

UNSOLVED WITH STEVE GREGORY, EPISODE 205

TRANSCRIPT

SEGMENT 1

Announcer

KFI AM 640, heard everywhere on the iHeartRadio app.

Steve Gregory

On any given day in Southern California, hundreds of investigators are working more than 10,000 unsolved cases. That's 1000s of friends and families who have lost loved ones, 1000s of people who got away with a crime and 1000s of murderers who still walk the streets, killers who may be your neighbor, go to your church, or could be dating a close friend. For the next two hours, we'll highlight cases that have gotten cold, baffled investigators or just needs that one witness to speak out. This is unsolved with Steve Gregory.

Los Angeles County Sheriff's homicide case number 017-191433-1134-011 the murders of Andrew Chavez and Clotee Severino Reyes. Detective Adam Kirste reached out and said he needed help to find those responsible for the shooting deaths of a young man and woman who had been dating and while having an argument in the street, both were gunned down during the drive by shooting. I head down to Homicide Bureau in Monterey Park, Kirstie gives me an overview of the night of September 30 2017, in the city of Lancaster.

Detective Kirste

And that's when my partner and I, since retired detective, were called out at about... Phone rang at about 2:30 in the morning, to respond to Lancaster for a double murder, which had occurred on a street out there on Sixth Street East up in Lancaster. Long drive from where I live got up there started seeing what we had with had several people who had been detained shortly after the shooting at a crime scene, obviously with multiple pieces of evidence, obviously, multiple victims. So we had another team out there to assist us with the scene and my partner and I handled the interviews of the folks who had been detained. This was September 30, 2017, almost five years ago now. And the nuts and bolts version of it is our two victims, Andrew Chavez and Clotee Reyes were at a party at a house near on Sixth Street, he's there. And by all accounts, the only thing that I know for sure is that the party was kind of a dud. And at about 1:30, he was breaking down, people were milling about in the streets. And Andrew and Clotee were on again off again, boyfriend girlfriend. At the time they were kind of off, and they were arguing out in the street. And their arguments out there in the street became the source of for lack of a better term entertainment. A large group of people came from the party and started watching them argue. We know this, this portion of that is on a little bit of an obstructed bit of surveillance video large tree blocked the clear view to get a clear head count of who all was out there or how many people were out there. And at some point, a dark colored vehicle it's one in the morning you don't know what's you

know, black, dark blue or red. Drives from the south northbound goes behind the foilage of the tree. And we know that it fires several rounds striking Andrew and Clotee and nobody else. We know that the people scatter, but we also know that at least one person returned fire with his own gun at the car that was fleeing the scene northbound on Sixth Street East. We don't know if that car was ever hit. That suspect vehicle has never been recovered. And everybody then scattered and left the the party seeing the streets extremities. Responding deputies were able to detain some folks who were there at the party, which is what led to myself and Detective Reynolds interviewing a bunch of these folks who were at the party and we know we're right there in the group of people who could have been shot just as easily as Andrew and Clotee.

Steve Gregory

Okay, so let's go back. How old are these two?

Detective Kirste

They're under 20. They're 20 or younger. They're just kind of starting out on their life.

Steve Gregory

So were they both in their 20s?

Detective Kirste

Yes. Okay. So very young.

Steve Gregory

The in I assumed in the party was filled with some 20 somethings?

Detective Kirste

Down to 16-17 year olds, it was a party of youth. It was supposed to be a birthday party for somebody, but you know, very young people. 16, they may have been at the upper end of the age spectrum. They may have been the oldest ones there. They may have been some of the oldest people there.

Steve Gregory

Yeah. We're talking with detective Adam Kirste with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department about this, this tragic murder of two young people on Saturday, September 30, 2017. Detective, so when you

got the call of this homicide, this apparent murder, and you get on scene, you're talking about you and your partner interviewing a bunch of the young people at the party. Now, presumably, they're all witnesses. And you showed me some videotape before we started recording. And you showed me that there's clearly a bunch of people who not only watched it with their own eyes, but recorded it on their phones. So you have witnesses out there.

Detective Kirste

Absolutely. Which is what makes this case far more frustrating than forgive the term but the the run of the mill unsolved, where maybe there aren't witnesses, maybe something happened in the middle that night, and there was nobody around. And somebody had gotten shot and called. That is absolutely not the case here. There are at least a dozen people in the immediate area who watched the car approach their group that was watching Andrew and Clotee. There was people who walked up to the shooters vehicle and talk to them 20 seconds before they went and did the shooting who were still on the street. There's just no way. Approaching five years this case is still being solved.

Steve Gregory

Looking at this, you know in you're talking about a party in Lancaster, is this the 43,000 block of Sixth Street East? I'm not familiar with the area. So can you kind of tell us what kind of neighborhood that is?

Detective Kirste

It's a it's a residential neighborhood. houses on both sides of the street. However, there are a couple of dirt roads that lead up to it. I remember driving up a dirt road to get to the paved road where the scene was, but it's a residential neighborhood. Just out in Lancaster,

Steve Gregory

Typical neighborhood?

Unknown Speaker

Yeah, I would call it typical. The houses had bigger lots than some of the other areas I've been to in Lancaster. Like the house with the surveillance video had a really big, wide lot, just standard neighborhood houses on both sides of the street.

Steve Gregory

The area, though, is what's the gang activity sort of nexus up there for that kind of an area?

Detective Kirste

First things first, I have no information that Andrew or Clotee had anything to do with any gang. And having worked my entire career in the south end of LA County. I'm not very familiar with the gang situation up there. I do know that it is a lot of folks who have moved from down here, who moved up there trying to kind of get away from the gang activity in the south end of LA County, but it kind of follows them up there.

Steve Gregory

So let's go back the short answer is there is gang activity.

Detective Kirste

Yes.

Steve Gregory

Okay. So in this particular neighborhood, though, Sixth Street East. And the reason I was asking about neighborhood and for you to paint that picture is have you had issues like this before that neighborhood?

Unknown Speaker

Not that I'm aware of, but we are a county wide thing. So I don't always go to Lancaster I don't always know the trends of what's going on in a particular neighborhood.

