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Worse Than Murder Itself. (Victims' Kin Seek Answers, Try to Cope. Pg. 3 Q 5/19/91): [NASSAU Edition]

By [Michael Slackman](#). STAFF WRITER. **Newsday, Combined editions; Long Island, N.Y.** [Long Island, N.Y.]07 May 1991: 63.

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1) Newsday Color Cover Photo by J. Conrad Williams, Jr.-Mary and John Schultz of Dix Hills, who have called the police every three weeks since their son Jerry was stabbed to death two years ago. Newsday Photos by J. Conrad Williams - 2) Patricia **Parker** and her son, [James Jr.], sit behind a picture of [**Laura**], 14, who was found dead near her school. 3) Jerry Schultz in a photo at his parents' house. 'We're in mourning every day because we don't know nothing,' says father John Schultz. 4) [Angelo Wong] and [Mary Wong], left, inside daughter [Angela]'s mausoleum. 5) Below, the Wongs, who still comb the newspapers and TV news for clues to their daughter's death.; No Answers. When the murder of a son or daughter is solved, the family can begin to heal. For many, that day never arrives. Newsday Color Cover Photo by J. Conrad Williams, Jr.-Mary and John Schultz of Dix Hills, who have called the police every three weeks since their son Jerry was stabbed to death two years ago.

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QUOTE OF THE DAY. 'People will be talking about what they think is important and all you can think is 'Somebody killed my kid.' Why was she killed? I want to know why.' - Mary Wong, whose daughter's murderer has never been found (Pg. 2 NS)

THE PHONE RANG just after midnight. Even before the receiver reached his ear, Angelo Wong heard the hysterical voice of his ex-wife. Their daughter Angela was missing.

Angelo ran from his Queens apartment and caught a train to his childrens' home in North Massapequa. As he stared out the window, watching the night streak by, he felt what he described as "the draining of blood." He knew that as he traveled closer and closer to the scene of his daughter's disappearance, he was traveling farther and farther away from life as he knew it.

Hours later, 11-year-old Angela, his only daughter, was found. She was dead, her face shoved into a shallow pond in a wooded area right behind her house, a log over the back of her neck.

His daughter's murder was an unbearable horror, and Angelo will have to live with it for the rest of his life. What makes the case even more painful is this: Seven years after Angela's death, her killer has not been found.

Angelo and his second wife, Mary, are still obsessed with the case, still waiting to find out who killed Angela. In their way, they are frozen in time. Nothing else matters.

"People will be talking about what they think is important and all you can think is 'Somebody killed my kid,'" Mary Wong said recently.

"Why was she killed? Why was she killed?" Angelo Wong asks over and over, as though reciting a mantra. "I want to know why."

Day after day, Angelo and Mary Wong wait for the phone to ring with the news of an arrest. Like the relatives of soldiers listed Missing in Action, their lives no longer move straight ahead.

They can only ask why. But they can't begin to know the answer.

In such cases, parents are stuck in a loop - every day begins and ends the same way - wondering when the big break will come. If the big break will come. If they will ever again be able to sleep through the night.

****(APPEARED 5/19/91 Queens Regional) Angelo's ex-wife, in her own way, is also still trying to cope with the murder. A relative says she is leaning on her family for support and has no contact with Angelo and Mary. *****

Lula Redmond, a therapist based in Clearview, Fla., has for the past six years counseled relatives of homicide victims. In her experience, people whose cases are solved come through her 12-week therapy program stronger and ready to move forward. Those who have unsolved cases attend one, maybe two, sessions, and never come back.

"These people will say to me, 'I don't care how many other people you helped. This is different because they have not found who murdered my child,'" Redmond said. "They don't want to heal."

Though the vast majority of murders are solved, the list of unsolved cases grows all the time. Each year about 20 percent of the roughly 80 murders that occur on Long Island are added to that list. Nationwide, the rate is higher, with an average of 30 percent of all cases left open, according to the U.S Justice Department. In Nassau, where statistics were available only going back to 1975, there are 92 unsolved cases. In Suffolk County, there are a total of 107 unsolved murders, the oldest dating back to 1956.

