



F31 A Vicious Sexual Attack Leads to Mutilation

Norman Sperber, DDS, 3737-A Moraga Avenue, San Diego, CA 92117*

The goal of this presentation is to present a case involving multiple human bites, fracture orbital bone, and the severing of the nose in a female sexual assault victim.

This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by detailing physical & sexual assaults that occur in the military community.

On May 8, 2002, in Phuket, Thailand, an attack by a U.S. Marine on a female U.S. Navy petty officer was so vicious and deranged that it resulted in the severing of a portion of her nose, human bite marks on her breasts, neck, and head and the breaking of the right inferior orbital bone. Both of the suspects, a 26 year-old Marine sergeant, and the victim, a 23 year-old Navy petty officer, served on the San Diego-based amphibious ship *Bonhomme Richard*. The ship was returning the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit to Camp Pendleton from deployment in the Arabian Sea, related to the war in Afghanistan.

The attack occurred on the island of Phuket, a port of call, while thousand of San Diego-based military personnel were ashore. After a trip to a local bar, the victim testifies that she had a beer with Sgt. Thomas Wolf and a friend and accompanied them to the beach. She swam with them then returned to the beach. She stated that Sgt. Wolf coaxed her back into the water, punched her, bit her, and forced her under the water several times. Several witnesses, including a Marine lieutenant who had to subdue the suspect in order to save the female victim from drowning, saw this incident.

The suspect was arrested and turned over to the Military Police and eventually returned to San Diego., The victim was treated locally, then by Navy physicians and returned to Balboa Naval hospital in San Diego, four days later. This presenter was contacted by the United States Naval Criminal Investigative Service and examined the victim on May 12, 2002, at the hospital. Forensic Odontologist Greg Golden, who was conferring on a related case, assisted in the examination. Conventional and ultraviolet photography was accomplished over a four-hour period. This examination revealed the following: 15 human bite marks, orbital fracture, and loss of a portion of her nose. In addition to photography, videography was accomplished with 15 stickers placed at each bite site and then a description of each bite was logged into an evidence document for later reference.

Subsequently, the presenter at a dental clinic at Camp Pendleton accomplished dental impressions and photography of the suspect. At a Camp Pendleton court-martial, the suspect explained how he beat, raped, bit, and then tried to drown the victim. He then pleaded guilty to all charges, which included attempted murder, rape, maiming, and three counts of assault. When asked by the military judge why he attacked a person he had met that day, the defendant answered, "I don't know, sir." He also told the court, "I forcibly tried to have sex with her, and she pulled away, sir."

This presenter explained to the Marine prosecutor, Maj. Scott Woodard, that the suspect's teeth were consistent with at least one of the bites but that teeth #24 and #25 were in a slight facial version with respect to the other incisors and that they were slightly rotated. He was also informed that these slight variations were not evident in the image and that also the bite had occurred in a centric rather than protrusive relationship. This presenter also explained that even in a situation seen by dozens of witnesses, a bite mark image might not compare exactly with the biter's dentition, due to the inherent distortion in a bite mark.

On November 8, 2002, Sgt. Wolf was sentenced to 25 years in a military prison for shattering the life of his victim.

A plastic surgeon described four surgeries, thus far performed on the victim. In order to attempt the restoration of her nose, surgeons have grafted tissue from her temple and ear. Defense attorneys said Sgt. Wolf would be eligible for parole in eight years. He will be reduced in rank to private, forfeit pay and benefits, and be dishonorably discharged.

Sexual Assaults, Multiple Bites, Severance of Nose Through Biting