



Police Take Cat Killings Seriously

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Troy police detectives have been assigned to find out who killed a cat that appears to have been tortured and possibly shot in the head with a nail gun. Police began investigating after finding the cat in a tarp at the top of the Congress Street Bridge Wednesday morning. The case has received the attention of the city's police chief and may be connected to another cat killing in Troy about a month ago.

"These are brutal and savage acts," said police spokesman Sgt. David Dean, "and we need to make sure that this sick person that is somewhere in our society, whether it's Troy or Watervliet or some neighboring community, we need to bring them in make them answer for these crimes."

Psychologist Rudy Nydegger says police are smart to go after whoever committed these crimes because animal cruelty can sometimes lead to more serious crimes against people.

"At the very minimum, here's somebody who sees nothing wrong with doing some thing illegal," says Nydegger, "who sees nothing wrong with killing a living thing, who sees nothing wrong with killing a living thing that may be someone's pet and may mean something to them. We put enough of those things together and it's clearly someone who has a lot of disregard for things that most of the rest of us feel are important."

Take the case of Chester Williamson, convicted of setting fire to a cat named Buster at age sixteen and sentenced to three years probation. Ten years later, in September of 2007, Williamson was charged with sexually abusing a 12-year old girl.

Police and SPCA workers may be nipping serious crimes in the bud.

"We have education programs and we try to get out to kids in summer camps and in schools when they're in session to educate kids about how to treat animals," said Captain Jeremy Noble of the Schenectady County SPCA.

Nydegger says police may be looking for a young man - the most likely profile of someone who would be cruel to an animal