Steve Gregory

Have you ever been called to that neighborhood before?

No, no.

Before we get back to more of detective Kersti I want to tell you how you can contact the Unsolved team. If you're listening on the iHeartRadio app, just simply press the red microphone and record your story idea tip or comment or press #250 on your cell phone and say the key word "unsolved". That's #250 And the key word "unsolved". More on the deaths of Andrew Chavez and Clotee Reyes but first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KF I am 640 Time now for a news update.

SEGMENT 2

Steve Gregory

KFI AM 640, heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory. And this is Unsolved. If you're listening on the app, you can send us a tip about a case a story idea or comment about the show. Just tap the red microphone on the app and record your message. We're talking with detective Adam Kirste with the LA County Sheriff's Homicide Bureau about the deaths of Andrew Chavez and Clotee Reyes, and it happened September 30, 2017. Before the break, we were kind of talking a little bit about gang activity. And let me tell you something. That's the question. I think the number one question I asked about homicides in this market. Is there always a gang connection to it, because it seems to be, unfortunately, one of the most common threads about these kinds of shootings. Now, you said that there's no evidence that Andrew or Clotee were involved in gangs. But as I've always known, uncovering these, sometimes it's mistaken identity. Sometimes it's an initiation. And sometimes people feel like they're in a place they shouldn't be at. Do any of those three things fit in this narrative?

Detective Kirste

Initiation I wouldn't necessarily know about but mistaken identity is a possibility. Because the group of people was so large as it relates to people standing on a middle of the street watching to folks argue or talk or discuss the relationship status. Any of these other folks could have been the targets now, or some of them. I mean, obviously, one of these folks had an illegally possessed weapon and fired back at the suspect which leads me to believe he could have had, we did end up talking to him though. And he was more not as overtly gangster as he denied it, obviously. Couldn't really explain why he had a firearm, which we never recovered.

Steve Gregory

So wait, you I saw the video in this young man, I assume young man -

Detective Kirste

Yep.

Steve Gregory

lifted a firearm and appeared to fire back. But when you talk to him, there was no gun.

Detective Kirste

By the time he was detained by the patrol folks. The gun had disappeared, which is not uncommon.

Steve Gregory

Okay. I didn't mean to sound naive. It's just it's just funny that in that amount of time, but he admitted he never admitted having a gun?

Detective Kirste

Correct.

Steve Gregory

Now, were you able to verify his identity on the video with him? I mean, were you able to

Detective Kirste

We didn't have the video yet. Pardon me, we didn't have the video. The morning that we did the interview, it takes a while for our guys to come up and get it and then make it viewable for us. So we didn't have it. At the time we did the interview. But we told them we knew of the cameras existence. So he didn't deny being there. But he did know, denied everything else didn't know who the shooter was. They didn't know what had happened. But he very easily could have been the target as like I said before any of the other 15 people standing around.

Steve Gregory

Okay, so let's go back then I was I interrupted you about when we're talking about the video and the other weapon and and that sort of imply that there might have been some sort of a gang Nexus. So let's go back to that. When you saw that, and you saw that there was a person that had a gun fired back, did you immediately go to the gang part of this? Or did you had you not considered that yet?

Detective Kirste

Try to keep an open mind to everything when we're doing these things. Because you just have to if you get tunnel vision on one thing, you know, something's gonna fly past you that you didn't notice. So, you know, we talked to him and he denied being a gang member. He denied doing any shooting, but we felt it was him. He had pretty distinct size and stature. And we were we were pretty sure we're talking to the right individual. And he did not claim to be a gang member. He was just out there on the streets hustling to get money, which is basically the the term that some of these folks use

Steve Gregory

The term for what hustling to get money?

Detective Kirste

In my opinion, I've seen that in the past and my patrol and station level experiences that they're committing street level robberies, burglaries of residential homes, things like that.

Steve Gregory

Okay, so and then I was asking you about that. How did you know that this was the man that would later be the one in the video. How did you know he may have been the one that had the weapon?

Detective Kirste

He, like I said he had a pretty distinct stature. He was pretty tall. I don't know, if you noticed it, you know, tall, skinny, tall and tall and skinny. And he was in a car with several other people that was detained leaving the scene. And one thing led to another and we we know he was the guy who had got forget that firearm. Okay,

Steve Gregory

So now looking at a little broader then- did you consider that there was any kind of gang involvement at all in this is that you say you keep an open mind. But when you already know you had someone that returned fire, someone has already opened fire? Is that where you go first?

Detective Kirste

Well, the party was our first thing and whether that was a gangster party, or whatever the case may have been. We tried to figure out what its deal was and its participants. And these kids weren't gangsters. The majority of these folks who were at this party were... I don't even know what the right word is, you know, what their generation has called because I'm, you know, obviously way older than them. But they just don't understand the value of life and being a decent upstanding citizen. And doing your duty, whether that be you know, telling law enforcement what happened when two people were murdered right in front of you. Because they live in this Snapchat, Instagram story. Everything's funny everything is for a like or a comment or whatever the case may be on social media. And like we had watched the video people came out of you know, from the party towards this argument with their phones, you know, at the ready and you

Steve Gregory

Could see the light you can see on their phones already lighting up the area. Yeah,

Detective Kirste

they don't care about life. For lack of a better term,

Steve Gregory

Presumably, I guess I'm jumping to that conclusion. Did Andrew and Clotee have friends at that party?

Detective Kirste

Yes. It at least acquaintances. I don't know what their definition of friends are. But you know, people they hung out with.

Steve Gregory

For more about this case and others head over to KFIAM640.com keyword "unsolved". More with Detective Kirste. But first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI AM 640. Time now for a news update.

SEGMENT 3

Steve Gregory

KFI AM 640, heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. To reach the Unsolved team through the iHeartRadio app, just press the red microphone and leave us a story, idea, tip or comment, or press #250 on your cell phone and say the key word "unsolved". I've been talking with detective Adam Kirste about a double murder in Lancaster. It's a boyfriend and girlfriend both in their early 20s. They were attending a birthday party on September 13, 2017. We were just kind of getting before the break to the point where we're talking about acquaintances and friends of these two young people. Were any of them helpful at all? I mean, how can someone see their own friends, even a close acquaintance, a mild acquaintance get gunned down on the street?

