



D80 The Patricia Flores Cold Case: An Interdisciplinary Approach About Death and Rape After an Investigation in a School in La Paz, Bolivia

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After attending this presentation, attendees will get a well-rounded view of a forensic cold case investigation in Latin America by showing the interdisciplinary forensic work about the murder and rape of a 9-year-old girl in 1999 in La Paz, Bolivia.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by explaining the importance of the interdisciplinary work, consisting of pathology, archaeology, anthropology, psychology, and crime scene investigation, in order to investigate cold cases related to child homicide and abuse in Latin America.

On Friday August 27, 1999, Patricia Jaqueline Flores-Velasquez, a 9-year-old girl living in the city of La Paz, Bolivia (South America), disappeared from the public school she was attending and four days later her body was found inside the school warehouse. The body showed signs of asphyxia, rape, and torture. Once the body of the girl was discovered at 11 p.m., there were several mistakes related with the crime scene investigation, including analysis and technical/scientific procedures, chain of custody, the absence of sexual abuse protocols, and a proper necropsy. The Medical Examiner committed suicide just few days after Patricia's body analysis was done, apparently because of bad practices used in this case.

DNA samples were taken by the FBI of two suspects. In one of them, Patricia's DNA was found in a belt and in a shoe of the suspect, but the Bolivian court did not accept this evidence and argued contamination. The case became a cold case.

After 11 years, the criminal process was re-opened thanks to two Human Rights NGOs named Funderes (a Human Rights non-profit organization from Bolivia) and Women's link, (an international human rights non-profit organization working to ensure that gender equality is a reality around the world).

In April 2011, a group of 11 forensic scientists and criminal investigation analysts (seven Colombians and two Spaniards) started to work the case, analyzing documents, testimonies, and expert witness reports in order to help the Bolivian Justice to again open the case with forensic evidence

In August 2012, an interdisciplinary team composed a group of Colombian forensic scientists and technicians (one anthropologist, one pathologist, one crime scene analyst, one forensic photographer) who belong to the National Institute of Legal Medicine and Forensic Sciences and AFFIC foundation, went to Bolivia in order to do an exhumation of the body, a second necropsy, took new DNA and other biological samples from the body, suspects and forensic evidence, and conducted forensic psychological tests on suspects and a new analysis at the crime scene.

A group of forensic psychologists from Colombia and Spain worked on a psychological profiling in this case, including the suspect's behavior, motives, and background, in an attempt to guide the investigation. Psychologists gave a profile using both inductive and deductive approaches, trying to find if the murder was committed by a serial killer or was an isolated case.

Cold Case Bolivia, Child Abuse, Sexual Abuse