

# Expert paints portrait of Kobe killer

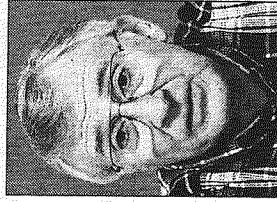
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By Edward A. Mazza II

Daily Yomiuri Staff Writer

The killer of 11-year-old Jun Hase probably is between 17 and 23 years old, of small stature and relatively weak, said famed serial killer expert Robert Ressler.

"You're dealing with a young, introverted, hostile male...who's grown up in a dysfunctional environment," said Ressler, who has profiled killers for decades for the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. Ressler was head of the FBI's behavioral science unit.



**Ressler**

Last week, Hase's head was found in front of Kobe's Tomogaoka Middle School. Police believe the incident may be linked to the March stabbings of two young girls and a series of animal mutilations, all in the same area.

So does Ressler. "What I see is escalation. There's no way in the world he just started doing this," he said, adding that the killer has likely displayed a pattern of "bizarre fanta-

sy" for 10-12 years.

In a telephone interview, Ressler said police should question everyone at the school from the principal to the janitor in search of a graduate or dropout over the past five years who was a vandal and may have been violent.

"The school is the answer. The key is in that school," he said. He added that the fact that the victims were young does not necessarily indicate a grudge against children, just that the killer is small and weak.

"I don't see the children as being the focus of the crime," he said. The head, he noted, was placed in front of the school and facing out, "more or less to greet, in a macabre sense, people coming to school in the morning."

Ressler said the killer fits the profile of a "loser," is not very intelligent, may read violent comic books, sniff glue or paint thinner and drink—but probably doesn't do drugs. "This guy wouldn't be with it enough to get drugs," Ressler said. "He wouldn't be contemporary enough to get drugs."

Ressler said the killer has now attracted international attention, giving him a kind of high. "This little nerd is now taking on society. He's on the ultimate power trip. He's going to want to recapture that excitement. Under the premise that the same guy

is involved in all these things, he will definitely strike again," he said. "He may take another crack at the school."

He predicted that the killer will strike again within 60 days or less.

Ressler's books, including the recent "I Have Lived in the Monster," are based on his experiences battling evil at the FBI, where he coined the term "serial killer." He defines a serial killer as a person who takes four lives or more, but said that may be what police are dealing with in this case.

"You've got a serial killer in the making," he said. "He's well on his way to becoming a serial killer or is a serial killer." He warned police not to overlook the obvious or draw conclusions too early.

## Kanji indicates cult link

Gunma University lecturer Nathan Sturman, 49, said the kanji used in the killer's note have long had cult associations tied to their Chinese meanings.

Ressler said the suspect may well be involved in a cult. Cults, he noted, tend to attract "losers" who lack esteem. But, he added, the killer would not be a gang member. "A person like this would not have many friends. He would not have any girlfriends," he said.