

## **Cold Case Murder Project**

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The solved cold case that I found on the FBI's website was entitled "30-Year-Old Murder Solved." The crime committed in this case was the murder of Carroll Bonnet in Nebraska in 1978. Carroll Bonnet was killed by way of brutal stabbing in his apartment. The police who arrived at the crime scene found finger and palm prints in the victim's bathroom that they believed belonged to the murderer. Additionally, they found that Bonnet's car was stolen. His car was then found in Illinois, but no new leads on the case were developed. As a result, this case was left in the cold for thirty years. In 2008, because of an inquiry on the cases, Laura Casey of the Omaha Police Department ran the fingerprints from the crime against the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS). Within five hours, the IAFIS created a list of possible assailants. After days of examining the prints, Casey determined that convict Jerry Watson had the same fingerprints. Because of this, the cold case was re-opened, and Doug Herout was assigned to investigate the murder. He found that Watson lived near where Bonnet's car was found, and that a flyer with the name "Jerry W." written on it. Herout then went to question Watson in Illinois and perform additional DNA tests. In 2011, Watson was proved guilty of the murder of Bonnet and sentenced to life imprisonment. This murder case helps to further demonstrate the importance and impact that large sets of data have on the decision making process.

For this cold case DNA sampling was used to compare the fingerprints from the crime scene to Jerry Watson's fingerprints. Additionally, DNA retrieved from beer cans and cigarettes from the crime scene matched the DNA of Watson. This allowed the police to tie Watson to the murder and prove that he committed the murder. The fingerprints, handprints, and DNA from the crime scene were collected by the police who originally investigated the murder in 1978. Additionally, DNA from Watson was collected by the police when he was convicted on unrelated charges.

And, then again when Herout questioned him. DNA samples from individuals who are not convicted of a crime should be removed from the system to keep their personal lives private.

## References:

Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2024, November). *30-Year-Old Murder Solved*. U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/30-year-old-murder-solved>