



NEUBERGER & PARTNERS LLP

Toronto Criminal Defence Lawyers
Domestic Assault • Drugs • Sexual Assault • Impaired Driving

Find A Lawyer/Legal Supplier

Join AdvocateDaily.com

HICKS ADAMS LLP
CRIMINAL TRIALS & APPEALS

HICKS ADAMS LLP
Criminal Trial and Appeal Lawyers

AdvocateDaily.com
Canada's Legal Wire Service

HICKS ADAMS LLP
CRIMINAL TRIALS & APPEALS

BE YOUR FAMILY'S SUPERHERO!
Protect their lifestyle with a customized Life Insurance plan.

LAWYERS FINANCIAL

Criminal Law

Why do some murders get more attention?

By Peter Small, AdvocateDaily.com Contributor



The intense media and police focus on the suspicious deaths of billionaire couple Barry and Honey Sherman contrasts sharply with the fleeting attention given to those that occur in marginalized communities, says Toronto criminal lawyer [Jordana Goldlist](#).

"I think that if the public was equally concerned with the lives of some of the more unfortunate individuals, then perhaps the police would dedicate their resources accordingly," Goldlist tells [AdvocateDaily.com](#).

Barry Sherman, 75, founder of generic drug company Apotex and his wife Honey, 70, a prominent philanthropist, were found dead in their North York mansion in mid-December, the [Toronto Star](#) reports. Both died of "ligature neck compression" and police have characterized their deaths as suspicious.

Speculation has been rife in the media about the cause of their deaths.

Goldlist, principal of [JHG Criminal Law](#), says she is not in any way suggesting that the deaths of the prominent couple are not a tragic loss for their family and the community, but she doesn't understand "why society and the media were so obsessed with the case for weeks on end."

High-profile cases such as these put extra time pressure on investigators, Dave Perry, a former veteran Toronto police detective, tells [CBC News](#). "It's not just the police, it's the public, it's the media, and it's of course the victims' families who want answers, and they want them right now," he says.

Even Toronto Mayor John Tory has been criticized by former police board chair Alok Mukherjee for creating "the impression that a prominent family has special access to policing services," when he passed on their concerns about the investigation to the city's police chief, the [Toronto Star](#) reports in another article.

PatWorld
The Global Patent Database

Toronto
www.patworld.com
salesna@patworld.com
Developed by Patent Seekers

FELDMAN
FAMILY LAW GROUP
PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

Providing legal mentoring for lawyers and firms in need of additional support handling complex family legal matters.

LEARN MORE

Toronto Lawyers ASSOCIATION **TLA**

Get Informed. Get Involved. Make an Impact.

Increase your productivity by collecting CPD hours cost effectively and efficiently.

LEARN MORE

DRL
DATA RESCUE LABS

COMPUTER & CELL PHONE FORENSICS

UFED

HICKS ADAMS LLP
CRIMINAL TRIALS & APPEALS

HICKS ADAMS LLP
Criminal Trial and Appeal Lawyers

Meanwhile, the force has been reproached for how it handled the cases of two missing women in the Gay Village, who were later found dead, the [Globe and Mail](#) reports. The body of Alloura Wells, 27, a transgender woman, was found in August but only identified in November. Her father said his initial report was not taken seriously because she was a homeless sex trade worker, the newspaper says.

The family of Tess Richey, 22, who was strangled after leaving a club in the area, was upset that it was her mother who found her body in a nearby laneway, rather than police, the *Globe* says.

“It’s horrific,” Goldlist says. “Police devoted so few resources to finding her that it’s her mom that finds her body. I can’t even imagine what that does to a mother.”

If Richey were a resident of Toronto’s wealthy Forest Hill and went missing from that area, you can be sure police would be out searching in full force, she says.

The two Gay Village deaths, along with the cases of two missing gay men, Andrew Kinsman and Selim Esen, have created a climate of fear in this community centred on Church and Wellesley Streets, according to the article. Local transgender activist Nicki Ward says she had “never seen the relationship with Toronto police services break down to such a degree,” the newspaper reports.

Toronto police Chief Mark Saunders has ordered an internal review of how the force handles missing persons reports, saying that his officers could have responded better to this series of disappearances and deaths, the *Globe* says.

Meanwhile, the media coverage of the Sherman case has been so unrelenting, regardless of whether there was any real news to report, that one [Toronto Star](#) headline read: “What happens if police can’t determine who’s responsible in deaths of billionaire couple,” Goldlist notes.

The answer to that question, she says, is that it’s the same as what happens to cases where the victim is poor or black or gay when police can’t find their killers.

Ontario Institute for Studies in Education doctoral student Neil Price, writing in [NOW Magazine](#), says his research has found that three Toronto police divisions with large black populations — 31, which includes the Jane-Finch area, 23 in north Etobicoke and 51 downtown — have the highest number of unsolved homicides in the city.

The lack of attention given by society and police to missing and murdered marginalized, racialized and gay people makes them easier targets for criminals, Goldlist says. She points to how British Columbia serial killer Robert Picton got away with murdering, as he claimed, 49 women for many years because many were aboriginal, sex workers or drug addicts, as described in [The Canadian Encyclopedia](#). While he claimed to have murdered 49 women, he was charged with the murders of 26 and convicted of six counts of second-degree murder; the Crown determined a second trial for the remaining 20 — even if he was convicted — would add nothing to his sentence, it says.

“The more society turns a blind eye to what is happening in marginalized communities, the more the problems there will just be repeated,” Goldlist says.

“We’re not making any gains in society or helping marginalized people when we are so focused on the rich and famous,” she says. “People need to shift priorities.”



AdvocatePlus >

- [IIROC mandatory cybersecurity breach reporting](#)
- [Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario awards \\$120,000 award for discrimination in hiring process](#)
- [Join Littler LLP for its 2019 Canada Conference](#)
- [TLA gives voice to the next generation of legal experts!](#)

[View more AdvocatePlus posts](#)



Finally, an accounting firm with expertise in estate accounts **AND** trust tax returns.
Avi Dahary

AccountTrust
Business Services Inc.
WE DON'T STOP AT TAX.

[HOME](#) [POSTS](#) [OPINION](#) [EVENTS/RELEASES](#) [TV](#) [PLUS](#) [ABOUT](#) [CONTACT](#) [@ADVOCATEDAILY](#)

[in](#) [ADVOCATEDAILY](#)