Detective Kirste

The short answer to your question is no. Nobody was helpful. At the end of the day, the answer is no. Which is why we're sitting here. As we talked about close acquaintances. Clotee, had an incredibly close relative at the party, who was outside at the time that this happened, and has provided a statement which said, I don't know what happened, I hurt my ankle. So I know for a fact that person that relative was outside at the time of the shooting. I suspect she hurt her ankle in her haste to get away from the

shooting, which I understand completely, but I don't understand that telling me about a your relative being shot on the street.

Steve Gregory

Okay. So based on that, in your experience, and you were talking about being in patrol also, when that many people refuse to tell you what happened, or what they saw, what does that tell you?

Detective Kirste

A lot of these folks live in this. Like I said, social media influenced world. And regular movies, TV shows, where witnesses get killed all the time. He was a witness. The snitches get stitches thing. And I've been doing homicide for six years. And I've never had a witness get killed. I've never had a witness get shot. I've had some witnesses be threatened, but nothing has ever come of it. A lot of people talk a big game. But that's where their head is that they're not in the you know, for lack of a better term, I don't think they've been raised properly to respect life to respect the rule of law. And understand that if you're a witness to a murder of all things, we might need to help the police solve this, specially excuse me, especially if this is a friend, acquaintance, or relative of yours.

Steve Gregory

What I was asking to what I'm getting at, also is that do you suppose that there was a feeling or a vibe with these people that this was gang related? And that's why they don't want to talk? Because if you have a relative of Clotee you know that there was right there a close relative, and she's totally tight lipped. Do you think it's more about their generation? Or do you think it's more about they all know who did this?

Detective Kirste

I think there's a confluence of factors and the two major ones being the ones that you just mentioned, I think they they know who did this and for whatever reason, maybe they believe that person to be a gang member and they fall into that snitches get stitches. I don't want my friends knowing that I'm a snitch trap of being unhelpful and I'm not helping anything out.

Steve Gregory

We're talking with detective Adam Kirste with the LA County Sheriff's Department's Homicide Bureau about the murders of Andrew Chavez and Clotee Reyes from 2017 in the town of Lancaster. One of the things I noticed on the video detective is again all the phones we talked about that how soon after you arrived on scene were you able to look at the video?

Detective Kirste

The video we probably didn't get back viewable to us for a day or two. Okay,

Steve Gregory

So when you looked at that video and you sat there just like I did seeing it for the first time and you know I was just absolutely dumbfounded at how many people witnessed it but watching that seeing that there were there are recordings of this. Do you think those recordings still exist? Because I mean, I saw easily five phone ones that were up in recording already, by the time they ran and got to the scene, presumably they recorded all the way up to and including the shooting?

Detective Kirste

Probably, so.

Steve Gregory

Do you think those recordings still exist?

Detective Kirste

I would be surprised if they did, because they know the outcome of, of the shooting, which is, you know, these two folks had been killed. And while they not to me, these folks at the scene may not be interested in helping, they're probably interested in helping themselves and not getting caught up. And they probably deleted their stuff. Once they realized what happened and got maybe whatever likes, they may have gotten off of whatever social media.

Steve Gregory

So were you able to get with your, and I'm sorry, if I'm not saying it correctly, but for lack of a better term, your cyber folks were able to get with your IT or cyber folks and start scouring social media to find out anything about this.

Detective Kirste

We did what we could with what we had at the time. And we weren't able to locate any of the posts. The only video that exists from this incident is the obscure surveillance video that I showed you earlier.

Steve Gregory

Out of all of that?

Detective Kirste

Yeah. Now I don't know maybe they didn't post it because they knew what happened in the you know, in the end, but they were definitely recording. Obviously, we saw it on the on the video, their phones were out at least and in the positions they were we can make the assumption they were recording. But we weren't ever able to find any posts. You know, we asked some of these folks that we interviewed about it. And no one could point us to an account that had it on there or anything of that nature.

Steve Gregory

That sounds absolutely just unbelievable

Detective Kirste

Stonewalled from the beginning.

Steve Gregory

And young kids. I mean, they're bad at keeping secrets. Yeah, most of them. So that still amazes me. You had that many people together and no one said something to somebody.

Detective Kirste

Correct.

Steve Gregory

So no idea about a license plate description of a car or nothing for these kids?

Detective Kirste

They might have told us it was a black car, which I was able to see. But small black cars doesn't really help me with anything.

Steve Gregory

If you have a tip about this case or any that we feature on the show, please press #250 on your cell phone and say the key word "unsolved", or press the red microphone on the iHeartRadio app more with Detective Kirste, but first this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on K FYI am 640 Time now for a news update.

SEGMENT 4

Steve Gregory

KFI AM 640, heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. If you're listening on the app, you can send us a tip about a case a story idea or a comment about the show, just tap the red microphone on the app and record your message.

We're talking with detective Adam Kirste of the LA County Sheriff's Department's Homicide Bureau about this double murder in Lancaster back in 2017. We got really deep into the social media aspect of this because we have seen the surveillance video and my first impression of it was unbelievable how many witnesses there are to this shooting this double shooting, and yet no one is able to come forward or is unwilling to come forward. What about the families of these two victims? Were you able to get anything from them? What was their family lives like?

Detective Kirste

Andrew Chavez has one of the nicest mothers that I've ever met. Nice person. And I feel terrible for her. Because she was very close with him, as most mothers are with her sons, but a lot of folks over the ensuing years would talk to his mother and tell them something, actually tell her something that Oh, Billy did it or Billy knows who did it. Or Johnny knows. Somebody who knows it.

Steve Gregory

People were actually telling the mother who did it?

