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LEAD LIEUTENANT IN BTK CASE TO SPEAK TO K-STATE CLASS, BE AVAILABLE FOR MEDIA INTERVIEWS

MANHATTAN — Wichita police Lt. Kenneth Landwehr will speak to the intersession class, "The Social Construction of Serial Murder," Thursday, Jan. 4, 2007, at Kansas State University.

Landwehr headed the task force that eventually identified and captured the serial killer known as BTK, who killed 10 people in the Wichita area between 1974 and 1991. He has investigated more than 450 homicides and also aided in the capture and conviction of another Kansas serial killer, Richard Grissom, who killed five women in the Wichita and Kansas City areas during the 1980s.

Media will be able to sit in on the first 45 minutes of the class, which begins at 1 p.m. and will be a presentation of BTK case details. Photographs can be taken of Landwehr and Detective Tim Relph, as well as the students and professor. Media will not be permitted to photograph crime scene photos without explicit permission from Landwehr. The class, in 109 Justin Hall, is not open to the general public; only enrolled students and media will be able to attend. Landwehr also will be available for interviews before the class. Interested media should contact L. Susan Williams at 785-532-4971 or lswilli@k-state.edu for details.

Williams, associate professor of sociology and criminology at K-State, has taught "The Social Construction of Serial Murder" for four years as both a winter intersession class and a spring online class. Guest experts, including FBI agents, authors and a survivor of a serial murder attack, are a frequent part of the course, which addresses the social roots of the phenomenon referred to as serial homicide.

Williams said although multiple killings have existed for centuries, the term as a particular category of crime has emerged only in the last 20 years. The class also examines the life-course development of serial killers, as well as responses to the crimes, including the role of the media.

"People are always surprised," Williams said. "Students are excited about the course content, but they often say they learn as much about themselves as about the killers. They don't expect that — but that is often a lesson of sociology."