

= Chandra Levy =

Chandra Ann Levy (April 14 , 1977 ? c . May 1 , 2001) was an American intern at the Federal Bureau of Prisons in Washington , D.C. , who disappeared in May 2001 . She was presumed murdered after her skeletal remains were found in Rock Creek Park in May 2002 . The case attracted attention from the American news media for years .

The police investigation revealed she was having an affair with Congressman Gary Condit , a married Democrat then serving his fifth term representing California 's 18th congressional district , and a senior member of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence . Condit was never named as a suspect by police and was eventually cleared of involvement . However , after a cloud of suspicion was raised by the intense media focus on the missing intern and the later revelation of the affair , he was not re-elected in 2002 , with the Levy issue cited as a contributory factor .

The circumstances surrounding Levy 's death were unclear for eight years . On March 3 , 2009 , D.C. authorities obtained a warrant to arrest Ingmar Guandique , an illegal immigrant from El Salvador . He had been convicted of assaulting two other women in Rock Creek Park around the time of Levy 's disappearance . Prosecutors alleged that Guandique had attacked and tied up Levy in a remote area of the park and left her to die of dehydration or exposure . In November 2010 Guandique was convicted of murdering Levy ; he was sentenced in February 2011 to 60 years in prison . In June 2015 , Guandique was granted a new trial and in March 2016 , the date was set to October 11 , 2016 .

= = Life and background = =

Levy was born in Cleveland , Ohio , to Robert and Susan Levy ; the family moved to Modesto , California , where she attended Grace M. Davis High School . Her parents are members of Congregation Beth Shalom , a Conservative Jewish synagogue . She attended San Francisco State University , where she earned a degree in journalism . After interning for the California Bureau of Secondary Education and working in the office of Los Angeles Mayor Richard Riordan , she began attending the University of Southern California to earn a master 's degree in public administration .

As part of her final semester of study , Levy moved to Washington , D.C. , to become a paid intern with the Federal Bureau of Prisons . In October 2000 she began her internship at the bureau 's headquarters , where she was assigned to the public affairs division . Her supervisor , bureau spokesperson Dan Dunne , was impressed with Levy 's work , especially her handling of media inquiries regarding the upcoming execution of Timothy McVeigh , convicted of bombing the Oklahoma City Federal Building . Levy 's internship was abruptly terminated in April 2001 because her academic eligibility was found to have expired in December 2000 . She had already completed her master 's degree requirements and was scheduled to return to California in May 2001 for graduation .

= = Murder case = =

= = = Disappearance and search = = =

Levy was last seen on May 1 , 2001 . The Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia was first alerted on May 6 , when Levy 's parents called from Modesto to report that they had not heard from their daughter in five days . Police called hospitals and visited Levy 's apartment in Dupont Circle that day , finding no indication of foul play . On May 7 , Levy 's father told the police that his daughter had been having an affair with a U.S. congressman , and said the next day that he believed the congressman to be U.S. Representative Gary Condit . Levy 's aunt also called the police and told them that Chandra had confided in her about the affair . Police obtained a warrant on May 10 to conduct a formal search of Levy 's apartment . Investigators found her credit cards , identification and mobile phone left behind in her purse , along with partially packed suitcases . The

answering machine was full , with messages left by her relatives and two from Condit . A police sergeant tried to examine Levy 's laptop computer and inadvertently corrupted the internet search data , as he was not a trained technician .

Computer experts took a month to reconstruct the data to determine that the laptop was used on the morning of May 1 to search for websites related to Amtrak , Baskin @-@ Robbins , Condit , Southwest Airlines , and a weather report from The Washington Post . The last search at 12 : 24 p.m. was for the location of the Pierce @-@ Klinge Mansion , a historic house in Rock Creek Park that is used as the park 's administrative office . On July 25 , 2001 , three D.C. police sergeants and 28 police cadets searched along Glover Road in the park but failed to find evidence related to Levy . Later , a second attempt found nothing .