Detective Kirste

Yes. And she would call me she would text me. And I say, Okay, give me the person's name. And tell them I'm gonna call them. No, they don't want to talk to you. Of all the people who came up to Andrews mom's name is Shauna. Of all the people who came up to Shauna, I was able to track down one of them. And when I was able to track him down myself to try to get the information firsthand from a person. I didn't, I don't know anything. That's what I was told by that person. They just stonewalled me. But they give Shauna the mother, the mother, like false hope she gets her hopes up. Every time somebody tells her, Hey, Billy knows who did it. Joey knows who did whatever the case may be. And Billy is never willing to tell me who did it or or whatever the case may be. I mean, the range of emotions that Shauna has gone through, outside of losing her son, since that day, the highs and lows that she's had to endure from

people not helping out, giving her half truths, half information, a quarter of information, you know, third hand, fourth hand information. It's, it's devastating. She's, she'll never be the same.

Steve Gregory

Then what about Clotee Reyes' family?

Detective Kirste

The level of participation from Clotee's family has not quite been the same as it has from Andrews family. And I think I've talked to them once or twice over the ensuing four and a half years. And that includes the relative that was there. Who told me nothing?

Steve Gregory

What does that tell you? When you've got families that typically are very helpful and cooperative like that, and then you got one family that doesn't want to talk about it.

Detective Kirste

Clotee's family, the day or two after the murder when we were at their residence talking to them. The family ended up arguing amongst themselves about another issue. Like, in front of myself and Fred Reynolds, my partner at the time, they're arguing about something completely unrelated to this murder. We had to like kind of like, you know, wrangle them back into trying to talk to us about this homicide. And you know, we never got any good information out of that. It was a bizarre, I mean, fresh looked at each other after we were done. We can't even get them to stay on task about Clotee's murder. In a you know, a 1520 minute interview it was it was bizarre. And I'm not saying they're not devastated by Clotee's murder, but their level of interest in solving this seems to be less than Shauna has.

Steve Gregory

And when's the last time you spoke with him?

Detective Kirste

I don't know.

Steve Gregory

That long?

Detective Kirste

Yeah, it's been at least a year.

Steve Gregory

So do you think people were going to their family saying they know who did it much like they did with Shauna?

Detective Kirste

Well, if they did, if people told anybody in Clotee's family that they knew who did it, they didn't come and tell me immediately. Shauna always has always did, and will continue. You know, Shauna, and I have, you know, talked about, you know, trying to do other things to generate interest, such as we're doing here, we did a press conference in 2018. Shauna was at that. But, to this day, we're still, we're still sitting here.

Steve Gregory

There is a \$30,000 reward for information on this case, is that still active?

Detective Kirste

Still active, I made sure that it was renewed through the board of supervisors who offer \$20,000. And the city of Lancaster \$10,000 still is valid. I confirm that with a friend of mine who works up there, and Lancaster, sheriff's station. And that's still a good reward, there's still \$30,000 on the table for information leading to the arrest and conviction of who killed these two kids.

Steve Gregory

You said something earlier, that kind of resonated with me, when you made mentioned that a lot of these young people perhaps aren't getting the proper upbringing, about with respect to, you know, doing the right thing coming forward being a good citizen. What is your message to parents out there who have kids this age in their early 20s, and are going to parties and you know, parents know that once those kids walk out the door, they really don't know what they're up to?

Detective Kirste

Or in this case, they don't know if they're coming back. And you know, I understand I have kids, myself, I have an adult and a juvenile. It's kind of hard to tell your 18-19-20 year old. Let me see your phone. Who you talking to? Because they don't want us the parents to know. But you got to do everything you can to stay up on top of your kids. But if you're worried about that at 20, when your kids are 20. Maybe it was because you didn't be strict enough with him when they were 7,8,9, 10,11,12 in my personal opinion, that stuff starts to wait, you know, a long time before they get to be 20. In their wayward.

Steve Gregory

Well. It's a very superficial generation. It is. Yeah, that's especially if I had not seen the video myself, showing that many people, young people with their phones up and in record mode running toward the scene. I would tell you were lying to me if I hadn't seen it myself. And then for them to all just be quiet, completely silent about this thing. Just seems mind boggling to me. It is. My parents would have smacked the crap out of me if I didn't come forward.

Detective Kirste

Absolutely. As I was afraid of my mom more than I was afraid of anybody else in the world. And, you know, hopefully, my kids feel the same way about me.

Steve Gregory

Well, listen, we'll do what we can and we appreciate your time. We really do detective, so we'll get more information online about this.

Detective Kirste

Yes, absolutely.

Steve Gregory

Okay, Detective, thank you for your help.

Detective Kirste

Thank you, sir.

Steve Gregory

You can see the surveillance video from this case on our website at KFIAM640.com key word "unsolved". Coming up, we head out to Riverside where we explore the mysterious Christmas night shooting of 2016. But first, this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI AM 640 Time now for a news update.

SEGMENT 5

Steve Gregory

KFI AM 640, heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. To learn more about this case and others on this program head over to our website at KFIAM640.com keyword "unsolved". Recently, surveillance video was released showing three men approach a car on the street in Riverside seconds later they opened fire the driver of the car hits reverse and slams into the car behind them. Three men run away in the car speeds off. This is the case of the mysterious Christmas night shooting of 2016.

We're joined now by Riverside Police Department officer Javier Cabrera, he is a spokesperson for the Riverside Police Department. First of all, sir, thank you for joining us appreciate it very much. Let's, let's start with an overview of the case. So tell us about the shooting that day.

Officer Cabrera

This actually occurred on Christmas day in 2016, at about 10 to 9pm. The victim, our name is Cassey Verrette. She was sitting with a male companion inside her vehicle on First Street between Main Street and Orange Street. In our city. They were sitting in another car when all of a sudden, three Hispanic males walking on the sidewalk without any notice, you know, also produce handguns and began firing into the vehicle. Cassey was able to start the car and didn't realize I guess he had in reverse, you know, sped hit the car behind her and then was able to drive away and then realize that she actually had been hit there was blood inside the vehicle. And she just she was able to drive herself and her companion to the hospital where they were treated for their injuries.

Steve Gregory

So what time of the day this?

Officer Cabrera

Shortly after 10 o'clock at night.

