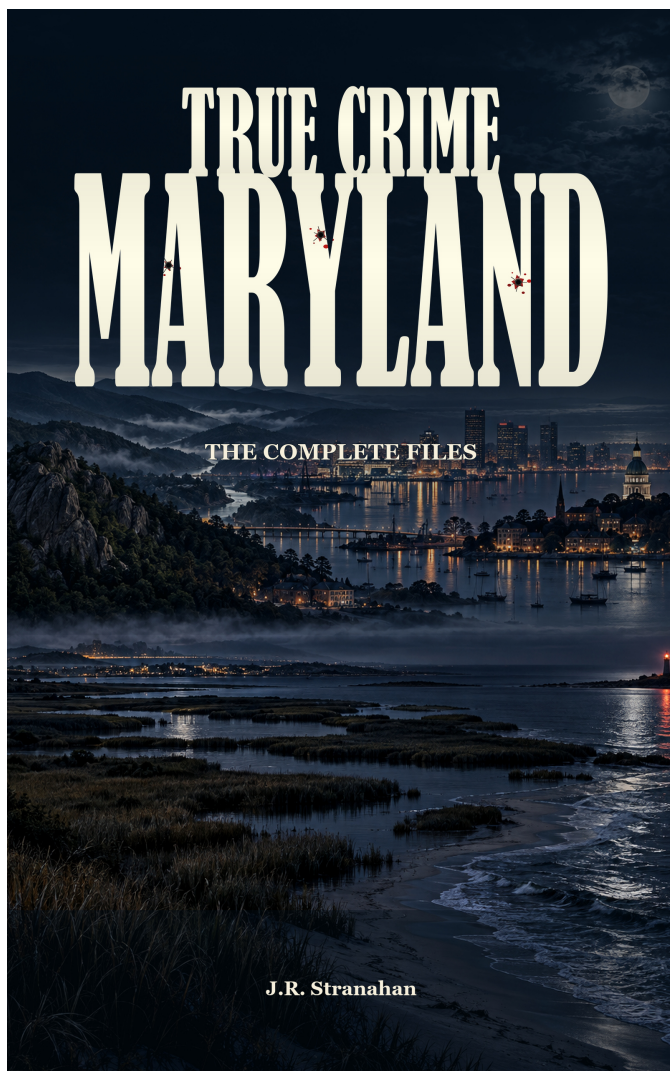


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Sister Catherine Cesnik and Joyce Malecki

The first record

Catherine Cesnik disappeared on November 7, 1969, after leaving her apartment in the Baltimore area.

Placed in sequence, this detail fixes one part of the chronology without filling the spaces around it. A documented time, place, or official act can narrow a case. It cannot supply an unwitnessed conversation or an unrecorded motive. That distinction is especially important in Sister Catherine Cesnik and Joyce Malecki, where later retellings can make a settled fact appear to explain more than the source says.

The point is modest but essential. Here, the documented point is that Catherine Cesnik disappeared on November 7, 1969, after leaving her apartment in the Baltimore area. Anything beyond that proposition must be identified as inference, allegation, or an unanswered question rather than written as fact.

Her body was found on January 3, 1970, in a remote area of Lansdowne in Baltimore County.

The source matters as much as the statement. A police summary records the agency's position; a charging paper states an accusation; a verdict establishes guilt under the law; an appellate opinion explains what a reviewing court decided. Reading those documents as if they were interchangeable would flatten the very process that produced the case's adjudicated status.

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Cesnik had taught at Archbishop Keough High School and was a member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame.

For the people who knew the victim, this was never only an evidence problem. The public file is built around what investigators could preserve and what lawyers could prove. It rarely records an ordinary week, a familiar voice, or the full network of relationships interrupted by the crime. Those omissions should remain omissions rather than invitations to invent.

The record becomes clearer when the categories stay separate. Here, the documented point is that cesnik had taught at Archbishop Keough High School and was a member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Anything beyond that proposition must be identified as inference, allegation, or an unanswered question rather than written as fact.

The known sequence

Former students later alleged abuse by school chaplain Joseph Maskell, an allegation that renewed public attention to the homicide.

Geography shaped the work. Baltimore County determined which officers responded, which court received the charges, and which local records survived. When a lead crossed a county or state line, authority had to cross with it through requests, warrants, laboratory work, and witness coordination. The map is therefore part of the investigation rather than scenery.

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The next stage did not begin with a blank page. Here, the documented point is that baltimore County Police exhumed Maskell's body in 2017 to compare his DNA with evidence from the investigation. Anything beyond that proposition must be identified as inference, allegation, or an unanswered question rather than written as fact.

What investigators had

Police reported that the comparison did not match the relevant crime-scene profile.

The legal outcome must be stated with its date and scope. A reversed conviction is not an acquittal unless a court says so. A reduced sentence does not erase a verdict. An arrest does not establish guilt. A guilty plea establishes what the defendant admitted under the agreement. These distinctions keep the narrative accurate when a case continues to change.

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A case file naturally centers the accused because motions, rulings, and sentences carry that person's name. The victim can disappear inside that structure. Restoring balance does not require imagined biography. It requires keeping the loss visible whenever the procedure threatens to become the whole story.

This is where procedure becomes part of the story. Here, the documented point is that federal investigators exhumed Malecki's body in 2023 as part of continuing forensic work. Anything beyond that proposition must be identified as inference, allegation, or an unanswered question rather than written as fact.

What the evidence could show

The geographic and social links between the cases have prompted scrutiny, but no court has established that the same person committed both crimes.

The final status is not an emotional conclusion. It is a statement about the present record: Both killings remain unsolved. Police have continued to test evidence and seek information.. That wording leaves room for lawful future change while refusing to manufacture certainty the existing evidence has not earned.

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The surviving documents preserve both information and absence. Here, the documented point is that her body was found on January 3, 1970, in a remote area of Lansdowne in Baltimore County. Anything beyond that proposition must be identified as inference, allegation, or an unanswered question rather than written as fact.

What the evidence could not show

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The route to court

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The judgment and its limits

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Later review

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The people inside the file

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Sources for this file

[1.1] Baltimore County Police case timeline. <https://www.baltimorecountymd.gov/files/Documents/Police/2017pdfs/sistercesnikreleasetimeline.pdf> [1.2] Associated Press report on the Malecki exhumation. <https://apnews.com/article/b7f20c46aac49d30d74aa8763db7fd6d>

Status at manuscript lock: Both killings remain unsolved. Police have continued to test evidence and seek information.

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