= = = Relationship with Condit = = =

Controversy surrounding Levy 's disappearance drew the attention of the American news media . Levy 's parents and friends held numerous vigils and news conferences in an attempt to " bring Chandra home . " Condit , a married man who represented the congressional district in which the Levy family resided , at first denied that he had had an affair with her . Though police stated that Condit was not a suspect , Levy 's family said they felt Condit was being evasive and possibly hiding information about the matter .

Unidentified police sources alleged that Condit had admitted to an affair with Levy during an interview with law enforcement officers on July 7 , 2001 . Condit described her to police as a vegetarian who avoided drinking and smoking . He thought that Levy was going to return to Washington , DC after her graduation and was surprised to find out that the lease on her apartment had ended . Investigators searched Condit 's apartment on July 10 . They questioned flight attendant Anne Marie Smith , who claimed that Condit told her she did not need to speak to the Federal Bureau of Investigation about his personal life . Federal officials began investigating Condit for possible obstruction of justice as Smith was also involved in an affair with him . (She was not acquainted with Levy .) Upset by leaks to the media , Condit refused to submit to a polygraph test by the D.C. police ; his attorney asserted that Condit passed a test administered by a privately hired examiner on July 13 . He avoided answering direct questions during a televised interview on August 23 , with news anchor Connie Chung on the ABC News program Primetime Thursday . Intensive coverage continued until news of the September 11 attacks superseded the media 's coverage of the Levy case .

In a nationwide Fox News / Opinion Dynamics poll of 900 registered voters conducted in July 2001 , 44 percent of American respondents thought that Condit was involved in Levy 's disappearance and 27 percent felt that he should resign . Fifty @-@ one percent of the respondents believed that he was acting as if he were guilty ; 13 percent felt that he should run again for office . A poll sample taken from Condit 's congressional district held a more favorable view of Condit . On March 5 , 2002 , Condit lost the Democratic primary election for his Congressional seat to his former aide , then @-@ Assemblyman Dennis Cardoza , with the Levy controversy being cited as a contributing factor . He was subpoenaed to appear on April 1 , 2002 , before a District of Columbia grand jury investigating the disappearance . The date was kept a carefully guarded secret to avoid further leaks . Condit left Congress at the end of his term on January 3 , 2003 .

= = = Discovery of remains = = =

District of Columbia Police Chief Charles H. Ramsey announced on May 22 , 2002 , that skeletal remains matching Levy 's dental records had been discovered by a man walking his dog and looking for turtles in Rock Creek Park . Detectives found bones and personal items scattered , but not buried , in a forested area along a steep incline . A sports bra , sweat shirt , leggings and tennis shoes were among the evidence that was recovered . Though police had previously searched over half the 1 @, @ 754 @-@ acre main section of the park (2 @. @ 74 mi2 , 7 @. @ 10 km2) , the wooded slope where Levy 's remains were eventually found had not been searched as it was very remote :

about one mile (1 @. @ 6 km) north of the Pierce @- @ Klinge Mansion and about four miles (6 km) from Levy 's apartment .

After a preliminary autopsy was performed , District of Columbia police announced that there was sufficient evidence to open a homicide investigation . On May 28 , D.C. medical examiner Jonathan L. Arden officially declared Levy 's death a homicide , but said , " There 's less to work with here than I would like . It 's possible we will never know specifically how she died . " Arden found damage to her hyoid bone , suggesting possible strangulation , but did not deem it to be conclusive evidence of such a cause of death . On June 6 , after the police completed their search , private investigators hired by the Levys found her shin bone with some twisted wire about 25 yards (23 m) from the other remains . Police chief Ramsey said , " It is unacceptable that these items were not located . "

= = = Memorial services = = =

On May 28 , 2002 , the Levy family organized a memorial service at the Modesto Centre Plaza that drew over 1 @, @ 200 people , some from as far as Los Angeles . Speakers at the 90 @- @ minute ceremony included Levy 's brother , grandmother , great @- @ aunt and friends . In a eulogy delivered in Hebrew and English by Rabbi Paul Gordon , Levy was described as " a good person taken from us much too soon . " About a year later , on May 27 , 2003 , Levy 's remains were buried in Lakewood Memorial Park Cemetery at Hughson , California , near her home town of Modesto . Attended by about 40 of Levy 's friends and family members , the private ceremony concluded with the release of 12 white doves .