Steve Gregory

And so were you initially able to get information out? How were you able to find out? I mean, Cassey survived?

Officer Cabrera

Correct. Right.

Steve Gregory

So she was able to give you sort of an overview of what happened. And you said she didn't realize she had the car in reverse?

Officer Cabrera

Well, yeah, she said it will happen so quickly that when when the shooting started happening, she just wanted to get out of there. And she had said she'd even like cars rebirth. She just got on the gas and car went backwards. She hit a car that was behind her, and then just throw it and drive and then drove out of there.

Steve Gregory

You were talking about First St. between Main and orange. What kind of an area of town is that?

Officer Cabrera

It's a residential neighborhood.

It's just all homes around there. It's more townhomes. Yeah. There's some homes townhomes, different types of residences there.

Steve Gregory

And were there streetlights. I mean, was it illuminated?

Officer Cabrera

Yeah, there are there are street lights there.

Steve Gregory

I mean, obviously a shooting out of nowhere, like that a random shooting or wasn't random. We will get to that in a moment. But is it unusual for that kind of a shooting to happen in this kind of an area of town?

Officer Cabrera

Well, you know, at some some accident, you know, we consider random acts, but we are not right now. We really don't know if this was just a random act. We're trying to we're still trying to figure it out that night.

Steve Gregory

Tell us a little bit about Cassey. What what is she? What does she do? Who is she? And what's her background?

Officer Cabrera

You know, I really don't know much about Cassey. She's just a family girl.

Steve Gregory

And how old is she?

She was 22. At the time when she was almost I believe she's almost she's 28 now.

Officer Cabrera

She doesn't have any type of gang affiliations. The person that she was with in her car, we believe he might have had some gang tie so that, you know we're not 100% Sure, because we'd have anybody in custody to confirm anything. But we have strong suspicions that they were possibly targeting him. And unfortunately he was collateral damage.

Steve Gregory

Was he is your boyfriend or wasn't boyfriend.

Officer Cabrera

At the time. I believe he might have been our boyfriend. We're not 100% Sure.

Steve Gregory

What were you able to get from him? It sounds like he wasn't hit at all.

Officer Cabrera

He was grazed by a bullet. He had some like a small graze and he was treated at the hospital released on the same night.

Steve Gregory

What were you able to get from him?

Officer Cabrera

We interviewed him got some information description on suspects what he believed what to suspect descriptions. He was fairly cooperative towards the beginning of the investigation.

Steve Gregory

And what about his background? I mean, was there anything about his behavior or anything that led you to believe that he might be involved in a gang?

Officer Cabrera

After they conducted some follow up investigation? They can't confirm or deny but there are there are some type of gang ties that he was involved in.

Steve Gregory

Did that make you guys suspicious right off the bat?

Officer Cabrera

We're assuming that yeah, there are definitely most likely he was the target. Not Cassey.

Steve Gregory

So we're talking by The way with Officer Javier Cabrera with the Riverside Police Department about a shooting on Christmas 2016 happened in the evening hours in a residential area of Riverside. You're kind of going down this gang path, because you said there might be some affiliations of some sort with the boyfriend this, Cassey, that was hit the the gang affiliation. Let me back up, then. How many documented gangs do you have in Riverside?

Officer Cabrera

I'd have to look. Look that up. Oh, we have we have quite a few. We have some gangs. Yeah, I'm not going to net we do have some gangs in the city.

Steve Gregory

Active, I mean, to the point where it's a problem, or is this just do or do these gang related crimes crop up? And then they die down?

Officer Cabrera

Correct. Yeah, we don't comparable to like other cities like LA, we don't we don't have that big of a problem. But the problem still exists.

Steve Gregory

So, you know, and I know you weren't the investigator there that night. You're just you're sort of recounting the story for so I know that you may not know a lot of the nuances of it. But what were you able to get from him other than a suspect description? Was there any indication or suspicion based on his body language or anything that might have led you to believe that there was something more to this?

Officer Cabrera

That night? No, we didn't get anything from him.

Steve Gregory

So now you've got Cassey, who is.. You say she was in her 20s, early 20s. At the time was 22. And what about the man the young man? You know what?

Officer Cabrera

I really I don't have that information right now.

Steve Gregory

So fast forward to today. Then, have you had to now that you released this video, and we'll talk a little bit more about that coming up? But have you been able to talk to Cassey again? Or this boyfriend again? Have you been able to get anything new from them?

Officer Cabrera

We talked to Cassey and some family members of hers, but we have not been able to we didn't talk to the male companion.

Steve Gregory

Are they still together?

Officer Cabrera

No, no, not together. They don't even she doesn't even know where he's at. Or she hasn't got a hold him or anything.

Steve Gregory

Now, when you talk about this residential area, were there any other crimes? Or is that a what sort of your crime map though? What does your crime map look like for that part of town?

Officer Cabrera

There's been some crimes in that in that particular area, some gang activity in that area.

Steve Gregory

And when you say gang activity, can you be more specific?

Officer Cabrera

You know, different different types of crimes that we could possibly label as gang related.

Steve Gregory

What types of robberies, assaults, murder?

Officer Cabrera

Yeah. shootings, things like that. I mean, it's a big neighborhood. So it's just that particular street, maybe not that particular street, but the actual neighborhood, the surrounding areas that we've had shootings and different things that are possibly gang related.

Steve Gregory

What about the demographic for that area? What's the demographic?

Officer Cabrera

Usually that area is predominantly Hispanic and African American.

Steve Gregory

Okay. socio economic. I mean, it's just a wealthier area of town? Is it a not so wealthy area? I will say like middle class, middle class. Yeah. Okay. So typically, probably a very quiet neighborhood working class families for the most part. Yeah. So this is an unusual occurrence.

Yeah, I would say that.

Okay, more from Riverside PD. But first, this is unsolved with Steve Gregory on KF I am 640. Time now for a news update.

