



16 Serial Killer Luis Alfredo Garavito Cubillos (Colombia, 300 Victims): Self-Perception, Problem Solution Picture Tests, and Childhood Influences

Mark Benecke, PhD*, *International Forensic, Research & Consulting, Postfach 250411, Cologne, NRW 50520, GERMANY*; and Ewelina Căcilie Wawrzyniak, BSc, *Ruhr University, University of Bochum, Universitätsstr. 150, Bochum, 44780, GERMANY*

The goal of this presentation is to show that: (a) even a killer with a very high number of victims (and a supposedly “clever” modus operandi in many locations all over the large country) is not necessarily intelligent, yet extremely street smart, (b) the offender was influenced by typical social factors that are often found in criminals (severe abuse, drugs, etc.), (c) he credibly claims that he misses his substitute family (a woman and her son whom he both took care of in a non-sexual way), and (d) that in his current self-image (aided by a priest who baptized him), Garavito feels that he is now a reborn Christian who will not kill again.

This presentation will impact the forensic community by discussing this unusual case with a very high number of victims.

As a follow-up to the previous, mostly criminalistic case report (*Proc AAFS* 9:290-291 (2003)) on homosexual pedophile sadist Luis Alfredo Garavito Cubillos (*1957, Colombia; 300 victims between 1992 and 1999), additional interviews and tests were performed, focusing on his self-perception, intelligence, and childhood influences on this behavior. These are the only known tests ever made in his case. Several of the factors that Garavito suffers from that are typical for his severity deviant personality structure (paraphilia) are: extreme physical and verbal abuse (violence) by his father, early sexualization (first homosexual relation at the age of 12) and pedophilia, and long term abuse of alcohol. Further findings and observations were picture tests indicate that his intelligence is rather low. He may, however, not have understood the (extremely simple) test instructions due to a lack of education in schools. Garavito suffers from narcissistic and antisocial personality disorders. He shows (or states that he feels) symptoms of schizophrenia like auditory hallucinations (imperative voices) and delusions of being controlled by an external force. Whenever possible, Garavito denies the sexual abuse of his victims because he cannot integrate this particular aspect of his fantasies into his self image. Therefore, and with the help of a local priest, Garavito now projects his feelings of guilt into demons and the devil. Being baptized in prison seems, for him, to heal the personality traits that caused the killings.

The chance of becoming repeatedly delinquent increases with the number of such factors (e.g., German: “kriminogene Faktoren”). Garavito is an example of a classical combination of such factors. This study argues that his personality and the influences in his childhood in their specific combination made Garavito heavily prone towards one of the most intense series of killings in modern times.

Since neither therapy nor picture tests were ever performed on (or with) Garavito before, some of his very straight original statements are additionally presented with letters, drawings, and picture test results which – due to his unawareness of such tests – he could hardly manipulate.

Serial Killing, Paraphilia, Pedophilia