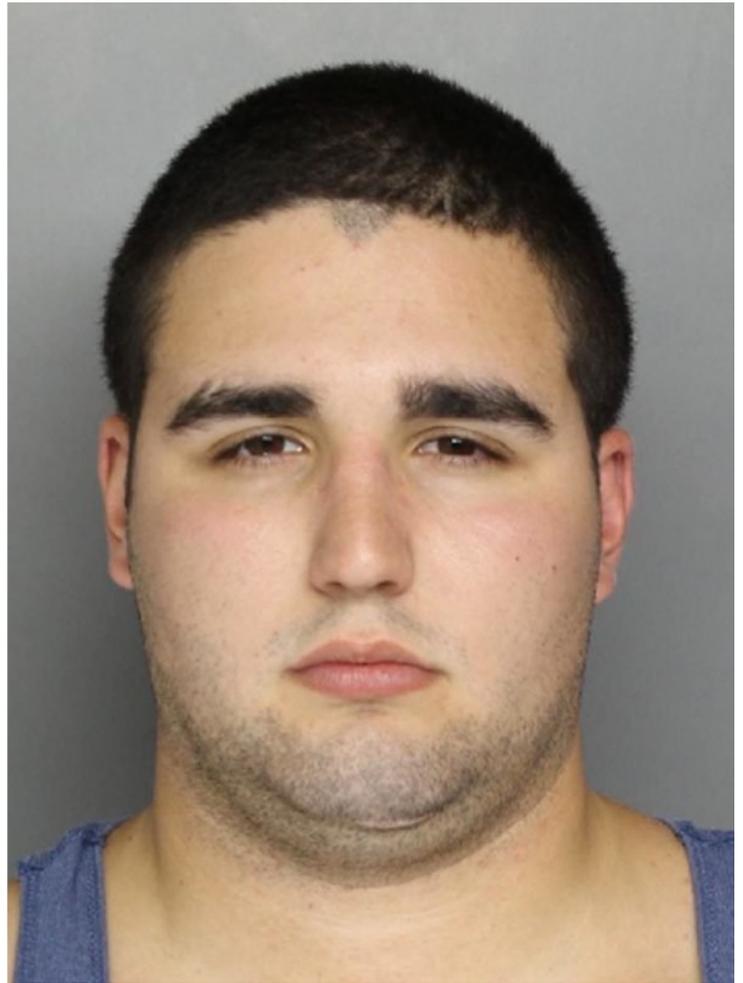
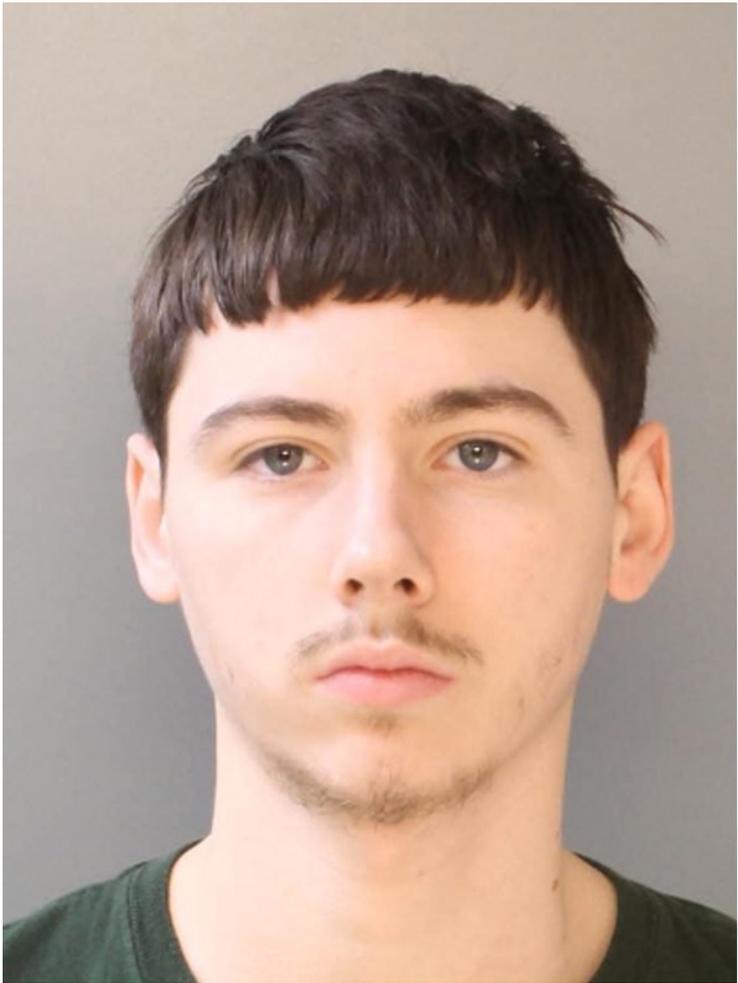


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# Sean Kratz's journey from dishwasher, to thief, to murder

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**BUCKS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**

Sean Kratz, left, and Cosmo DiNardo, right, are charged in the Bucks County slayings. The two men are cousins, authorities say.