SEGMENT 6

Steve Gregory

KFI AM 640, heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory, and this is Unsolved. If you're listening on the app and have a tip, story, idea or comment, press the red microphone button and leave your message. I've been speaking with Javier Cabrera with the Riverside Police Department about the attempted murder of a man and woman on Christmas night of 2016. Before the break, we were talking a little bit about possible gang affiliation between the boyfriend of the woman that was driving,

and you said you're not really sure yet that there might be might not be it wasn't really determined. But now what kind of brings us together is you've released a video that shows Cassey throw the car into reverse, you know, rush backwards, shows what appears to be the guys opening fire. So this is a video that you just recently released in the month of April, right? Why now and not then?

Officer Cabrera

Okay, back then, when the actual incident occurred. We were actually working and investing doing several investigations, while when the incident occurred. One of the investigation was a homicide. And two are my water heater, or maybe even two of the suspects on this video that we obtained that night. There are physical characteristics and different things led us to believe that they might be the same people that might be related or so then we were kind of like, you know, it, we'd probably compromise the investigations that we were already deep into if we released that video. So that's when we decided not to release that video because of the ongoing investigations that were taking place.

Steve Gregory

Well, that's kind of interesting. So then I suppose that I'm and just correct me if I'm wrong there. I'm presuming that since there was no death included, or involved. Rather, in this shooting, we're talking about now that it didn't seem to be as big of a priority as solving the homicide prior?

Officer Cabrera

Well, it's still always a priority, you know, because this is somebody's somebody's daughter. It's somebody's family member that we still always a priority. But we still have to maintain the integrity of the other investigations. And we don't want to compromise that.

Steve Gregory

that's a tough spot to be in.

Officer Cabrera

It is.

Steve Gregory

Wow, I don't think I've heard of something like that where you've had to sort of stop one investigation in favor of another because the information might be the same in both cases.

Officer Cabrera

We continue to work diligently with what we had. It's just the actual video we couldn't release to the public.

Steve Gregory

I see. I see. Okay, that makes sense. So then, if you've released the video now some what? Six years later?

Officer Cabrera

Correct. almost six years later?

Steve Gregory

Yeah. So are we to take from that, either you solved the previous homicide, or you just hit a brick wall.

Officer Cabrera

You know what the previous ones? I'll be 100% honest, I'm not 100% sure if those were actually solved is a possibility. They were able to have to research by the actual report number and go back ...

Steve Gregory

But somebody gives the green light for the release of the video

Officer Cabrera

Correct. Meaning that it would no longer be compromised. Those old investigations. Yeah.

Steve Gregory

Interesting. Hope you can maybe maybe tell us about that. Because I still like to know how that came to be. That's so fascinating. So now explain because you obviously people are listening. Explain what's on the video. What did the video show you?

Officer Cabrera

The video shows, obviously, Casseyt is parked inside a white Malibu on the curb. When the first one Hispanic male appears he's like a heavysset Hispanic male. He appears walking kind of ahead kind of looks like he's like checking out to the whole situation. Checking out the scene. He's walking first. And as he walks past her car, the other two Hispanic males follow behind him. And as right as the other two Hispanic males reach the front of the car on the sides are passing along the side, that long the car on the sidewalk. That's when the heavy set Hispanic turns. Everybody pulls out the gun and just start opening fire on the vehicle.

Steve Gregory

And where did the rounds go, through the windows? Or where did it?

Officer Cabrera

The video shows him going through the front windshield. You go through the I believe the side door the car was hit multiple times we found a total of 10 shell casings at the scene within three weapons three. So it looks like they shot 10 times. Yeah.

Steve Gregory

Wow. It's miraculous nothing more happened to them.

Officer Cabrera

It was it truly was - specially with her because she she got hit three times. And it was just she fortunate that you know, she's still here with us.

Steve Gregory

And so what else did the video show? You did? Were you able to get enough of a description of the suspects.

Officer Cabrera

We have a description correct. And like I said earlier, the video was not released to the public, but it was released internally.

Steve Gregory

And so how did you use that internally? Then you were talking about the previous case. So So did you how did that work? Did you reach out to other investigators in the department say hey, watch this. Do you know these guys?

Officer Cabrera

Right, what we do is we'll release IT department wide for their sworn officers. And then a lot of times, it's a lot of our department has very proactive officers. They're constantly out there. And they contact a lot of people. And along these years, they'll be they'll know their contacts when the people that remember names, they remember they live. And then in this case, a couple of our former gang intelligence detectives saw the video and they like, you know, what they it resembled some people they might have encountered and encountered in the past. So they also we had now a couple of persons of interest. And where did that take you? Well, once we established, you know, the persons of interest, and we, we were able to put together photographic lineups, we actually put were were to put three photographic lineups at three separate times for Cassey to the victim, to look at the photographic lineup, right with one of the persons of interest in it. And she wasn't able to identify anybody on any of the three occasions. And the male companion participated in two of them. And he also was not able to identify anybody.

Steve Gregory

How soon after the incident happened, that you had the lineup? And the only reason I'm asking that officer is because I'm curious that is this a case of based on your experience of the trauma still? Or do you think they just didn't get a good look?

Officer Cabrera

You know, what, it could be both a little bit of both. Because sometimes, either, if two things can happen when something traumatic like this happens to somebody, they either have a spitting image of the person, they won't forget their face, or it'll be the complete opposite. They won't remember. So that's, that's the unfortunate part when they don't remember exactly. And this case, you know, there was some street lighting, but it was a little, you know, it could have been a little dark. It might have been hard to actually get a good look at their face. And it probably happened so quick. So she heard the gunshots. He's probably like trying to get out of there. You know? Yeah. Yeah. So it's one of those things.

Steve Gregory

So the persons of interest that you had? Is this a case of where you just let them go? And that's it, or do you put any surveillance on him?

Officer Cabrera

No, we did all that there was a person's interest led to search warrants. At the residences, parole searches, probation searches, surveillance, and unfortunately, it just it didn't go anywhere. Just Ted ends where these guys clean. For throw this particular case, yeah, we didn't find any history. Correct. For this particular week, boys are not able to put this shooting, you know them as to shooters. So what is it you want from the public? You not just see the video. Maybe you recognize somebody? Maybe you've heard something? Maybe you never know, somebody might have said something. You might talk about it. You heard somebody talk about it. You just never know. So we're hoping that maybe showing this video might shed some light, maybe some some new set of eyes will see something and they can, you know, we can get some new leads and reopen this case.

