

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

MIDDLESEX, SS.

**SUPERIOR COURT DEPARTMENT
DOCKET NOS. 2581-CR-0062**

COMMONWEALTH

v.

EDWARD J. WATSON

COMMONWEALTH'S STATEMENT OF THE CASE

Now comes the Commonwealth in the above-captioned matters and submits this Statement of the Case. This statement is provided to assist the court and is not intended to be a bill of particulars, nor does it contain all information known to the Commonwealth at this time.

Disappearance of Michelle Miller

Michelle Miller was 29 years old and living in Somerville when she disappeared from the streets of Cambridge on the night of July 28, 1992. Miller was a former US Army enlisted soldier, and was a mother of two children at the time of her disappearance. By 1992 she had fallen on hard times, and was struggling with addiction to cocaine. For two weeks she was missing. No missing persons report was filed with police.

Identification of Victim's Body

Miller's body was found on August 11, 1992 by Cambridge Police in an abandoned basement apartment at 245 Washington St., Cambridge, after a neighbor had placed a call about a foul odor. At the time her body was recovered, substantial decomposition had occurred, and the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) recorded the cause of

death as "Undetermined: Decomposed Body." In his autopsy report, the assigned physician, Dr. Antonio A. Boschetti, noted that, "the manner of death could not be identified and remains suspicious." The victim, who had no identification on her person, was conclusively identified through comparison of dental records.

When she was found by police, the victim was positioned on her back on the floor of the basement apartment. She was wearing neither pants nor underwear, and her blouse had been pushed up over her chest, exposing the area of her breasts. Her face was covered by a blanket. The position of the victim's body, and the position of her clothing, was consistent with having been a victim of sexual assault. Because of the decomposition of the victim's head and neck area, it was not possible to determine whether there had once been physical evidence of bruising on the victim's head or neck, or petechiae in her eyes.

Initial investigation identified Edward J. Watson, then a resident of 36 Newtowne Court, Cambridge, as the last person to see the victim alive. When interviewed, he told a State Police investigator in 1992 that he had last seen the victim walking away from the Buffet Café, a bar then located at 20-24 Prospect Street, in the Central Square area of Cambridge. But no further evidence was developed, and no arrest was made at that time.

Initial Identification of Edward J. Watson as a Suspect

In 2002 a female party close to Edward J. Watson made a report to authorities that Watson had admitted to her that he had killed a woman in Cambridge in the late 1980s or early 1990s. The female informant provided a detailed account of Watson's alleged statements, which included information that was not known to the general public and did not appear to have been published in any contemporaneous news reports. She claimed that Watson had told her that he killed the woman at the behest of a male acquaintance of

Watson, and that the motive for the killing had been a custody dispute. The female informant died of natural causes in 2019.

Social Worker Records and Identification of Daniel J. Innis

A review of records obtained from the Arlington Police Department, and from the former Department of Social Services (DSS, known since 2008 as the Department of Children and Families) revealed that Miller had been involved in a physically abusive long-term relationship with a man named Daniel J. Innis. Innis, the father of her two children, had attacked the victim on multiple occasions, resulting in his repeated arrest, and, at times, in the victim's hospitalization. The DSS records also revealed that Innis threatened at various times to seek custody of the victim's children. On July 27, 1992, the victim reported to her social worker that Innis had broken her nose and that she needed stitches, and that she intended to go to court to seek a restraining order against Innis. There is no record of any such order being issued. The next day, July 28, 1992, is the last date the victim was ever seen alive.

Interviews of Edward J. Watson

On March 6, 2024, homicide investigators from the Massachusetts State Police and Cambridge Police conducted an audio-recorded interview of Edward J. Watson, at his residence in Mattapan. Watson was given his Miranda warnings and agreed to speak with the detectives. During the interview, Watson acknowledged knowing Daniel Innis but claimed not to remember the name of Innis' girlfriend, and said he didn't know where she was today, or if she had children.

On April 2, 2024, detectives conducted a second interview of Edward J. Watson. Again, Watson signed a Miranda waiver and agreed to have the interview recorded. During

this interview, Watson admitted he had been “pretty close” to Daniel Innis, and admitted for the first time that he knew that Michelle Miller had been found dead in an empty apartment. He claimed that an unidentified woman had approached him when the victim’s body was found and told him, “that girl, man, got murdered. And they found her in there, and her body was decomposed.” When confronted with the information that the female informant had provided to police, implicating him as the victim’s killer, Watson denied any involvement in the victim’s death. When asked why the female informant would make such a detailed statement implicating him, Watson said he had “no idea,” claiming flatly, “it wasn’t me.”

On November 21, 2024, detectives conducted a third interview with Edward J. Watson. Again he was advised of his Miranda rights, and signed a written waiver form, and again he agreed to have the interview recorded. During this interview, Watson admitted for the first time that he had personally been in the abandoned apartment, with the victim and four other males. He said one of his “partners” had climbed through a window and opened the door for them. Watson said that while he smoked cigarettes, the other members of the group smoked “a lot” of crack cocaine. Watson said that other people were “having sex with her,” and that the victim wanted to have sex with him but he declined. Watson admitted that at some point he and the victim were the last two people in the apartment. Watson then appeared to explore alternate theories of the victim’s death. At one point he attempted to claim that as he was leaving, some other unidentified person entered the apartment. He then attempted to float the possibility that the victim had died of a drug overdose after he had left, asking, “where does that leave me?” This claim was not credible;

a toxicological examination of the victim's blood indicated an absence of drug metabolites in her system.

Watson then retreated from these claims and acknowledged that he was the last person with the victim, and that he was responsible for her death. He told detectives that a man had asked him to "take care of her," and that "I guess he didn't like the girl." While Watson did not identify Daniel Innis as the man who had asked him to kill the victim, he also admitted that he was aware that there was "a lot going on" between Innis and "the girl," specifically "over the kids." Watson was insistent that he had never sought or received any payment for killing the victim. In describing how he had killed the victim, Watson first said, "maybe I punched her one time, she got knocked out," then admitted that he had hit the victim in the face with "a stick" or "a board" while she was laying down or sitting down. He described that in the morning he exited the basement apartment and left the victim's body behind. After initially denying in the April 2024 interview that he had ever admitted the killing to the female informant, Watson admitted in the November 2024 interview that he had told the female informant about what he had done to the victim, and that he had once heard a tip about what the female informant had told the police.

Respectfully Submitted
For the Commonwealth

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