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by **Jason Nark, William Bender & Colt Shaw**, STAFF WRITERS

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Born on Valentine's Day, Sean Kratz was accused of stealing just about everything but hearts in the last couple of years.

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Jewelry, leaf blowers, and tools were among Kratz's targets. His former girlfriend's mother thinks he stole her beloved Yorkie, Bella, from her home on Benner Street in the city's Crescentville section.

"I still believe he did it," Sheila Fontaine said. "I loved that dog."

On Friday, the Bucks County District Attorney's Office accused Kratz, 20, of helping his cousin Cosmo DiNardo, also 20, steal something even more unimaginable: the lives of four young men whose disappearance riveted the area in recent days.

Residents of Benner Street, where Kratz often spent time visiting his former girlfriend, recalled him as a lanky kid who often wore a black hoodie. They figured the worst — and were relieved when he stopped coming around.

“He literally tormented this block,” said Amanda Stankiewicz, who lives two doors from Kratz’s former girlfriend.

Stankiewicz said residents had reported multiple break-ins. Last fall, Stankiewicz said, she caught Kratz trying to sell a dirt bike in the cubbyhole behind her home. A neighbor had alerted her because she thought he was trying to steal Stankiewicz’s air conditioner.

Police were in the neighborhood Thursday night looking for Kratz, she said. He was found about a mile away on Magee Avenue.

That was hours after DiNardo had confessed to killing the four men on his family’s Solebury Township farm, after luring them with promises to sell them marijuana.

According to prosecutors, Kratz was complicit in the July 7 killings of Dean A. Finocchiaro, Thomas C. Meo and Mark R. Sturgis, and helped DiNardo bury their bodies in a 12-foot grave last week. A fourth, Jimi T. Patrick, had already been buried on the property.

Kratz allegedly used a Smith & Wesson .357 to shoot Finocchiaro, 19, of Middletown Township, in the head inside a barn on the DiNardo property.

His prior run-ins with the law didn’t hint at that level of violence. He has lived in the Magee Avenue house “all my life,” he told a district judge Friday, with his mother, sister, younger brother, a nephew, and his stepfather. Where he went to school was unclear, but Kratz had been a dishwasher at the Philadelphia Protestant Home, a retirement community on Tabor Avenue in Fox Chase, between July 2014 and February 2016, a spokesman said.

In the months that followed, he started building a criminal record.

In June 2016, surveillance video caught him and an accomplice breaking into a shed on a property on the 6400 block of Dorcas Street and walking away with a leaf blower, weed whacker, and a box containing tools, all valued at \$1,000, according to the probable-cause

affidavit filed for his arrest. The homeowner later posted the video to his Facebook page, where a witness — whose neighbor was dating Kratz at the time — identified him in the footage, the document states.

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Kratz was arrested on June 20 that year and released on bail. Within months he was back in police custody, charged in December 2016 with retail theft and related charges in Montgomery County. The case has since been marked closed.

Detectives arrested him in February this year on charges of breaking into the home of the witness in the previous case and stealing several items of jewelry. Investigators later determined that Kratz had sold the pieces for \$345 at a resale shop on Cottman Avenue.

On Thursday, his lawyer was in Philadelphia court to request a continuance for further investigation in one of the open cases. Kratz was present and signed a subpoena. His next court date was scheduled for Aug. 4.

He is being held without bail. At his arraignment Friday, District Judge Maggie Snow told Kratz that he would be held in a county prison outside of Bucks County, separated from his cousin: "We need to know where you are and it's for your safety," she said.

Back in Northeast Philadelphia, Fontaine said she was shocked when she'd heard what Kratz was accused of. She described him as quiet and respectful when he was around her.

"However, as time went on, I was just kind of suspicious of him," Fontaine said. "Things started coming up missing — laptops, Kindles, iPads."

Fontaine said she often drove Kratz to his home but wasn't sure who he lived with. A woman who owned the home declined to comment Friday; other members of the family didn't return requests for comment. Facebook profiles for that family show Kratz smiling in Christmas photos. One shows him standing in a wedding party last year.

Once Kratz disappeared from Benner Street; the rumor was that he'd been shot numerous times. Philadelphia police declined to comment but on Friday, he told the judge he had been shot three months ago and "couldn't bear weight" on his left leg.

"I thought he was dead," Stankiewicz said. "I guess he wasn't. Everyone knew he was bad news. It just sucks this is what it had to come to."

*Staff writers Jeremy Roebuck, Julie Shaw, and Joseph A. Slobodzian contributed to this article.*

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