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Woman's body found; husband arrested**Couple had problems, relative says**

By **Linda B. Blackford**
 HERALD-LEADER STAFF WRITER

A Lexington woman reported missing by her family became the city's first homicide victim of 1999, police said.

Officers found the body of Kecia Hughes, 28, at her residence, 325 Bainbridge Drive, Apt. 405, yesterday after worried family members asked police to check on her.

After a brief foot chase at the scene, Hughes' husband, Troy Hughes, was arrested and charged with murder.

Police released few details about the killing, including when they think Hughes died. A cause of death won't be known until an autopsy by the state medical examiner this morning.

Police said they did not find a weapon.

Hughes' family members called police yesterday morning after being unable to contact her for several days.

Her two sons, ages 5 and 9, were visiting their father's family in Louisville. Troy Hughes is not their father, relatives said.

Officers went to the apartment, southeast of Man o' War Boulevard and Richmond Road, about 9:15 a.m. and spoke to Troy Hughes, Lexington police Sgt. Mark Barnard said.

Barnard would not release the details of the conversation.

However, after talking to family members again, police returned to the apartment shortly after noon.

Troy Hughes was not there, and police asked the complex manager to open the door. That's when they discovered his wife's body.

Meanwhile, Hughes had not gone far from the apartment.

"He was spotted in the vicinity and the officers gave chase," Barnard said.

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Police said there was no record of Hughes filing a protective order against her husband in Lexington, but there appeared to be an expired order in Louisville.

The victim's sister, Fran Harris, said that the couple, who had been married two years, had had problems in the past.

"She said she was trying to leave him," Harris said.

But the manager of Derbytowne Apartments, Dawn Chenault, said that Kecia Hughes was planning to see her next week to formally add Troy Hughes to her lease.

A downstairs neighbor, Antoine Weathers, said he had never heard any problems from Apartment 405.

A light was still on outside Hughes' brick and wood frame apartment, illuminating a children's basketball hoop on the balcony.

Hughes was described as a quiet neighbor and a good mother who worked at a local hospital.

"She liked spending time with her kids," Harris said. "She was somewhat of an introvert, and her kids were her life."

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