

Cruise Ship Deaths and Disappearances: A Honeymooner Vanishes Overboard and Other Mysteries

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Cruise Ship Deaths and Disappearances: A Honeymooner Vanishes Overboard and Other Mysteries

Authorities say cruises played a key role in these seven cases of homicide or missing people

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A Fatal Vacation for Mom-of-3

Some passengers on an Alaska-bound Princess Cruises ship the night of July 25 could hear a woman screaming onboard, [though they initially thought](#) it was part of a murder-mystery-themed trivia game. Then a witness found Kristy Manzanares, a 39-year-old mom-of-three (left), [dead on the floor in her cabin](#), with a head wound and blood “spread throughout the room.”

“She would not stop laughing at me,” the Utah woman’s bloodied husband, Kenneth Manzanares (right), allegedly told the witness, [according to an affidavit](#) for his arrest. (The cruise line called the incident a “[domestic dispute](#).”) Kristy’s family [has since publicly mourned her](#) as “the light of our lives — a devoted mother, daughter, sister and friend.” Quickly charged [with his wife’s murder](#), Kenneth, 39, allegedly told the FBI, “My life is over.” His attorney has declined to comment to PEOPLE; he has not entered a plea.

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Woman Goes Missing from Cruise with Ex-Husband

Former attorney Lonnie Kocontes was divorced from Micki Kanesaki, 52, but the two traveled together on a 2006 cruise [from which she disappeared](#). Her strangled body then turned up in Italian waters, with Kocontes already back in the U.S. with a woman he later married. In 2013, prosecutors charged him with Kanesaki’s murder, arguing he acted to gain control of more than \$1 million from her assets. In a twist, Kocontes was later charged with allegedly trying to have the subsequent — and now ex — wife killed after she gave grand jury testimony against him. He’s awaiting trial on all charges and has pleaded not guilty.

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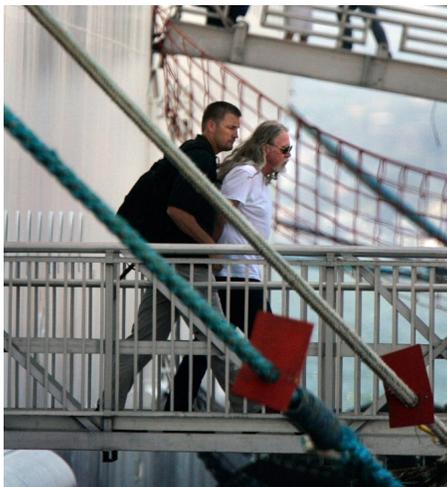


A Cruise Ship Engineer Who Kills

An outgoing sometimes-model, 31-year-old Julie Scully (right) met Giorgos "George" Skiadopoulos (left) while on a Caribbean cruise with her husband in 1997. The Greek-born engineer on the luxury liner on which she had just been sailing, he later pursued her with calls that preyed on her neediness. After Scully left her husband, Skiadopoulos visited her in Mansfield, New Jersey, and then she flew to Greece to live with him, temporarily leaving behind her daughter with her ex. But Scully soon expressed regret. In a "jealous rage" during a January 1999 quarrel, Skiadopoulos told police he strangled her, then burned and

beheaded her body. He was convicted and sentenced to life in prison (a penalty that was reduced on appeal to 23 years).

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Teacher Strangles Wife Then Confesses

Robert John McGill (right) drank heavily in Mexico's Cabo San Lucas on his 55th birthday while on a five-day Carnival cruise with his wife and "childhood sweetheart," Shirley. He was so intoxicated, according to his attorneys, that he wasn't sure what drove him to strangle her in their ship cabin on July 14, 2009. Afterward, he changed clothes, went up to a deck on the ship, smoked a cigar and, when another couple asked about his wife, he told them he killed her, according to court records.

The teacher of at-risk teens was sentenced in September 2011 to life in prison after pleading guilty to second-degree murder. "Whatever decency Mr. McGill had, he left on the floor of that bathroom next to Shirley's beaten, bleeding and broken body," one prosecutor said in 2011.

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A Baby Left to Die by Her Mother

Alicia Keir was 20 years old in October 2011 and had only recently learned she was pregnant when she joined friends on a Carnival Dream cruise to St. Maarten in the Caribbean. But after an unexpected episode of cramping, Keir admitted giving birth alone in a stateroom, never calling for help, then wrapping the baby girl in a towel and placing the child under her bed, where a cleaning crew later found the body. A doctor determined the infant had been born alive, without defects or diseases, and Keir faced eight years after pleading guilty to involuntary manslaughter. She was sentenced to one day and given credit for time served. "I should have gotten help," she said in court in May 2015.

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Honeymooner Goes Overboard: Accident or Foul Play?

On his July 2005 honeymoon cruise, George Smith IV, 26, of Greenwich, Connecticut, [went overboard into the Mediterranean](#) as his Royal Caribbean ship traveled from Greece to Turkey. Smith's family — citing accounts of other men with him in his cabin and the sounds of arguing before a "thud" was heard between 4 and 5 a.m, when Smith's wife returned to their room after a night where both had been drinking — said they believe he was murdered. The FBI investigated for 10 years before telling the family they couldn't prove his death was a homicide and not an accident, a decision that "outraged and disgusted" Smith's relatives. His body was never found.

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Husband Accused of Murder After Wife Vanishes Without a Trace

At the end of an 11-day Mediterranean cruise with his wife, Li Yinglei (left), Daniel Belling (right) and their two young kids disembarked on Feb. 20 from the MSC Magnifica in the Italian port of Civitavecchia. But Li, 36, was nowhere to be found — her cell phone, credit cards and wallet remained behind. Belling allegedly said she had left the vacation early, as she had done before. But Italian authorities had other questions and arrested the Dublin-based, German-born IT consultant at an airport in Rome as he prepared to travel home to Ireland. He remains jailed in Italy and charged with Li's murder while authorities continue to investigate. Through his lawyer, Belling his denied involvement and has maintained that he believes his wife is still alive somewhere.

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