

The /b/ Killer

Why do criminals brag about their acts? Studies declare a wide variety of mental health symptoms, like narcissism, sociopathy, and so on. It's not a surprise then, for criminal activities to be posted on 4chan; regardless of the board or the discussion. Stories and videos of robberies, abuse, and even war crimes are often discussed - if not enjoyed. The false illusion of anonymity presents an opportunity for darker secrets to be expressed. Posters across the site take every story and greentext with a grain of salt, but it's difficult to brush off a story when it contains evidence.

August 21st, 2015.

"I have killed several women for pleasure" the post begins. "If you can guess a name, I will upload a picture. If you can guess a name of any of these women, I will upload their photo. No more than 10 names per post. Any more than that will be ignored. Some are polaroids and others were taken with a disposable camera. I also have pictures of them before death when I was able to do so. If you guess all of the names, I will show you where I dumped a body in 1999. The first one is free as her name unlikely to be guessed."

Next to the paragraph is exactly what OP described; before and after photographs of an unknown corpse. And just like that – a horrific, disturbing game begins. And users are quick to play. One commenter guesses 5 names, and the OP responds: "wow off to a great start. Incredible." As he posts a polaroid of a dead woman's lower half; undressed. The thread erupts into equal parts disbelief and shock, while others guess more names. Someone asks how the OP was able to develop the pictures as it would obviously get him in trouble, but he states that he developed them himself. The OP posts another photo, almost as if he was gifting the thread with more pictures, and writes "this is from before I played with her". The reason he posted this is unknown; he didn't respond to any name guesses nor did he say anything else.

No more photos are posted, and the thread is soon closed. But the interest of 4chan had piqued, and the search was on to find who this mysterious serial murderer was – and why was he posting his confessions to /b/ of all places? Threads begin to pop up all across 4chan, as the discussion grows further and further. The FBI was contacted, and others began trying to match the faces with missing persons reports.

Have you ever heard of EXIF data? It stands for exchangeable image file format, and it presents the metadata of any digital camera, scanner, and smartphone. Data such as the camera model, its aperture, focal length, and ISO speed. It also provides the metrics to the image, like resolution, colorspace, and file size. But most importantly, and the reason I'm talking about this – is that EXIF data also stores and displays the time and date that a photo was taken – and the location. All of this information is embedded within the image, meaning the common man can't remove it. It's not impossible to remove EXIF data if you know what you're doing... but that's the first mistake.

The /b/ killer did not remove any of their EXIF data. Some users were able to save the original photo and scan it – finding that this serial murderer was located in Louisiana. Keep in mind, the /b/ killer took photos of his victims with polaroids, but he was posting his evidence along with timestamps via a digital camera; quite possibly, and accidentally, doxxing himself to those who knew where to look. And while they homed in on where he last took these pictures, the location of his attacks needed to be found.

So, while users began trying to identify victims and guessing where their location is, others began thoroughly inspecting each polaroid that the /b/ killer uploaded.

"So /x/, I got news for you. I identified the graduation photo victim. This means 2 things. One, this guy is actually the killer since the police found this girl's body next to a road in Las Vegas. And two, we have a new lead."

The first victim was supposedly identified to be Shauna Maynard. According to the Las Vegas MPD website (with the help of the wayback machine): On 04-21-98, Shauna Maynard

was located at the intersection of Blue Diamond Rd. and Decatur Blvd in the early morning hours by citizens, and upon investigation, it was discovered that Shauna Maynard had been shot several times and dumped on the roadway. Shauna was 17 years old at the time of her murder. She was a white female, 5'4", 150 Lbs, having red hair, and brown eyes.

Along with that, the Las Vegas Sun wrote a small article in 1998 that stated: Maynard was reported missing on December 31 and was believed to be a runaway from Norco, CA. "It is unclear to the detectives investigating this case who Shauna may have been staying with while she was in the Las Vegas area," homicide Sgt. Rocky Alby said. "A few people have come forward and acknowledged knowing Shauna, but also admit that there are many things about Shauna Maynard that remain a mystery."

Many theories sprout from this: one being that the /b/ killer could have simply just handpicked a random missing person's photo to create fraudulent claims all to rile up 4chan. Another theory being that the /b/ killer could have known Shauna for a lengthy time and actually befriended her – which aligns with the story about Shauna staying with a mysterious person before her body was found.

As for the second victim the /b/ killer posted, users begin to argue on whether their picture matches one from a missing persons database, and the thread dies out. A few hours later, a new one is created and the discussion continues. Over and over and over this happens; a thread either sizzles out and dies or it reaches its bump limit, thus a new thread is born and falls down the same path as before. The victims are given grotesque nicknames besides Shauna, such as Toothpick (image displays toothpicks shoved into body), This Side Up (a nude female body stuffed into a moving box) and Smileygirl (a human head severely damaged).

Just as things begin to align themselves, all of a sudden – everything begins to tangle up. In the mess of arguments, several links are posted; all being articles and reports written shortly after Shauna's body was found. Prior to these articles, many believed that Shauna may

have been held captive for months, if not already murdered before her body was shot and disposed of. But in the reports, it states that Shauna had called up a close friend and stated that she was scared and needed to leave her apartment, due to getting into an argument with her roommate. Later that night, a police officer would hear gunshots but couldn't locate where the crime was happening. 3 hours later, Shauna's body was discovered. Meaning that Shauna was killed and discovered within just hours; completely debunking the photos that the OP posted. Another report is found which states that Shauna's body was discovered by citizens, not a police officer. A lot of posters took this as meaning one of these articles was a fabricated story, but I believe the articles are saying Shauna was last seen alive by citizens before being found dead by the police. And then, a third report is posted, and it states that Shauna had been shot in the face and had to be identified [from an inscription on the ring she was wearing](#). Another article that I found which was posted this year, was of an interview with Shauna's family. In the interview, we learn that Shauna wasn't even staying with a mystery murderer, but rather, was living with 8 or 9 other people in a small apartment; including children. It also states that the act of murder might have also been a "in the moment" action, as they speculate her murderer tried to make an advance on her, probably mistaking her for a sex worker. Therefore, many theories can be disregarded. Shauna wasn't living with a murderous boyfriend, Shauna wasn't being held captive by OP, and most importantly, how could the /b/ killer have pictures of Shauna laying dead on a sheet... when she was murdered and found outside on the street?