(APPEARED 5/19/91 Queens Regional) Although the vast majority of murders are solved, the list of unsolved cases grows all the time. Each year about 20 percent of the roughly 80 murders that occur on Long Island are added to that list. Nationwide, an average of 30 percent of all cases left open, according to the U.S. Justice Department. In the city, the rate is even higher; last year 38 percent of the 2,262 murders citywide and 34 percent of the 312 murders in Queens went unsolved.**

When a case is solved, a victim's family has a starting line from which to begin healing. It was that way for Bonnie Manners, whose 14-year-old daughter, Jessica, was found raped and murdered on the banks of Setauket Harbor on Easter morning in 1989. The healing began the day that Christopher Loliscio, a 21-year-old landscaper from Stony Brook, was convicted of the crime. "If Jessica's murder hadn't been solved, if they hadn't found the man that killed her, I would be living in absolute fear," Manners said. "I

have no idea how I would have handled that." EVEN FOR Dennis Holland, who saw Joseph Porto, convicted of criminally negligent homicide for killing his sister in 1986, walk free after 2 1/2 years in jail, it is easier than not knowing at all. "It's not until the trial is over can you really begin to rebuild your life," he said. "At least my questions were answered. People like Angelo have no answers."

No answers and too much time. Many parents of victims in unsolved murders find they are unable to wait and must search for the answers themselves.

Anton Weiss of Staten Island continues to search for clues in the mysterious murder of his son Chaim, who was killed as he slept at a boarding school in Long Beach in 1986. "If there was an arrest it would be easier to cope," said Weiss, who has filed a civil suit hoping that it will bring him answers. "I could put my efforts into other things, instead of getting the guy . . . I need the answers."

The need grows into an obsession. It controls the lives of those who survive, blunts their dreams and aspirations, makes everything else seem meaningless, fills their days with pain and uncertainty. This is the life of Angelo and Mary Wong, who relentlessly scan news accounts of recent murders, searching for a link to their case. It is the same for Pat and Jim **Parker**, who have not been down their old street in **Lindenhurst** since their daughter, **Laura**, was found dead in a wooded lot near her school seven years ago.

And it is the same for John and Mary Schultz, who have called police every three weeks since their son Jerry was stabbed to death in his Dix Hills home two years ago.

"It ain't going to bring him back," John said recently. "But at least we would know."

Angelo Wong was alone on his couch, classical music playing on the stereo. His eyes were closed and his right hand began to move as though it were pulling a brush through someone's hair. His left hand followed gently behind, as though pulling the hair into a pony tail, then letting it go.

"I can feel the brush right now running through her hair," Angelo said with great intensity. "I know how it feels. I can see her eyebrow. I can tell you about the little scar she got on the side of her eye and the little burn she got right here," just below her ear.

As he continued, Angelo smiled and for a time was content to be lost in thought. It is a meditation he has mastered so he never forgets the sight, smell or feel of his daughter. "I just have to," he says. "I can't ever let myself forget."

The Wongs have focused on the past much more easily than they've coped with the present, with the interminable wait. Soon after they learned of the murder, both he, a produce buyer, and Mary, an executive recruiter, quit their jobs. They went on a spending binge, going out to eat every night, traveling to Florida on the weekend. They ran up credit card debts. "You get to feel like 'What can anybody do to me that hasn't already been done?'" Angelo said.

They were consumed by the case. When Angelo Wong wasn't out canvassing the neighborhood in a search for witnesses, he and Mary would talk incessantly about the case.

"For the first three years, at least, the dinner conversation was, 'Did you speak to the police today?' 'No. Did you?'" Mary Wong recalled.

"After this happened, everyone wanted me to get over it quick," Mary said. "They wanted the old me. They wanted the jolly, happy me. But that's gone."

Through the years the police have offered hope. Nassau Homicide Det. Jack Sharkey, the investigator on the case, has tracked out of state, even solving other, unrelated cases during his search. However, the police effort wasn't enough for Wong. He searched himself. He angered parents when he tried to interview their children; the police eventually told him to back off.

One day Mary Wong said she realized that three years passed and their lives had gone nowhere. "I remember that it came to a point where we were sitting at the table eating dinner and I said, 'We know more about the case than we know about each other,'" Mary recalled. "We spent every bit of our energy on Angela's case."

When Mary Wong learned of Parents of Murdered Children, a support group with a chapter on Long Island, she persuaded Angelo to go to a meeting with her. Now the Wongs don't miss a meeting.

Angelo has gone back to work as a produce buyer for a large food company and Mary has started her own business. But still they live as though they are frantically clawing their way up a dirt hill - if they don't keep moving, the earth will crumble from beneath them.

Still, there is still an obsession with the case.

One day last October, a 10-year-old named Jessica Guzman was found murdered in the Bronx and, before his phone rang, Sharkey said, he knew that he had to call the New York City police.

