Sowell, who spent 15 years in prison for choking and raping a woman, was remanded in custody. In an ongoing investigation into the discovery of at least 11 bodies in his home and yard on Imperial Avenue on the city's East Side, six bodies were found buried in the home's backyard and four bodies along with a skull were found inside of the home.

By JAMES W. WADE III

Staff Reporter

CLEVELAND – Wednesday, Nov. 4, Anthony Sowell appeared in court charged with murder, rape and kidnapping. A prosecutor described him as "incredibly dangerous."

Sowell, who spent 15 years in prison for choking and raping a woman, was remanded in custody. In an ongoing investigation into the discovery of at least 11 bodies in his home and yard on Imperial Avenue on the city's East Side, six bodies were found buried in the home's backyard and four bodies along with a skull were found inside of the home.

Cleveland Municipal Court Judge Ronald Adrine said the charges were the most serious allegations he had ever seen. In another case, Sowell is also charged with kidnapping, felonious assault and rape.

Assistant County Prosecutor Brian Murphy said "the state believes Sowell is an incredibly dangerous threat to the public, not only in Cleveland, but beyond the city's limits."

Murphy said that Sowell is facing the death penalty. As officers began to demolish the house brick by brick, they widened the search to abandoned homes in a run-down area of Cleveland.

Sowell was indicted on one count of attempted murder, a felony of the first degree; two counts of rape, felonious of the first degree; two counts of kidnapping, felonies of the first degree; and two counts of felonious assault, felonies of the second degree. Sowell's charges carry specifications that include: notice of prior conviction, repeat violent offender, sexual motivation specification, and sexually violent predator specification.

Sowell was born Aug 19, 1959, and grew up in East Cleveland before in 1978 entering the Marines, where he served until being discharged in 1985. He is now a prime suspect in three East Cleveland murders, of which two victims were strangled and another beaten severely. Out

of those in East Cleveland, two were found on the same street and the other on the street where Sowell once lived.

So far, 11 bodies have been found at the convicted sex offender's home. All are African-American women, most had been strangled. Nine of the 11 bodies have been identified so far.

Tonia Carmichael, 52, of Warrensville Heights, was the first woman identified, on Nov. 4. Her body was one of the first six discovered in the back yard of the home.

Nov. 5, two more women were identified by the Cuyahoga County Coroner's Office. Tishana Culver, 31; Telacia Fortson, 31; and Culver, who also lived on Imperial Avenue, was not reported as a missing person, police said. Culver was the mother of four children. The children live with their grandparents on Imperial Avenue. DNA was not needed to identify Culver.

Fortson was the mother of three young children and had been missing since May 31. Her family said they initially filed a missing persons report with East Cleveland police during the summer and then contacted Cleveland's 4th District on Sunday.

Nov. 7, Cleveland Police confirmed that the Cuyahoga County Coroner's Office positively identified the fifth, sixth and seventh victims. Cleveland Police Homicide detectives, assisted by a Violent Loss Response Team from Mental Health Services, made notifications to the families of Amelda Hunter, 47; Crystal Dozier, 38; and Michelle Mason, 45; all of Cleveland.

Hunter lived in the 3200 block of East 137th Street. She was not reported as a missing person at the time of the discovery of the victim's bodies at Anthony Sowell's residence. Her family reported her missing on Nov. 3, indicating that she was last seen on or about April 18.

Dozier lived in the 6900 block of Kinsman Avenue. She had not been reported as a missing person at the time of the discovery of the victims' bodies. She was reportedly last seen in October 2007.

Mason lived in the 2900 block of East 121st Street. She was reported missing in Cleveland on Oct. 12, 2008, by her mother, who stated that she last saw her daughter on or about Oct. 4, 2008. At that time, it was reported to Cleveland police that Mason suffered from bipolar disorder and that she was not taking her prescribed medications.

In an attempt to locate Mason or to uncover clues to her whereabouts, officers conducted dozens of follow-up searches for her and actively searched for her in various areas of the city. Police also checked area hospitals, as well as residences of both Mason and a family member.

Nov. 9, authorities say the remains of Janice Webb, 48, and Kim Yvette Smith, 44, were identified by the Cuyahoga County Coroner's Office. Lt. Thomas Stacho says Webb's family reported her missing on Aug. 2 but Smith was not reported missing until Nov. 2, after police began uncovering remains at an East Side Cleveland house.

Police, who searched for Webb with friends and relatives and at area hospitals and shelters, say Webb was last seen on June 3. They say Smith was last seen on Jan. 1 of this year.

Cleveland City Council said in a written statement, "Cleveland City Council wants to express its sincerest sympathies to the victims of Anthony Sowell. The top priorities at this time must be to discover the full extent of the tragedies and to bring forth justice. We acknowledge the issues being raised by the community and the media and will examine the case at the appropriate time but we will do nothing to impede the ongoing investigation."