

## "The Dead Governor" by Stan Smith

Solve-it #289 - December 2005

Originally appeared Jan 1999

Sign up for our  
Monthly Mini-Mystery

SIGN UP  
FREE

[Privacy Info](#)

Previous Solve-it

[The Unlucky Landlord](#)

Can you solve the mystery?

### The Solution

Whom does Detective Hamilton suspect?

James Shepard

How other people responded:

21% said Samuel Mason

16% said Inez Olson

55% said James Shepard

8% said Not sure

### The Explanation

What clue points to this suspect?

The trash in Shepard's kitchen included a can of chili. If he had put the trash out the day before, he would have eaten the chili within the last day, which belies his motive of being laid up with stomach flu. He therefore lied either (incomprehensibly) about taking out the trash, about having no visitors, or (much more likely) about his stomach flu alibi. He would not give a false alibi in so serious a case unless he were himself the murderer.

Shepard decided to rid himself of an obstacle to his political career, and carried out the crime with a silenced pistol. Before leaving, he opened the French doors to confuse the police. The music in Mason's house was playing on a CD. Kelner had put Shepard's name on his calendar just as a reminder to call him.

**Come back next month  
for a new Solve-it mini-mystery**

[Back to the mystery](#)

[Discuss this mystery](#)

How did you solve it?

What did you miss?