Steve Gregory

Well, of course, people are free to and should be encouraged to call the Riverside police department if you'd like though, you can also hit #250 on your cell phone and say the keyword "unsolved" and leave any information there. We'll make sure that investigators get that. So officer Cabrera, thank you so much for your time, much appreciated. And good luck. We hope that you can solve the case. Awesome. Thank you so much. Coming up. Our next case takes us to San Bernardino. It's a case of an abandoned baby. But first this is Unsolved with Steve Gregory on KFI AM 640 Time now for a news update.

SEGMENT 7

Steve Gregory

KFI AM 640, heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. To leave us a comment, hit #250 on your cell phone and say the key word "unsolved". Or press the red microphone button on the iHeartRadio app. Also, you can email the team unsolved@iheartmedia.com. That's unsolved@iheartmedia.com. San Bernardino County Sheriff's homicide case number 1914-07365 The Henry number 2014-87, the death of Baby Jane Doe number 45.

Detective Eric Ogaz has been assigned this cold case I sat with him at the department's Homicide Unit at their headquarters in the city of San Bernardino. Caution this case is graphic. Detective, welcome. Thank you for your time.

Detective Ogaz

Thank you.

Steve Gregory

So let's start a Baby Jane Doe. That's got to be one of the most disturbing things you hear. I mean, Baby Jane Doe that's, you know, anything dealing with children missing children, abused children, and in this particular case, Baby Jane Doe that ended up being found deceased?

Detective Ogaz

That's correct. Well, basically on October 1 of 2014, the workers at the advanced disposal which is a dump yard, up in the high desert Victorville area, they were sorting to the trash. When the trash truck arrives, they dump the trash in a separate area in the trash then goes up a conveyor belt, and the workers and employees separate the recyclables from the regular trash. While the workers were sorting through the trash and the conveyor belt, they came across a newborn child.

Steve Gregory

Wow. Have you spoken to anybody yet from that company? Or is that company still around?

Detective Ogaz

That company is still around and everyone there has already been spoken with.

Steve Gregory

I've heard about this. In other cases, I remember a case in Orange County where there were prostitutes being disposed of this way. This seems to be you know, could this be a nefarious act? Do you think or this was a situation where a mother had an unwanted pregnancy? What's your experience tell you on this?

Detective Ogaz

Well, that's what we're trying to figure out. That's what we need to find out. Regardless of what the situation was, we need to find out why the child was deceased on a conveyor belt in the dump, why someone placed their child into a trashcan. As far as the reasons or how or why that's something we have to come to the conclusion based upon our investigation.

Steve Gregory

So were you able to pinpoint the route that this particular baby maybe been a part of?

Detective Ogaz

Yes, based upon the where the trash was dumped at, at the facility, they were able to connect it with the actual truck that dumped in that area. And then the route of that truck was to through the Hesperia area.

Steve Gregory

Okay, so then, if you focus on Hesperia area, and then when did you get this case? Because I know sometimes you just you get these cases, and they've already been looked at by other detective. So wouldn't Alan, have you had this case?

Detective Ogaz

I got this case approximately six months ago.

Steve Gregory

Six months ago. Okay, so tell us a little bit about some of the progress you've made thus far. So you say his barrier is where the route originated? Was it a residential route or an industrial route?

Detective Ogaz

It was a residential route.

Steve Gregory

How do you focus in on that then?

Detective Ogaz

Well, basically going through the report investigators at the time, went out did door to door contact, referenced the area and the residences in which that track that trash truck picked up a trash hoping to identify or locate a female that looked like they, you know, just had a child for someone that said, Hey, we had a neighbor, we know she was pregnant, and now she's not pregnant, but we've never seen the child. Anything that would stir up a lead

Steve Gregory

Was the I don't know if this is a little too in the weeds. But can you tell whether or not it was a baby that was placed in one of those residential... The bins with the wheels on it? Or was it in another thing? Or is did they pick up? Only those bins are with her like a larger dumpster? Do you know any of that kind of detail?

Detective Ogaz

Oh, that's hard to tell. I mean, when the like I said it's all the trash is dumped in one pile and then goes up the conveyor belt. And as you can imagine, you know, the child's in the back of a trash truck that's constantly getting compacted and trash getting mixed in and around, you know around the child.

Steve Gregory

We're talking with detective Eric Ogaz with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department about a baby Jane Doe. So what else can you tell us about the young child ethnicity, what was the condition of the body?

Detective Ogaz

It was an Hispanic female child and the condition of the body the she was she was mutilated obviously by it appears to be believed to be from the trash compactor?

Steve Gregory

Not from another person?

Detective Ogaz

At this time we have no reason to believe that we believe her injuries were from the trash...

Steve Gregory

The compaction you know the compaction in the truck. Yeah, no, no, that's fine. So any idea the timeline? How long had the baby been deceased?

Detective Ogaz

That is something that there was autopsy obviously conducted by the San Bernardino Coroner's Office, and they came to a conclusion of a proximate time and that's something I kind of want to hold on myself right now. Sure. When I interview people and talk to people in the future

Steve Gregory

understandable the the thought that you're in homicide you've done cases before, what it what type of a person does something like this?

Detective Ogaz

I'm not a psychiatrist.

Steve Gregory

Yeah, but you're homicide detectives they have an innate sense they can kind of. So what type of person does this?

Detective Ogaz

Well there's different circumstances with this could happen. It could be a real facetious person just a cruel you know, does not want to have the child and discards a child in the trashcan. It could be a stillborn trying to hide either from parents or, or a loved one that they were pregnant and throw the child in the trash. I mean, there's different reasons why people do things that I don't understand. But nevertheless they do

Steve Gregory

To learn more about this case and others go to KFIAM640.com keyword "unsolved". And if you have a tip or story idea, just grab your cell phone and dial #250 and say the key word "unsolved". More with Detective Ogaz from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. But first this is Unsolved on KFI AM 640. Time now for a news update.

