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San Francisco Police Department cracks a 43-year-old homicide case with suspect's arrest last Thursday 21-221

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Colorado man is arrested and booked for the murder of Marissa Rolf Harvey, who was only 15 years old when she was killed on a visit to San Francisco in March 1978

The San Francisco Police Department's homicide cold-case unit has cracked a 43-year-old homicide case with the arrest of Mark Stanley Personette in Colorado on Thursday. Personette is a suspect in the 1978 murder of Marissa Rolf Harvey.

On December 16, 2021, members of the San Francisco Police Department's homicide detail, San Francisco District Attorney's office, Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Jefferson County, Colo. Sheriff's Office conducted a joint operation in suburban Denver. The joint operation successfully executed a homicide warrant for Personette's arrest, and the 76-year-old Conifer, Colorado resident was soon after booked into Jefferson County Jail on one count of homicide (187 PC).

"For more than four decades, Marissa Harvey's family members have been relentless advocates to bring her killer to justice, and we hope this development in the case begins to bring a measure of healing and closure they've been too long denied," said Chief of Police Bill Scott. "To the families and friends of all victims awaiting justice for crimes committed in our city, we hope this case sends an unequivocal message that you are never forgotten by the San Francisco Police Department — and that our cold-case investigators continue their tireless work on your loved ones' behalf. We're grateful to our law enforcement partners for working with us on this case, and we're equally thankful to the many forensic scientists and other unsung heroes who helped to solve this case and to make SFPD's Crime Laboratory among a small handful nationwide to be recognized for employing our profession's most rigorous forensic standards."

In March 1978, 15-year-old Marissa Rolf Harvey traveled from New York to visit her family in San Francisco. She visited Golden Gate Park on March 27, 1978, but never returned. The following day, Marissa's body was located not far from Golden Gate Park, in Sutro Heights Park.

SFPD's homicide detail responded to the scene and led an investigation that employed the best available technology at the time and exhausted every lead. Despite their best efforts, the investigation went cold.

In October 2020, the San Francisco Police Department’s homicide cold-case unit re-opened the 1978 murder investigation of Marissa Harvey, utilizing advanced investigative methods employed by SFPD’s industry-leading Forensic Sciences Division.

SFPD asks U.S. law enforcement partners to review possible Personette-related cold cases

In the wake of this homicide suspect’s arrest, the San Francisco Police Department is requesting that law enforcement agencies within the United States thoroughly review their sexual-assault-related cold-case homicides involving young women to identify any other incidents in which Personette may be a suspect. Accompanying this news release is a photo of Marissa Rolf Harvey. In addition, several booking photos of Personette, which have been taken over several decades, are attached, including his latest booking photo from Jefferson County, Colorado. The release of booking photos for Mark Stanley Personette has been approved by San Francisco Chief of Police William Scott in accordance with [Department Notice 20-112](#), July 1, 2020, “Department Media Relations and Social Media — Booking Photos and Arrestee Information,” to seek the public’s assistance in ongoing investigations.

While an arrest has been made, this remains an open and ongoing investigation by SFPD’s homicide cold-case unit. Anyone with information or leads, in this case, is asked to call Sergeant Alan Levy, Star #4216, of the San Francisco Police Department’s homicide detail at [+1 \(415\) 553- 9245](tel:+14155539245) or by email at alan.levy@sfgov.org.

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