



E15 Effective Use of the Multidisciplinary Approach Is Critical to Solving Contemporary Violent Crime

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After attending this presentation, attendees will better appreciate the necessity of employing a multidisciplinary approach in violent crime investigation.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by demonstrating that the complexity, motivations for, and high-level education-based execution of violent crimes necessitate effectively using a wide spectrum of disciplines within the forensic community.

The “Forensic Family” came together as part of task force and was responsible for solving several cold case murders and rapes.

The explosion of forensic crime dramas, true-life documentaries, and the parallel increase in available academic forensic education has forever impacted the art of criminal investigation. Savvy criminals are taught in a wide variety of areas how to circumvent traditional crime fighting strategies, thwart traditional crime scene processing techniques, and mask or obliterate various types of physical evidence traditionally associated with interpersonal violent crimes. The killer highlighted in this presentation owned multiple text books on trace evidence.

Over the course of more than 60 years of criminal investigative experience, a dramatic shift in the time and effort spent by perpetrators in staging or simply altering crime scenes, in an effort to avoid forensic detection, in even the most emotional and anger-fueled violent crimes has been seen. This study will present a case which illustrates how knowledge of forensic science affected the planning and execution of a murder, and how leveraging the multidisciplinary approach in processing the crime scene, incorporating the forensic pathology findings, and combining the results with traditional stalwart investigative methods resulted in identification of the perpetrator.

The illustrated case involved the murder of a single female soldier (mother of two children) in her government quarters where she was beaten, stabbed once, hit in the head with a hammer, manually strangled, and finally asphyxiated with a ligature. After seven months, a task force was formed and multiple members of the “Forensic Family” participated in the resolution of this investigation. The medical examiner’s office provided pathological assessment; the scene itself was assessed to include all blood patterns that allowed a sequencing of events; a panty hose wrapper was collected and analyzed which revealed a latent footwear impression that ultimately matched the footwear of the subject; skilled interviewing and cognitive interviewing techniques were used; and criminal analysis of method of operation resulted in the subject being identified in a triple murder, along with multiple break-ins, and rapes over a multi-year period along the east coast.

Ultimately, the subject was convicted and received a life sentence in prison. He was subsequently convicted of a triple murder and received the death sentence. The subject was executed in 2005 after all appeals were exhausted.

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