WHENEVER A young girl is killed, Sharkey knows Angelo or Mary Wong will call. As it turned out, there was no connection this time, either. But the Wongs still read the newspapers and watch the television news every single day. "We just want to know what happened," Angelo said, "why it happened."

Almost seven years after his daughter's skeletal remains were found in a hole in the ground beneath a piece of carpet, Jim **Parker** was thinking of putting an advertisement in the local newspaper. He had done it once before. It would be simple: **Laura's** picture, centered on the page. Below would be a phone number to the Suffolk Homicide Squad and a request for information.

On top of the page, one word would be printed in bold, black type: "WHY?"

"We'll try anything," he said. "You know the saying: A drowning man will grab a straw if he thinks it will keep him afloat. It will be seven years this May and still we aren't any closer to knowing what happened."

The **Parkers** haven't moved forward with their lives; in their despair, they've remained isolated. Suffolk Homicide police Det. Robert Doyle, whose team of investigators has the **Parker** case, describes what the **Parkers** are going through this way:

"They are stuck in the stage where there is no light at the end of the tunnel. The victim's pain is over. The victim is dead. It is the victim's family that goes through an immeasurable amount of pain with the constant waiting for an arrest."

The last time Jim and Pat saw their 14-year-old daughter was May 23, 1984, when she left their **Lindenhurst** home on her way to **Lindenhurst** High School, where she was finishing the ninth grade. By the time her body was found that September, it was so badly decomposed that dental charts were used for identification.

Shortly after the discovery, the **Parkers** and their son, James Jr., moved from their house in **Lindenhurst** to a garden apartment in Holbrook. Jim **Parker**, a beefy man with a ruddy complexion, cried every time he saw other children wearing green **Lindenhurst** jackets. Pat **Parker** was furious with her neighbors. She felt they let her down by not helping find her missing daughter, by insisting that she had run away.

"This is your hometown," she said during a recent interview. "Something has happened to a young girl and people say, 'Let her rest in peace. Let her rest in peace.' There's questions there that have to be answered so she can rest in peace."

In the living room of the **Parkers'** Holbrook apartment, on top of the television, is a large framed photograph of **Laura** smiling into a mirror. She is a short girl, with shoulder-length dirty-blond hair, round cheeks and a big smile. In the upstairs bedroom the **Parkers** keep a gold ring with a pearl setting, a ring **Laura** was wearing when she was killed. It is a ring her father had given her.

The **Parkers** confront more than just who killed their daughter. They don't even know how she was killed. **Laura's** body was so badly decomposed that the medical examiner never was able to determine the cause. The case has not officially been ruled a homicide, but police say it is very suspicious because of the way she was found, covered by a piece of carpeting.

All the **Parkers** can do is play over and over in their heads the last time they saw **Laura**. For Jim, that last moment came at 5:30 a.m., as he left the house for work at John F. Kennedy International Airport, where he was a mechanic. **Laura**, he says, liked to get up early to dry her hair before school, so he always woke her before he left. She was sitting on the edge of her bed, half asleep and still in her pajamas, when he leaned over, kissed her on the forehead and left.

Her mother last saw **Laura** as she walked out the door, her purse in her hand. "She had on white jeans," Pat said, "a green-and-white-striped tank-top with 'Hang 10' on it . . . I said 'It's cool. You better go put something on.'"

Late that night, when **Laura** had not come home and it was starting to storm, Pat climbed into her daughter's bed and sobbed uncontrollably.

By daybreak the police were called, school officials were called and, the **Parkers** say, everyone insisted their daughter had run away. The **Parkers** even started to believe them.

On Monday, Sept. 10, Jim was in the living room as Pat was getting ready to go to church when there was a knock at the door. Two detectives walked in. "Mr. **Parker**," one of them says, "I'm with the Suffolk County Police Department. We've found your daughter." I said, "That's great. Where is she?" And he said, "It doesn't look good, Mr. **Parker**. Your daughter is dead." As he tells the story, his hand comes up over his mouth, his face turns beet red and he starts to gasp.

It's seven years later, and the **Parkers** still have not returned to their old neighborhood. But each morning when Jim goes to work, he drives down Sunrise Highway and passes not far from the field on Frank Street where his daughter was found. And, every day, he looks the other way.

Mary Schultz was at a celebration for her grandson's wedding one day last January when she looked into the faces around her and sobbed. Even now, weeks later, as she sat in the kitchen of her Dix Hills home, her voice choked and her eyes again filled with tears.