SEGMENT 8

Steve Gregory

KFI AM 640, heard everywhere live on the iHeartRadio app. I'm Steve Gregory and this is Unsolved. October 1, 2014, workers at a trash sorting facility in Victorville come across the most gruesome discovery possible a newborn on a conveyor belt. Detective Eric Ogaz with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's homicide unit says the baby was dumped, abandoned without a trace.

So detective, given the anonymity and the condition of the baby, it's, it's like finding the proverbial needle in a haystack. So where does one start when investigating something like this? And do you have any leads?

Detective Ogaz

Well, at the time, the child was on the conveyor belt, once the child was located by their workers, they immediately stopped the conveyor belt backed away and notified his supervisor. Deputies responded

and basically froze that crime scene. So nothing moved, it was touched around that child, investigators went out there and went to the trash that was near that child and look for envelopes, addresses your mail that your bills that come to your house. And they had several addresses, which also confirmed the route that truck took during that period of time. And then to make contact at those addresses looking for leads.

Steve Gregory

Then when you look back at that, you know, I think there's always an assumption that it's probably a young woman, maybe a high school student. And do you go to nearby high schools? How do you do that as well?

Detective Ogaz

They did. Investigators back then went back to the Hesperia Unified School District and interviewed numerous teenage females also check for their attendance records to see if anyone was absent for extended period of time. During that timeframe, in for obvious reasons. I mean, we're talking to all the the female students there, you're hoping to get leads, you're hoping that someone's gonna say, yes, my friend was pregnant. And, you know, this is why I think she did or she's not pregnant anymore. That some someone would know something, or you would obviously sit down and actually talked with that student. And just by based on on interviewing them, you could tell by talking with them, that they are scared or upset, and that they were preyed on by you talking with them and getting them to admit to that.

Steve Gregory

And the sad thing about that is obviously, nothing panned out. Sounds like nothing panned out from that no approach. But you know, it could also have been an older woman, it could have been a absolutely a different age woman who, you know, an unwanted pregnancy, or it could have been a relative of a or friend of someone that came over. And so yeah, that's, that's what I mean. It's just so what happens next, how, where do you go from here?

Detective Ogaz

Basically, from here, we have some things that we're trying to new technologies, I guess you would say in, in, in homicide, things that we could research that obviously I can't say at this time.

Steve Gregory

But you're right. When you say things, you're talking about forensics or

Detective Ogaz

Lab technology and forensics, okay, absolutely.

Steve Gregory

Okay, where does this take you?

Detective Ogaz

Um, hopefully, it's going to lead us to you know, if the child is mother has has been in prison before or incarcerated before to DNA, hopefully we could match that now to that person. As we know, you're arrested for a felony. Now, California, you're given a DNA swab that's held. And I'm hopefully the we're getting the DNA from the from the baby having to submitted and put into what's called our coded system, and hopefully it comes back to match some match.

Steve Gregory

You said earlier, you didn't want to talk about how long you thought the baby was deceased. But can you tell us about how old the baby might have been?

Detective Ogaz

I will say this, it was a newborn.

Steve Gregory

It was a newborn. Newborn. So define newborn and your...

Detective Ogaz

Umbilical cord still attached?

Steve Gregory

Okay. That's, yeah, that's Gosh. That's a tough one to swallow. You know, that's a tough one to really digest. And I can't imagine those workers on a conveyor belt. Yes. And I mean, they must have been a little bit in shock. I remember the conveyor belt workers. It was a recycling plant. You I believe was Anaheim a few years ago, and they all had to go through therapy and trauma because they didn't, you

know, they didn't realize they're used to seeing so much trash and stuff. And then when you see a human body, you don't it just your brain doesn't process it.

Detective Ogaz

No, absolutely. Especially when, you know, all all deaths are tragedies, especially the woman as a child. I mean, not only for the workers there, but even the deputy sheriffs that responded and investigators that handle that case, whenever you see a child that's newborn, mutilated, it makes you it makes your heart sink in, it's hard to see. And it's difficult to take in.

Steve Gregory

So what is it you want people to do? I mean, what do you need from people now?

Detective Ogaz

Well, you know, during that timeframe of October 1 2014, in the high desert area, when I say a high desert, meaning the Victorville to Hesperia, or Apple Valley, if you're aware of anyone at that time that was pregnant and towards basically full term, and then was no longer pregnant, and they had no excuse to what happened to that child, you know, contact us any leads that you guys can give us, we would greatly appreciate, you know, it's a goal of mine. You know, she's identified to us as Baby Jane Doe, 45. And it's a goal of mine to put a name to her. I mean, as of now she's laid to rest with the name of baby Joe 45. And I'd like to put a name to her.

Steve Gregory

I know, this is a goal of yours, and you're talking about new technology, are you hopeful you'll you'll be able to solve this case,

Detective Ogaz

I am hopeful and I'm going to continue to work it I'm not going to stop working it or different angles. And to hopefully I can make that conclusion and get her identified and find out why. Like I say there's several different reasons why, you know, not that they're good reasons. But to why something happened. I'd like to get her identified.

You might want to take this opportunity to remind people about safe surrender.

Oh, absolutely. You know, if you if you have a child, you could drop the child off at Mr. drop your child off, you can bring the child to like a local hospital. And they will take the child with no questions asked, fire departments, too.

Steve Gregory

Any law enforcement or first responder agency?

Detective Ogaz

Absolutely.

Steve Gregory

And the key is no questions asked. That is the key. It's a better alternative. Detective, thank you so much for your time. Appreciate it.

Detective Ogaz

Oh, you're welcome. Thank you and good luck.

Steve Gregory

And that's going to do it Unsolved with Steve Gregory is a production of the KFI News Department for iHeartMedia Los Angeles. Robin Bertolucci, program director, Chris Little, news director. The program is produced by Steve Gregory and Jacob Gonzalez. The digital producer is Andro Mammo. The field engineer is Tony Sorrentino, and the technical director is David Callaway. Coming up next it's Coast to coast but first, this is KF I am 640 Time now for a news update.