= = = Identification of the prime suspect = = =

In September 2001 , D.C. police and federal prosecutors were contacted by the lawyer of an informant , held in a D.C. jail , who claimed to have knowledge of Levy 's killer . The informant , whose identity was protected for his safety , said that Ingmar Guandique , a 20 @- @ year @- @ old illegal immigrant from El Salvador also being held in the jail , told him that Condit paid him \$ 25 @, @ 000 to kill Levy . Investigators ruled out the story about Condit , because Guandique had already admitted to assaulting two other women in the same park where Levy 's remains were found . Guandique failed to show up for work on the day of Levy 's disappearance . His former landlady recalled that his face appeared scratched and bruised at around that time . The investigators on the Levy case did not interview the other Rock Creek Park victims . Police chief Ramsey avoided calling Guandique a suspect and described him as a " person of interest " , telling reporters not to make " too big a deal " about him . Assistant chief Terrance W. Gainer said that if Guandique had been considered a suspect , D.C. police would have been after him " like flies on honey . "

Guandique denied attacking Levy . On November 28 , the FBI had the informant take a polygraph test , which he failed . A polygraph test on Guandique , administered on February 4 , 2002 , returned inconclusive results that were officially ruled " not deceptive " . Because neither the informant nor Guandique was fluent in English , D.C. chief detective Jack Barrett said that he would have preferred polygraph tests to have been administered by bilingual examiners , who were unavailable at the time . When Judge Noel Anketell Kramer was asked about Guandique 's potential connection to the Levy homicide , she responded , " This is such a satellite issue . To me it doesn 't have anything to do with this case . " Kramer sentenced Guandique to 10 years in prison for his attacks on two other women at Rock Creek Park . Guandique was sent to the U.S. Penitentiary , Big Sandy near Inez , Kentucky , and was later transferred to the U.S. Penitentiary at Victorville , California .

The Levy homicide remained listed as a " cold case " until 2006 , when Cathy L. Lanier succeeded Ramsey as D.C. police chief . Lanier replaced the lead detective on the case with three veteran investigators who had more homicide experience . In 2007 , the editors of the Washington Post assigned a new team of reporters to take a year to re @- @ examine the Levy case . The resulting series of articles , published during the summer of 2008 , focused on the past failure of the police to fully investigate Guandique 's connection to the attacks in Rock Creek Park . In September 2008 , investigators searched Guandique 's federal prison cell in California and found a photo of Levy that

he had saved from a magazine . Police interviewed acquaintances of Guandique and witnesses of the other Rock Creek Park incidents .

On March 3 , 2009 , the Superior Court of the District of Columbia issued an arrest warrant for Guandique . He was returned to the custody of the District of Columbia Department of Corrections on April 20 via the Federal Transfer Center in Oklahoma City . Two days later , Guandique was charged in D.C. with Levy 's murder . He was indicted by a grand jury on six counts : kidnapping , first @-@ degree murder committed during a kidnapping , attempted first @-@ degree sexual abuse , first @-@ degree murder committed during a sexual offense , attempted robbery , and first @-@ degree murder committed during a robbery . Guandique pleaded not guilty at his arraignment , where a trial date was initially set for January 27 , 2010 . His lawyers argued that Guandique 's federal prison cell was outside the jurisdiction of a court @-@ ordered search . After errors in processing contaminated some of the gathered evidence with DNA from employees of the prosecution , the start date of the trial at the Moultrie Courthouse was moved to October 4 , 2010 .

= = = Trial of Guandique = = =

On October 18 , 2010 , jury selection commenced in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia before Judge Gerald I. Fisher . Assistant U.S. Attorney Fernando Campoamor @-@ Sanchez presented the names of potential witnesses for the trial , including FBI agent Brad Garrett and the two women whom Guandique was convicted of assaulting . At the start of the trial , the prosecution 's case was expected to take around four weeks and the defense was expected to take one day . On October 25 and 26 , Halle Shilling and Christy Wiegand testified about being attacked by Guandique while independently jogging in Rock Creek Park . Wiegand recounted that Guandique grabbed her from behind , dragged her down a ravine and held a knife against her face .

