



D79 Case Study: From Maternal Instinct to Staged Domestic Homicide

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After this presentation, attendees will understand how, through a process of comprehensive analysis of the crime scene, was obtained a reconstruction of a criminal behavior and which was the driving motivation of a murder against two children perpetrated by their own mother.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by showing how the criminal conduct of staged domestic homicide has some repetitive patterns or common characteristics in terms of planning and execution, regardless of where in the world presented, without being influenced by sociocultural or economic factors of their executors.

One mother told the police of the city of Mocoa, capital of the department of Putumayo in southern Colombia, in the early hours of September 20, 2010, an unknown individual attacked when she opened the front door of her residence, and she was attacked until she lost consciousness. After regaining consciousness, she observed that their children were in bed in the master bedroom and, when approaching them, believing them to be asleep, noted they were wet and without signs of life.

At the beginning of the investigation findings in the scene, the woman's injuries were consistent with blunt trauma and the apparent coherence of her story led the authorities to think that there was a perpetrator who murdered two children and had left their mother seriously injured. The high social impact produced by a case of two children killed and the assault on their mother activated law enforcement, both local and national level, so that the Criminal Behavior Special Unit of the Attorney General's Office was called to support the investigation through a process of crime scene analysis and the possibly developing a criminal profile.

On the basis of the processes of crime scene analysis, patterns of blood stains found, the comprehensive study of the evidence related to the victims, the assessment of the versions provided by the surviving mother and other witnesses, and the structural characteristics and safety of the building, the investigation team re-evaluated the hypothesis of an external aggressor and redirected their attention toward the crime being committed by the mother.

This change in the case offered to the team a clear vision about the dynamics of the events that led to the deaths of the two children. With the support of the analysis of forensic evidence at the scene, the Criminal Behavior Special Unit was forced to focus their attention of finding the motivation that drove this woman to kill her own children. Therefore, the line of investigation focused on probing deeper into all areas of the life of the mother, and found an intricate world of love frustrations and abandonment, a mentally unhealthy woman, egocentric and possessive, with strong intentions to pass over any obstacle to achieve all personal desires.

After harmonizing and fitting all parts of this criminal and forensic puzzle together, the prosecutors demonstrated definitively and beyond reasonable doubt that the crime was committed by the mother, in the form of staged domestic homicide. Today this woman is listed as a fugitive from Colombian justice.

Mother's Killer, Children, Staged Domestic Homicide