

Victim's mom seeks justice in dominatrix case

By DAVE WEDGE

For more than five years, Audrey Lord has struggled with lingering questions about her son's bizarre disappearance from a Quincy S&M pad.

The 81-year-old Texas mom is hoping to get some answers starting today when dominatrix Barbara Asher goes on trial for manslaughter in the July 3, 2000, death of 53-year-old Michael Lord.

"It's been so long. My child is gone. My life has never been the same," Lord said in a phone interview from her Texas home this week. "I just don't know what could have happened to him. I just know it was bad."

Prosecutors allege Asher, a professional dominatrix known as Mistress Lauren M, and her fugitive boyfriend Miguel "Mr. Versace" Ferrer, chopped up Lord after he died during a kinky bondage session in Asher's Quincy condo. Lord's car was recovered in Salem, N.H. — where Asher reportedly said it was stashed — but no trace of the burly retired phone company lineman has been recovered.

While Asher's lawyers have floated the notion Lord could still be alive, the family has a memorial headstone on a family bur-

ial plot in Peterboro, N.H., near Lord's home.

"I hope there's some kind of justice. She deserves everything she gets," Audrey Lord said of Asher.

Proving manslaughter without any remains will be a tall task for Norfolk District Attorney William Keating's prosecutors, who will pin their case on an alleged confession Asher later recanted.

According to prosecutors, Lord was hooded and tied to a rack when he died in Asher's makeshift dungeon — possibly of a heart attack. Asher, 55, reportedly told authorities she and Ferrer cut him up with a hacksaw and dumped the remains in Maine. Ferrer, who is charged as an accessory, is on the lam.

The bizarre case has also sent shock waves through Boston's underground bondage community. Cecilia Tan of the New England Leather Alliance, which throws a massive Fetish Fair every year, said the case has become a "cautionary tale" for the S&M crowd.

"Any kind of a play situation where something goes wrong, you have to react like you're the first responder to an emergency," said Tan. "We hope it makes people realize they have to be more careful."



STAFF FILE PHOTO, LEFT, BY TED FITZGERALD; AP PHOTO, ABOVE

NO CLUES: A police dog searches a landfill in Maine for the remains of Michael Lord in August 2003. Prosecutors allege Lord was chopped up by dominatrix Barbara Asher, left, after he died during a bondage session.