On October 26 , 2010 , Levy 's then @-@ 64 @-@ year @-@ old father , Robert , took the stand and refuted statements about his past suspicions of Condit . Robert Levy testified that he told authorities during the early years of the investigation that his daughter Chandra would have been too cautious to jog in the woods alone , but said that he no longer believed this to be true . He said that he also told police that his daughter and Condit had a five @-@ year plan between them to get married . In retrospect , Robert Levy admitted : " I just said whatever came to mind just to point to him as the villain . " Levy added that he had been convinced that Condit was ? guilty until we learned about this character here ? , referring to Guandique . On November 1 , Condit testified at the trial and was asked on at least three occasions if he and Chandra Levy had been involved in a sexual relationship . He replied , " I am not going to respond to that question out of privacy for myself and Chandra . " FBI biologist Alan Giusti testified that semen found on underwear from Levy 's apartment contained sperm matching Condit 's DNA profile .

Prosecution witness Armando Morales , who shared a cell with Guandique at the U.S. Penitentiary in Kentucky , testified that Guandique was concerned about being transferred between prisons in 2006 because of inmate violence against suspected rapists . Morales stated that Guandique , a fellow member of the Mara Salvatrucha gang , confided to him that he had killed Levy while trying to rob her , but said that he did not rape her . The prosecution rested their case on November 10 , while dropping two out of the six charges against Guandique : sexual assault and murder associated with that assault . On November 15 , the defense rested its case without calling Guandique to the stand . Other prison witnesses called by the defense refuted Morales ' testimony . Jose Manuel Alaniz said that Guandique made no mention of rape or murder while sharing a cell with both Alaniz and Morales at the penitentiary in Kentucky . Alaniz admitted under cross @-@ examination that he " didn 't want to be too nosy " and was often asleep at the prison while recovering from a gunshot wound . The prosecution dropped two more charges because the statute of limitations had passed : kidnapping and attempted robbery . During closing arguments for the remaining charges of first @-@ degree murder committed during a kidnapping and during a robbery , prosecutor Amanda Haines contended that Guandique bound and gagged Levy after attacking her , leaving her to die of dehydration or exposure in the park . Defense attorney Santha Sonenberg countered with the lack of any DNA evidence connecting Guandique to the crime scene . Calling the prosecution 's case "

fiction " , Sonenberg suggested that Levy had been murdered elsewhere , with her dead body being dumped in the park .

The jury began deliberations on November 17 , 2010 . Scheduled proceedings of the case met delays because of increased security at the courthouse . After two days of deliberations , all but one juror had voted to convict Guandique . On the third day , the jury asked Judge Gerald Fisher to clarify the definition of assault . Fisher responded that any physical injury could legally be considered an assault , regardless of how small . On November 22 , 2010 , the jury found Guandique guilty of both remaining counts of first @-@ degree murder . After the trial , a juror said the testimony of Morales was decisive in reaching the verdict . The conviction was called a " miracle " for having been reached with only circumstantial evidence . Gladys Weatherspoon , who had previously represented Guandique in the 2001 assault cases , stated that she was troubled by the jury 's verdict : " I just think they were going to convict anyway They felt bad for that woman , the mom . She 's sitting in there every day . " At a post @-@ trial press conference , Susan Levy said , " There 's always going to be a feeling of sadness . I can surely tell you , it ain 't closure . " Since the conclusion of the trial , Susan Levy has acted to keep photographic evidence of her daughter 's remains sealed from the news media .

= = = = Sentencing and appeals = = = =

On February 1 , 2011 , Guandique 's attorneys requested a new trial on the grounds that the verdict had been improperly attained . The 17 @-@ page filing claimed that the prosecutors had appealed to the emotions of the jury , using " references to facts not in evidence . " The motion also alleged that one juror , who did not take notes , had breached the judge 's instructions not to be " influenced by another juror 's notes . " The prosecution opposed a retrial , arguing that the issue regarding the notes was no more than a technicality that did not have a significant effect on the verdict .

