



Odontology Section – 2006

F3 Identifications - Awfully Simple vs. Simply Awful

Linda B. Edelson-Slocum, DMD*, 5 Cherry Blossom Drive, Churchville, PA 18966-1061; and Norman R. Goodman, DDS, 44 Sagebrush Lane, Langhorne, PA 19047

Attendees will learn what how to prepare when presented with a case involving identification. This presentation will impact the forensic community by providing attendees with a means to prepare for different problems and bring everyday skills into play.

The author was called to do two very different identifications.

In the first case, an intact body was found. The woman had been spackled into a wall, surrounded by sheetrock, and wrapped in a yellow tarp. Her treating dentist provided a complete charting and x-rays. He also said, "notice her veneer on tooth #8, it matches #9 perfectly." The veneer was fractured, but the remaining fragment did match perfectly. With all the information provided it was very simple to make an identification.

The story associated with the second case was that a man had shot his girlfriend, and then strangled his son. There was a cabin fire 160 miles away from the homicide site. Was this the murderer and was he the only person in the cabin at the time of the fire? The "body" was 16 fragments, including 15 teeth not associated with any bone at all, and one segment of the angle of the mandible with roots of two molars. Since most teeth were free of bone, the first question was "Is this, indeed, only one body, or did he take someone else down with him?"

Drs. Goodman and Edelson-Slocum laid out the teeth in proper dental order, there were no extra teeth present, i.e. there weren't three upper left first molars or other inconsistencies. X-rays were acquired with the available equipment. Medical x-rays of the teeth were oriented and an identification finally obtained.

Identifiers in these cases will not be provided for public viewing, however the woman in the first case was a New Jersey resident although the body was found in Philadelphia. The second case was a Lancaster resident named.

Identification, Veneer, Fragments