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Police Release More Murder Details

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Burlington, Vermont -- April 4, 2005

Police Monday released new information about how they believe murder victim Laura Winterbottom was randomly selected by her killer.



Last week police indicated for the first time that Gerald Montgomery randomly picked Laura Winterbottom to be kidnapped, raped and killed.

DNA evidence proves that Gerald Montgomery, 33, is the only person who could have murdered Laura Winterbottom, according to police affidavits filed last week.

He was arrested and charged with the murder last week, two weeks after 31-year-old woman was found in her car behead a vacant home in Burlington's old north end. She had been beaten strangled and raped, according to police.

During those two weeks the police tried to calm the public -- especially women -- who feared that Laura Winterbottom was the victim of random violent crime. Police indicated there was no specific evidence to support that it was a random crime.

However, at the same time, police also urged women to take common-

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sense precautions such as not walking alone at night

Then last week police revealed for the first time, based on new evidence, that it appeared to be a random crime.

Monday they released new evidence indicating that Montgomery kidnapped Winterbottom after she left a Church Street Bar and got into her car parked on College Street, 200 feet away, according to police affidavits charging Montgomery with kidnapping.

Police say they the new details were provided by two women who came forward after they recognized Montgomery from a news photo following his arrest.

The women told police a man looking like Montgomery confronted them around 9:30 on Church Street the night of the murder as they went to their car parked near city hall park on College Street. They said he asked them had any marijuana. They said he scared them, so they quickly got into their car. As they started to pullout of their parking space, they saw him approach the passenger side of a second car two parking spaces behind them. The women said they made a U-turn and the man was no longer in sight.

Police believe the second car was Laura Winterbottom's and that the man was Montgomery who somehow got into her car, forced her to drive off to Pearl Street where he then sexually assaulted and later killed her.

Montgomery did not attend the Monday court hearing so formal arraignment on the new kidnapping charge was postponed. However, he will continue to be held without bail on the charges of murder and sexual assault which he denied at arraignment last week.

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