



### F26 A Twenty-Two Year Old Cold Case Homicide With Bitemarks

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After attending this presentation, attendees will realize that even a 22-year-old cold case can contain bitemark evidence which can be processed.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by examining how even after many years, a cold case homicide can contain forensic odontology evidence that may be useful in the conviction of a long time suspect.

The year was 1989. Kim Currington was found by two of her children bludgeoned in her bedroom. Earlier that morning, the children, nine-year-old, seven-years-old, and a six-year-old, related they saw the boyfriend of their mother, stab her in the right leg during an argument. She screamed to the children to run to school. When two of the children returned from school near noon, they found their mother lifeless in the bedroom. They ran across the street for help and police were notified. The Saginaw Police Department arrived and secured the scene. They confirmed the fact a homicide had occurred. The crime scene investigators arrived and began to process the scene. Photos were taken of the exterior of the house and surrounding area. Following that, the interior of the house was processed. There were two entrances to the home. The entrance on the driveway side of the house revealed the door was locked. The front porch entrance door had a full size sofa placed directly in front of the door. The first responding officer related they had to push the sofa away from the door to gain entrance. There was no sign of forced entry on this door, plus the other house door was locked. Photographs were taken of the complete interior of the home. The windows in the home were all secure and no signs of a forced entry. There were two bedrooms; one for three children and a master bedroom. The children's bedroom appeared to be orderly and undisturbed. The master bedroom doorway was partially covered with a thin curtain. Upon entering, the bed was to the right with the victim lying face up on the bed with her feet near the floor. On examination of the victim, there were two large openings in the right lateral forehead, with other visible lacerations to the mid and left forehead. There was a large pool of blood around her head with blood splatter on the wall directly in the back. The victim was dressed in thin pink top and black dyed jeans. After crime scene photographs were completed the victim was transported to the hospital for an autopsy. After the clothing was removed, the pathologist noted a bitemark on the right upper arm and on the left breast. Swabs were obtained from both bitemarks. Photographs of both of the suspect bitemarks were taken with the ruler in place. Also noted was a stab wound on the right leg. There were multiple impacts to the head.

At the time, living in the house was the victim, the victim's three children, along with the victim's boyfriend. The boyfriend was questioned by the police and a signed search warrant was obtained for dental information. A local dentist at the time, who is now deceased, took upper and lower impressions of the suspect's teeth along with wax registrations. Photographs were also taken of the suspect's teeth. Later the photographs and dental models were taken to a forensic dentist in the Pontiac, Michigan area for evaluation. This dentist is now in poor health and has left the state. This was done on February 17, 1989. The case for a number of reasons was put on hold and not litigated. In 2009, the case was activated by the Michigan State Police Violent Crime task force, Cold Case Unit. The bitemarks evidence which had been stored in the evidence locker for over twenty years was examined. The dental models were wrapped in bubble wrap and in excellent condition. This interesting case was litigated in April of 2011 and concluded with a verdict of first degree murder.

**Cold Case, Homicide, Bitemarks**