"It hangs over your head. It's always there," she said pausing briefly to catch her breath. "I saw all the people there and it just hit me. I thought 'God, wouldn't Jerry have been happy to be here.'"

Since their son Jerry was stabbed to death in his own home 2 1/2 years ago, Mary, 74, and her husband John, 75, say they have not known a peaceful moment. "We're in mourning every day because we don't know nothing," John says with the gravelly voice of a man who smokes one filterless cigarette after another. "It's been two and a half years of silence. It ain't going to bring back our Jerry, but we would like to know who did it and why."

In March, John doubled a reward from his own pocket to \$20,000. He is increasingly desperate for answers.

He continues to call the homicide detectives every three weeks. He doesn't like leaving the house, because he doesn't want to be too far from the phone, though he and his wife always go to the Parents of Murdered Children meetings.

"I tell you," Mary says, her voice now filled with despair, "we survived many tragedies. We survived the depression. We survived the war. We survived my daughter, the only one I have, had polio. We survived all of that. But this, we can not get over. We can not survive."

The Schultz home is decorated with the mementos of raising a family. Pictures line the hallway: Jerry in a bowtie, with a crewcut as a child. Jerry in a tuxedo with his arms around his wife on his wedding day. Jerry sitting on the back of a fishing boat three weeks before his death, smiling as the wind blows his hair.

"He was a good kid," John says, staring into the picture of Jerry and his wife, Joann. "You'd like him, not because he was my son. He had a good brain, a good heart."

The murder of their son is fraught with questions, in part because of the odd circumstances that surround his death. When he died, Gerald Schultz was a 33-year-old Learjet mechanic married to his high school sweetheart, a girl he knew from the age of 14. They had lived in a home six houses down from his parents. He would often drive by and toot the horn on his blue Toyota and would stop on occasion to sit in the kitchen, eat an oatmeal cookie and have a cup of coffee with his father, whom he called "Pop."

Then on Aug. 15, 1988, at 9:20 a.m., he walked into his own house and was stabbed dead - in front of his wife, who hysterically called police for help. Joann later told detectives that she was being robbed by someone posing as a deliveryman, when her husband walked in and was killed. The next day, she worked with a police artist to compile a composite of the murderer. It showed a man with an enlarged right eye.

Then she retained a lawyer, Long Island criminal defense attorney William Keahon, and has since refused to speak to police or her in-laws. Keahon says she did not like the way police treated her, though she has never been officially called a suspect.

"I just can't understand it," Mary says. "He wasn't just stabbed so someone could get away. He was stabbed repeatedly, repeatedly."

Mary **Parker** stood from her seat in the kitchen and clasped the back of a chair. Her gaze was directed out the kitchen window, and her eyes squinted in the morning sun. "He loved his snowmobile. I can still see him riding around. I can still see his fat little bottom hanging off the seat."

Mary breaks out of her trance when she is asked to recall the day her son died. "I'll never forget it. We are Catholic. The fifteenth day of August is the Assumption of the Blessed Mother. It is a day of obligation." She was home when the doorbell rang.

She says a friend told her Jerry was stabbed. Then she corrects herself: "He's not just stabbed. He's dead." There are memories of rushing to her son's house, seeing crowds of neighbors, reporters and police officers. Wanting to look inside the truck where her son's body was zipped in a plastic bag.

"Answers," John says looking at a picture of his son on the fishing boat. "Answers would at least put it to a finish. We'd be happy to find out who did it."

Mary nods her head in agreement. "It would be like you're in a story and you close the book," she says.

"It ain't going to bring him back, but at least," John adds, "we would know."

Illustration

1) Newsday Color Cover Photo by J. Conrad Williams, Jr.-Mary and John Schultz of Dix Hills, who have called the police every three weeks since their son Jerry was stabbed to death two years ago. Newsday Photos by J. Conrad Williams - 2) Patricia **Parker** and her son, James Jr., sit behind a picture of **Laura**, 14, who was found dead near her school. 3) Jerry Schultz in a photo at his parents' house. 'We're in mourning every day because we don't know nothing,' says father John Schultz. 4) Angelo and Mary Wong, left, inside daughter Angela's mausoleum. 5) Below, the Wongs, who still comb the newspapers and TV news for clues to their daughter's death.; No Answers. When the murder of a son or daughter is solved, the family can begin to heal. For many, that day never arrives. Newsday Color Cover Photo by J. Conrad Williams, Jr.-Mary and John Schultz of Dix Hills, who have called the police every three weeks since their son Jerry was stabbed to death two years ago.

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