



E34 Forensic Investigation and Criminal Profiling of Very Unusual Infanticide in Italy

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Learning Overview: After attending this presentation, attendees will understand the dynamics of a very specific infanticide that took place in Italy in 2002, in which a mother killed her baby. There will be discussion of the analysis done of Bloodstain Pattern Analysis (BPA), the crime scene analysis used to solve the murder, and the method adopted for the analysis of this crime.

Impact on the Forensic Science Community: This presentation will impact the forensic scientific community by discussing the importance of a multidisciplinary approach and how it could be effective in the resolution of complex forensic cases.

The case concerns an infanticide which occurred in Cogne, a small mountain village in northern Italy in January 2002. The case had a great media echo that lasted for years due to the duration of the investigation and the trial, both on television and in the press.

The body of a 3-year-old baby was found in the parents' bedroom, completely smeared with blood. Many technical activities were conducted by the specialists of the forensic science lab of the Carabinieri-Parma. A thorough examination of the crime scene and further analyses of hundreds of pieces of forensic evidence were subsequently conducted at the urging of the defense experts. The total lack of fingerprints or DNA other than the victim's family, as well as the particular distribution of bloodstains, progressively focused suspicion on the mother, even though she proclaimed herself innocent.

Great attention was dedicated to the physical characteristics and distribution of bloodstains, which were analyzed through a rigorous application of BPA. To do this, the murder room was reconstructed in order to test two main hypotheses: (1) an attack carried out by an aggressor positioning himself exclusively next to the bed; (2) an attack carried out by an aggressor who—wearing the mother's pajamas—initially hit the victim beside the bed and then moved on the bed, hitting the victim frontally and inflicting wounds only on his head.

A forensic psychiatric assessment on the woman was also performed, as well as a second psychiatric assessment ordered by the Court during the second-degree trial. The psychiatric examination conducted during the appeal trial used an innovative methodology in the forensic field. The various tasks were distributed among a team of experts, then the results of the work were reassembled to outline the psychological framework and the criminodynamics of aggression in an integrated manner. After a close confrontation between all the experts, including the results achieved by the psychiatric examination, the only sustainable hypothesis was the criminal responsibility of the mother. After three degrees of judgment, she was sentenced to 16 years imprisonment.

The oral presentation of this case will reconstruct with great detail the criminal dynamics, the psychological motivations at the origin of the crime, and the psychological profile of the mother. Salient data referable to infanticide in Italy will also be discussed.

Forensic Investigation, Criminal Profiling, Infanticide