

## E59 A Complex Suicide Committed With a Knife and a Blunt Object

*Alessandra Torsello\*, Casarano, LE, ITALY; Michela Ferrara, MD, Department of Forensic Pathology, Foggia 71122, ITALY; Stefania De Simone, MD, Department of Forensic Pathology, Foggia, Foggia 71122, ITALY; Francesca Maglietta, MD, University of Foggia, Forensic Pathology, Foggia 71122, ITALY; Giuseppe Bertozzi, MD, Department of Forensic Pathology, Foggia 71121, ITALY; Francesco Sessa, MS, PhD, University of Foggia - Forensic Pathology, Foggia 71100, ITALY; Santina Cantatore, Foggia 71100, ITALY; Luigi Cipolloni, MD, PhD\*, Department of Clinical and Experimental Medicine, Foggia 71100, ITALY*

**Learning Overview:** The goal of this presentation is to show how the presence of the forensic pathologist at the crime scene investigation can be essential in cases of complex suicides and assaults.

**Impact on the Forensic Science Community:** This presentation will impact the forensic science community by showing how the intervention of the forensic pathologist at the crime scene can be essential to the olive investigation. In fact, in this case, the stone would likely not have been noticed and would have been consequently lost. A person without expertise in wound recognition would attribute the wounds only to the knife. In addition, this presentation refers to a case of suicide committed by lapidation, which is a rare occurrence.

A 65-year-old man was found dead in his car. The man had been missing since the previous day, and the car was found in the countryside. The car's interior and the corpse were covered in blood. There were also blood traces on the external body of the car, on the trunk, and along the whole left side. Additionally, blood traces were on the ground along the left side of the car.

The dead man was lying across the driver's seat with his legs outside the car. Near the body, inside the car, there was a common kitchen knife (with a ceramic blade of approximately 10cm in length). The police and the prosecutor suspected a murder and called the forensic pathologist to the crime scene. The external examination of the corpse showed multiple wounds on the top of the head and cranial bones were partially exposed; on the left forearm, there was a penetrating wound. According to the forensic pathologist, the wounds on the head did not look like typical knife wounds. So, the forensic pathologist requested searching for other possible weapons at the crime scene. Near the body, in a pool of blood, there was a small stone. This stone was smooth, 200–300gr in weight, and covered in blood. The police took it for laboratory examination.

An autopsy was performed and showed a cranial fracture but with no type of cerebral hemorrhage. There were no signs of the knife on the cranial bones, and the scalp wounds looked like typical wounds caused by a blunt object. Only the wound of the left forearm was clearly compatible with the knife found at the crime scene. The cause of death was acute blood loss. Consequently, the forensic pathologist established that the knife was used only to wound the forearm; indeed, the wounds on the head were produced via several strikes of a blunt object compatible with the stone found in the car. Police investigations established that the man killed himself.

---

### Complex Suicide, Lapidating, Crime Scene