Then who was this bloody-faced woman? Who are these other victims?

Well, as it turns out – two additional pictures would be later debunked by people on Reddit. The severely damaged head, that I can't show on screen, actually is just an old image that was shared on Rotten.com – when it was still active. This picture isn't of another victim of the /b/ killer; rather, it's a body that was found underwater. The discoloration and grotesque nature being the effects of both postmortem and adipocere.

As for the woman laying along the bed, smiling at the camera – users would struggle to discover who this was. And as I wrote this script, and searched through all of the links and articles I have saved, I was close to saying she remained a mystery.

...that was until I just happened to see an off-handed comment on Reddit. This woman, the one anons fought and argued over, would actually be Margaret Hicks – a woman found dead in 1997. And the photo that was posted would be the exact same photo that was displayed in the newspapers and articles. Suddenly, the theory from earlier grows ever stronger: is this simply just a troll playing a horrific game? A troll with too much time on their hands? Did they just end up getting their hands on some old crime scene photos and articles, and decided to cause a stir-up on /b/?

Granted, the Reddit findings weren't made until years after the thread was created, so this information wasn't available in the archives at the time. Yet, despite this shocking revelation about Shauna's case being false, 7 more threads are created throughout the following days. All sharing the same information while seemingly rejecting the police reports and news articles about Shauna's actual discovery. Instead, it's like they silently brushed away Shauna and moved onto the next victim. And with this attempt to forget and move on, their investigation comes to a staggering halt. Users mindlessly fighting, many quote unquote experts giving their opinions about the murderer, and many, many successful attempts at derailing the thread were made. Someone claims they even called the LVMPD and was told directly that the photo that had been submitted to them was not of Shauna. Anons alerted the FBI, with one even recording his phone call with an operator, proving that the FBI were aware and investigating all of this... and the thread eventually ends.

[pause]

One month later...

[play video]

The story is debunked by not only old media articles and police reports, but by the FBI themselves. And the same people who demanded justice and wanted the murderer to be caught; the same ones who demanded to keep this story alive ... would end up becoming viscerally upset that one of the biggest Latin American horror YouTube channels gave attention to this story. Not because the channel shared bad information or ignored clues; no, deep down most of the users wanted this story to themselves. To be the underdog hero, roleplaying as an online masked vigilante ... but instead they just argued and called each other fags. And with that, the story of the /b/ killer would end; the popular theory being that the original poster just got their hands on some crime scene photos and news articles, and conjured up a sick, inhumane way to pass the time on a Friday night. The investigation of the /b/ killer comes to a cold, dead end. No traces were made to any missing persons cases, and the Louisiana doxx was probably from the OP's scanner as he presumably scanned a crime scene photo book.

Y'know what... I'll be frank. The poster would return a month later shortly before the news story about this all being fake had emerged. He would post more photos of additional victims, but by this point, it's become very possible that these are just additional scans. One of the photos would attempt to be identified as George Sandoval, who went missing in 2015, but his body wouldn't be discovered until 2020. Thus, this new thread would die off rather quietly, with his last post bragging that he would return in a month.

But he never would.

[pause]

Some last moment afterthoughts before moving.

1) The crime scene theory was criticized since all of the photos lack place markers and proper lighting. However, that critique can be dismissed as, according to the book Sex-Related Homicide and Death Investigation: crime scene photos are actually taken first before markers and tape are laid out. This helps showcase the exact surroundings and environment that the

victim was in. Afterwards, markers are laid out, tape is pulled, and professional photography with proper lighting is taken.

2) When the /b/ killer posted for the first time, he had a photo of Shauna's graduation picture and a photo of Margaret. Shauna went missing before her class graduated, which confused many in the thread, but it's very common for schools to take class graduation pictures ahead of Spring, as photographers often are harder to book during that season. So, despite going missing before the New Year, her photo had already been taken and was processed. Plus, it's the very same photo used on the LVMPD website. The poster could have simply found her story and downloaded her graduation picture as part of the ruse.

3) If this were real, the FBI would have already taken care of this. Despite 4chan's illusion of anonymity, no one actually is anonymous. While users attempted to doxx the OP, the mods on /b/ would have already had his IP address, and if it were real, they would have to hand over the IP address to the feds. Sure, a VPN could've been used to displace his IP, but ... I mean, c'mon. A commercial VPN; hell, even a homemade VPN – we're comparing that to an, at the time, 8 billion dollar funded government agency.

in text (As of 2025, it will now be 11 billion dollars.)

4) There's this odd theory that the /b/ killer could have been the Golden State Killer, Joseph DeAngelo, but the evidence for this theory is lackluster.

This ... would be the last of the /b/ killer.

There would be no further verified updates, at least that I can find. Despite me leaning heavily into the theory of this being uploads of crime scene photos and newspaper reports, that doesn't mean it's true nor factual. It's merely a theory that I heavily agree with – and in the end, the story of the /b/ killer remains unsolved.