Guandique faced a minimum penalty of 30 years to a maximum of life imprisonment without the possibility of parole . In seeking the maximum possible sentence , the prosecutors stated that Guandique " is unable to control himself and thus , will always remain a danger to women . " A memo submitted by the prosecution in February 2011 cited Guandique 's harassment of female staff in prison , including soliciting a nurse and masturbating in front of guards . Assistant U.S. Attorney Fernando Campoamor @-@ Sanchez disclosed that he had traveled to El Salvador with a detective to investigate allegations that Guandique had fled his native country because of suspected attacks against local women dating back to 1999 . During the sentencing hearing on February 11 , Guandique said to Levy 's family , " I am sorry for what happened to your daughter , " and insisted on his innocence . Before Judge Gerald Fisher reminded Susan Levy to address the court instead of the defendant , Levy said to him , " Did you really take her life ? Look me in my eyes and tell me . " Fisher denied Guandique 's motion for retrial and handed down a sentence of 60 years in prison , stating that Guandique " will be a danger for some time . He 's a sexual predator . "

Guandique repeated his innocence during his sentencing . He has maintained his innocence in the years since the trial .

On February 25 , 2011 , public defender James Klein filed an appeal of Guandique 's conviction with the District of Columbia Court of Appeals . According to the court 's annual report , appeals take an average of 588 days to reach resolution . Guandique will not be eligible for parole until he is at least 80 years old . In December 2012 and January 2013 , a set of secret hearings was made known to the public , but the subject of the meetings was sealed by the judge . After a third hearing in February , the judge in the case unsealed transcripts from the previous hearings which revealed that Klein was seeking a new trial based on new evidence in the case . A fourth hearing was scheduled for April 2013 .

= = = = New trial ordered = = = =

On May 22 , 2015 , prosecutors dropped their opposition to a new trial . On June 3 , 2015 , the defense said a new witness , a neighbor , called 911 at 4 : 37 a.m. on the last day Levy was alive to

report hearing a ' blood @-@ curdling scream ' , possibly coming from Levy 's apartment . On June 4 , 2015 , Judge Gerald Fisher granted a motion for the new trial . Guandique 's attorneys suggested that Morales fabricated Guandique 's confession to gain favor with law enforcement . On June 12 , 2015 , Judge Robert E. Morin set the retrial of Guandique for March 1 , 2016 but in March , the trial date was moved to October 11 , 2016 .

In November 2015 , prosecutors told a D.C. Superior Court judge that their office failed to turn over documents to the defense before the defendant 's first trial . In December 2015 , defense attorneys argued in new court filings that the charges should be dismissed because of prosecutorial errors .

= = = Media coverage = = =

The disappearance of Chandra Levy became a national topic of the news media in the summer of 2001 , with 63 percent of Americans closely following the case . The media swamped Levy 's parents from the moment they decided to go to Washington , D.C. in search of their daughter . According to Condit , there were about a hundred reporters camped out in front of his apartment during the morning of September 11 , 2001 , but they all left after news spread about the terrorist attacks . Media critics and cable news executives later cited the Levy case , as well as the concurrent sensationalist coverage of a string of shark attacks , as a reflection of the manner of news coverage in the United States before the September 11 attacks had taken priority .

In 2002 , D.C. newspaper Roll Call first reported the possible connection of Ingmar Guandique to the case , with little effect on the news media 's focus on Condit . Conservative commentator Michelle Malkin noted the lack of headlines that an illegal immigrant had been questioned in the Levy case . She said that in her review of 115 news items from the Lexis @-@ Nexis database , not a single mention of Guandique referred to his status as a " criminal illegal alien . " She called the " glaring omission " of his status " a newsworthy act of negligence . " She wrote that only the very conservative Human Events reported that the Immigration and Naturalization Service had approved his working legally while applying for temporary protected status . That application was ultimately denied , but not before he had assaulted two other women at Rock Creek Park .

