



### G12 When a 70-Year-Old Mummified Baby Falls on Your Head: Collaboration in a Multidisciplinary Team

*Corinne D'Anjou, DMD\*, LSJML, Saint-Lambert, PQ J4P1Y2, CANADA; Caroline Tanguay, MD\*, Montreal, PQ H2K 3S7, CANADA*

**Learning Overview:** After attending this presentation, attendees will understand the importance of a multidisciplinary team approach in an unusual medicolegal death investigation.

**Impact on the Forensic Science Community:** This presentation will impact the forensic science community by demonstrating how experts from multiple disciplines can work together, each bringing their own experience and expertise, in a team approach to efficiently dissect the evidence in a unique and challenging case.

The case began with the discovery of human remains during a remodel of the basement of a century-old house in Westmount, Quebec, Canada. The remains, wrapped in journal paper, appeared to be of a very young child or fetus. They consisted of an almost complete mummified fetus, still in a fetal position with its arms flexed and the lower limbs folded over the trunk and crossed.

Following an anthropological consultation, the lower limbs were moved, which exposed a portion of the umbilical cord. In the absence of internal organs and biological environment, the umbilical cord specimen, along with the right humerus and left femur, were submitted to the forensic biology section of the Laboratoire de Sciences Judiciaires et de Médecine Légale to be analyzed and potentially provide a biological profile to aid with the investigation. The fetus presented no evidence of traumatic injury.

Determining the gestational age of the remains and finding any other evidence that could lead to valuable clues as to the nature of the death and origin of the remains were critical to the investigators.

A forensic document specialist examined the several newspapers that were found with the remains to help determine a possible timeline surrounding the events. A daily schedule of a film that was originally released in 1948 was found within the newspapers. This discovery led the investigators to meet with a lady, now 78 years old, who lived in the house during that time. From interviewing her, they were able to get a better understanding of who inhabited the house around that time. Given the Hollywood-like history of the household and the multiple possibilities of parenthood, she agreed to provide a DNA sample to allow a comparison with the remains.

Forensic pathologists, anthropologists, and odontologists examined the remains visually and radiographically to provide an estimated gestational age utilizing various techniques, from the osseous centers in the hands and feet to the developing primary dentition.

In conclusion, with the multidisciplinary approach involving forensic pathologists, anthropologists, biologists, odontologists, and document specialists, the discovered remains were thoroughly examined, and an estimated age and DNA profile were provided to the investigators to help determine the origin, timeline, and circumstances surrounding the discovery of the mummified remains.

#### **Forensic Odontology, Age Estimation, Forensic Pathology**