



Jurisprudence Section – 2003

E19 Where Medicine and Jurisprudence Meet — Two Case Reports: The London Nail Bomber - Mad, Bad, or Sad; and Tea With General Pinochet

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The goal of this presentation is to explore those areas where clinical forensic medicine and jurisprudence meet.

In Great Britain, the role of the "Forensic Medical Examiner" or "Police Surgeon" has long been established as the medical clinician actively involved in all aspects of Forensic Medical Practice ranging from care of detainees in custody and assessment of their fitness to be detained and interviewed to the examination of living victims of physical and sexual assault, collection of forensic evidence, and attendance at crime scenes.

Clinical forensic opinions are frequently sought before court, and clinical evidence on a broad range of subjects is frequently given and argued about in the course of civil and criminal hearings. This presentation will explore those areas where Clinical Forensic Medicine and Jurisprudence meet, illustrated by reports of two very different detainees that the author has previously looked after in custody.

The first examines the case of David Copeland, known as the London Nail Bomber after his homophobic and racially motivated bombing campaign in 1999 left three people dead and over one hundred injured, and focuses on how clinical assessment of his mental state subsequently became the key feature of his trial at the Old Bailey.

The second looks at aspects of the case of General Pinochet during some of his time in custody, and how opinions based on clinical assessment of medical conditions can subsequently become crucial in determining fitness to stand trial.

Clinical Forensic Medicine, Jurisprudence, London Nail Bomb