In 2005 , investigative journalist Dominick Dunne said on Larry King Live that he believed Gary Condit knew more information about the Levy case than he had been disclosing . Condit filed two lawsuits against Dunne , forcing him into an undisclosed financial settlement on one of them . In 2008 , U.S. District Judge Peter Leisure dismissed the other suit that alleged slander , because " The context in which Dunne 's statements were made demonstrates that they were part of a discussion about ' speculation ' in the media and inaccurate media coverage . "

During the summer of 2008 , The Washington Post ran a 13 @-@ part series billed , in part , as " a tale of the tabloid and mainstream press pack journalism that helped derail the investigation . " The two investigative reporters behind the Post series , Scott Higham and Sari Horwitz , wrote a book detailing their investigation . The book , Finding Chandra , was published in May 2010 . Commentators , including The Washington Post Metro reporter Robert Pierre , wrote that emphasis on a glamorous white murder victim , when " about 200 people are killed in this city every year , most of them black and male , " was " absolutely absurd and dare I say , racist , at its core . "

The media were criticized for their " rush to judgment " in suggesting , sometimes blatantly , that Condit was guilty of the murder , especially in the early days of the investigation . Some of the reporters camped in front of Condit 's Washington apartment house were quoted as saying that they would remain there " until he resigns . " When Ingmar Guandique was convicted in November 2010 of murdering Levy , Condit 's lawyer Bert Fields remarked , " It 's a complete vindication but that comes a little late . Who gives him his career back ? "

= = Impact = =

Levy 's death has had a lasting impact , due in part to the efforts of her family and friends . Levy 's disappearance came after a number of other high @-@ profile cases that led to the creation of resources for missing young adults . For example , Levy 's parents quickly turned for help to the

Carole Sund / Carrington Memorial Reward Foundation , a nonprofit group that was established in Modesto after three female hikers disappeared from a 1999 trip to Yosemite National Park and were later found slain . That foundation , which offered the Levys staff support and contributed towards a cash reward for information about Chandra 's disappearance , was merged into the Laci & Conner Search and Rescue Fund in 2009 ; Susan Levy had previously participated in the efforts to find Laci Peterson , another missing woman from Modesto . In 1997 , when Kristen Modafferi mysteriously disappeared from the San Francisco Bay Area just three weeks after her 18th birthday , her parents turned to their congresswoman for help they were ineligible to receive from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children . As a result , Congress enacted " Kristen 's Law " in October 2000 , which established the National Center for Missing Adults (NCMA) within the U.S. Department of Justice to coordinate such missing person cases . By the time Levy disappeared , institutions were in place to provide her family with support and to assist in a nationwide search to locate her . Although the Levy family moved quickly to mobilize all such available resources , including offering a cash reward for information , hiring their own investigators , and seeking media attention , those efforts to locate Chandra Levy or find her killer were overshadowed by the speculation surrounding her possible relationship with Condit . Susan Levy later joined with Donna Raley , the mother of another young woman who disappeared in 1999 from Modesto , to form " Wings of Protection " , a support group for people with missing loved ones . The Mary Ann Liebert company , publishers of the Journal of Women 's Health and Gender @-@ Based Medicine , presented their annual Criterion Award in May 2002 to Susan Levy for her work with " Wings of Protection . "

Newsweek magazine stated that the media may have become more skeptical of " herd mentality " and open to alternative suspects after the Levy case . The D.C. police claimed that they would have discovered Levy 's body earlier , if not for a miscommunication regarding the scope of the search . Commanders had ordered a search within 100 yards (91 m) of each road and trail in Rock Creek Park , but searches were focused within 100 yards of roads only , resulting in the body remaining undiscovered for a longer period of time . Both the Chief of Detectives , Jack Barrett , and the Chief of Police , Charles H. Ramsey , have since left the force in D.C. Ramsey became head of the Philadelphia Police Department ; Barrett , who became an analyst for an intelligence support firm in Arlington , Virginia , stated in hindsight that the media had imposed " enormous amounts of pressure " on the D.C. police . Morales , who is serving time for conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine and crack cocaine , is scheduled to be released on August 5 , 2016 . Condit retired from politics and moved with his wife to Phoenix , Arizona , to manage real estate and open two Baskin @-@ Robbins franchises , which have since closed .