knew she wasn't going to come home, that she was probably dead. I knew in my heart who did it," daughter Beebe said. "I don't sleep well at night anymore because I see the image of her floating in the water."

Earley said he has thought about his mother every day since she went missing. Mother's Day was always difficult. But getting through her birthday each year was the worst.

Through tears, Jeff's wife Julie Earley said "this man who has caused this family so much pain will finally get what he deserves."

Knowing Amy was murdered, Beebe and other relatives are grieving as though it were new. Briggs has been crying for 3 days. For Earley, the mourning comes in waves.

"I just want answers," Earley said. "I want to know why."

#### Questions

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1. Should survivors investigate cold cases? Should they be encouraged to do so? What if the survivor's actions affect the police investigation? Explain why survivor investigations are, or are not, advisable.
  
2. This case is 30 years old. The children are now adults. How do you think their perspectives about the crime and the offender have changed?

## **Worksheet 9.2 Part B**

### **Martha Jean Lambert, 1985 Wrong Suspect?**

In November of 1985, Martha Jean Lambert, 12, vanished near her Elkton, Florida home. She had had dinner with her brother David, then said she was going out. She didn't say where. She was last seen walking down a road near her home.

The Lambert family was troubled; the children had been in foster homes because of child abuse, and Martha's two brothers had run away. Although Martha was first thought to be a runaway, police soon concluded that she was not.

The police initially thought David, who was 14 in 1985, knew more about Martha's disappearance than he revealed because he gave many conflicting stories and appeared to have some emotional problems. In 2000, however, he was arrested for passing a bad check, and he told police he was "responsible for" Martha's death. He told investigators where he buried her, but her body could not be found and he was not charged.

Then, in 2009, two detectives reopened the case. When they interviewed David, he confessed to accidentally killing his sister. He said they were arguing over money near an abandoned building when Martha slapped him and he pushed her. She struck her head on a piece of steel, which penetrated her skull and killed her. David said that when he realized she was dead he panicked and buried her body in a shallow grave. The site has since been razed and rebuilt, and investigators do not expect to locate Martha's body. David will not be charged because he was a minor at the time of the crime and the statute of limitations for manslaughter has expired.

After David confessed, his mother Margaret Lambert Pichon told the press that she did not believe her son killed his sister. She told the Florida Times-Union that David "often makes up stories" to get attention. But she told another newspaper that "He'll say whatever he wants just to be left alone." Pichon remains convinced, as she always has been, that Martha was kidnapped. She says the sheriff's office just wants to close the case.

Soon after Pichon's statements became public, David recanted his confession. He said he only told police what they wanted to hear, and that he is "mentally incompetent," has emotional problems, and does not know what happened to Martha. But investigators believed David was telling the truth about his sister, stating that he became emotional and was overcome with grief during the interview.

Regarding his retraction, one investigator said, "He was terrified. He was terrified of his Mama. Still is."

**Questions**

1. In this case, the limitations for manslaughter were expired. What are the limitations for homicide, manslaughter, or murder in your state?
  
2. How does the offender's past history with his mother complicate resolution of this case?
  
3. The victim's and suspect's mother did not believe her son committed the crime. As a victim services provider, what are some points you should keep in mind when working with someone who does not believe the person who claims responsibility?

## **Worksheet 9.2 Part C**

### **Connie Hevener and Carolyn Perry, 1967**

#### **Reluctant Witness**

On April 11, 1967, in the small town of Staunton, Virginia, two young women were murdered while closing up for the night at High's Ice Cream Store. The victims, 19-year-old Connie Hevener and her sister-in-law, 20-year-old Carolyn Perry, were shot in the head with a handgun. Police thought it was a robbery; about \$140 was missing from the cash register. They focused on Gus Thomas, who had been seen near the store before the murders. Thomas was a scruffy, unemployed, eccentric character who seemed to like the attention. Thomas was arrested and tried only for the murder of Hevener, with the understanding that prosecutors could try him for killing Perry if they lost the first case. And they did lose the Hevener case.

According to news reports, the prosecution "tiptoed" into the case, with little evidence. Thomas was promptly acquitted for one of the murders; he was never prosecuted for the second.

Many in Staunton thought that the investigation and lack of aggressive prosecution was suspicious. David Bocoock, the police sergeant who led the probe, was responsible for identifying Thomas after he saw him at High's before the murders. Bocoock's report on the crimes was amateurish, reading more like a bus route map than a homicide investigation: "We drove to Terry Street and turned right," Bocoock wrote. "We turned right and drove to Coalter Street, turned right on Coalter and drove an average speed to Spotswood Road, turned left onto Spotswood Road, then turned right ... and continued to Randolph Street."

No more arrests were made, and Bocoock continued as a police officer until his retirement in the 1980s. It wasn't until his death in 2006 that the murders of Hevener and Perry were finally solved.

In May 2008, an elderly woman, Joyce Bradshaw, revealed her secret: 10 days before the homicides, another High's employee, Diane Crawford, showed her a .25-caliber pistol she said she had recently purchased. She said she had a bullet "reserved" for Connie Hevener, for taunting her about being a lesbian. Bradshaw also said that she had given this information to Bocoock the day after the murders. She said Bocoock replied with a strange comment that Crawford was a "crack shot." Bradshaw took it as a warning to keep her mouth shut.

At age 60, Crawford was living in a nursing home, dying of heart and kidney disease. Crawford eventually confessed: "I was just pushed so far," Crawford said, "so I shot [them] and that was it." Crawford said the murders were not premeditated but she could not explain why she took a gun to the store that night. She also added a stunning detail: she gave the murder weapon to Bocoock. Crawford died before she could be prosecuted. As her health deteriorated, she was never able to fully explain Bocoock's coverup,

although she said they were friendly and she had done some target shooting at his rural home.

In 2009 a judge dismissed the second murder indictment against Thomas, who had lived for more than 40 years with the other indictment hanging over his head.

Relatives described decades of uncertainty, recent shock at learning Crawford's motive, and sadness in having to relive emotions more than four decades old. "We can all start now to put this behind us," said Perry's sister, Ada Campbell. "It's been hectic ... feeling like I have to live through it all again," said Danny Perry, widower of Carolyn Perry, of Staunton. "I'm satisfied they will get to the bottom of this ... I think that there's a lot more that could come out."

### **Questions**

1. Even though Officer Bocoock died in 2006, the witness did not step forward until 2008. What might her reasons have been for waiting?
  
2. This case was solved after more than 40 years. Do you believe there is a point at which cold cases should no longer be investigated because of the time and expense involved, or because many of those involved in the case have died? Why or why not?