

Foreign objects in genitalia: Homicide with destruction of identity – A case report

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Abstract

Sadistic homicides are probably more common than would be expected from reading the literature, where only a few cases are mentioned. In the present case an unclothed dead body of 25 year old female was found in the forest area by the police. On postmortem examination, we found crushed head by heavy hard blunt force (a heavy stone with blood stains recovered near body). After killing her, assailants tried to destroy her identity by burning the face and disfiguring the head. In this case beside common findings of homicide as usually seen in sexual murder cases; there was unique finding of a wine bottle introduced into vagina probably out of frustration. Body also had postmortem abrasions over different parts of the body. Postmortem fractures of multiple ribs were present on both sides of the chest. The death was due to crushed injuries to head caused by hard blunt force, which was sufficient to cause death in ordinary course of nature. We also discuss the possible scenario of psycho-pathology of accused in such cases.

Case history:

A body of an adult female of about 25 year old was found dead in a naked condition in a reserved forest area in South Delhi in June, 2006 by police. There was information to Police via public call as 2-3 people had killed one lady after doing sex and run away. Further enquiry, revealed that they all had consumed alcohol along with the lady. They also had sexual intercourse with her using condom. After sometime she started abusing using foul language probably over money or dissatisfaction. Following the quarrel they killed her by hitting her head with a heavy stone. After killing her, they also tried to destroy her identity by burning her face with wooden stick and twigs and her cloths. One of them also introduced a wine bottle inside vagina. There were multiple postmortem injuries in particular pattern over left side lower part of chest, abdomen and inguinal regions including upper part of left thigh. All accused were subsequently arrested by the police.

Observation:

We conducted a complete medico-legal autopsy and noted following findings and injuries over the body – Rigor mortis was passed off. Post-mortem staining was present and fixed over the back of the body except pressure contact areas. No sign of moderate or advance decomposition seen. Left eye partially opened and right eye crushed. Face was distorted due to multiple crush injuries.

Important Ante mortem injuries:

1. Crushed injuries with multiple depressed comminuted fractures of skull bones of both parietal, temporal and frontal bones and facial

bones and associated lacerations over right forehead and face. Left side temporal region had crushed injuries of ear and with multiple fractured bone pieces and brain matter coming out. Brain matter was also coming out from right frontal and temporal region. Laceration of size 5x1 cm and cavity deep also seen over the nose and associated with nasal bone fracture. Exploration showed extravasations of blood under the scalp all over the skull. Meninges tears were present at multiple places. Brain matter lacerated and pulped out in pieces.(Figure 1,2, and 3)

2. Abrasion of size 8x2 cm was present over anteromedial surface of left thigh placed horizontally and 16cm above to left knee with reddish discoloration.
3. Multiple abrasions of varying size 0.2-2 cm x 0.2-1 cm were present over anterolateral surface of right thigh.
4. Contusion of size 3 x 2 cm was present over upper part of anterior aspect of right knee with reddish discoloration.

Postmortem injuries:

Postmortem burn injuries seen over upper half of chest above the level of nipples including neck and left side of face with partial singeing of scalp hair. Heat haematoma seen over the upper part of the sternum(Figure 3).

Multiple abrasions of varying size around the umbilicus , over lower portion of chest on the left, the upper arm and lower arm , upper arm, left hypochondrium region, the upper and lower arm of abrasion , upper arm of abrasion , left thigh, left inguinal region as shown in diagram(Figure 4)

Anal examination did not reveal any important finding. Vagina was roomy and fresh reddened areas. It did not show presence of semen.

Death in this was caused by crushed Head and face produced by hard blunt force and which was sufficient to cause death in the ordinary course of nature. However, viscera have been preserved for chemical analysis to rule out / substantiate any intoxication.

Discussion:

Postmortem mutilation of a victim's body by perpetrator is not an uncommon finding. The majority of such cases involve dismemberment for the purpose of disposing or hiding a body or of preventing identification. It also makes estimation of the cause of death very difficult. During the 30 year period 1961-1990, a total of 22 deaths with criminal mutilation / dismemberment of human body were registered in Sweden by Rajs et al.[2] They described mutilation in three categories as defensive, offensive (lust murder) and necromanic mutilation. The perpetrators of the defensive and aggressive mutilation were mostly disorganized i.e. alcoholics, or drug abuse and mental disorders and criminal histories while lust murderers were mostly organized with a history of violent crimes.

The characteristics of the mutilations were diverse. In cases of murder committed in association with sexual deviation, wounding is usually limited to the breasts and sexual organs. Corpse mutilation can also be of a symbolic nature as in cases of mafia murders (revenge punishment) and then it is associated with torturing the victim and with the motive of destruction of identify of victim.

Kunz J, Gross A [1] described a case of unusual postmortem mutilation of a victim's body, after killing his father, the son decapitated his body. The motive of the murder was revenge and the postmortem mutilation was the realization of the perpetrator is fantasies, symbolically representing a penalty for the reprehensible past life of his father.

Srch M [3] elucidated murders of two young women the bodies were devastated in a peculiar way and some organs were removed.

In our case the head, face, portion of chest were the most common part of the body, which were burn / destroyed / mutilated. There may be various reasons;

1. To prevent identification of the victims;
2. To make it difficult to determine the cause of death;
3. As an act of depersonalization, which often seen when the murder is disorganized and has a close relation to his victim or offensive mutilation as general act of frustration.

In this case introduction of foreign object to genitalia could be an outcome for

1. Frustration of no-performing partner due to heavy intoxication or otherwise
2. Extortion demand by victim
3. Blackmailing
4. Psycho-pathic tendency of accused for obtaining sadistic pleasure.

In this case as there was alleged history of consensual sexual activity which could be or could not be as body had injuries so it could be non-consensual activity also. Apparently there was no smell in the GIT contents but samples were sent for alcohol screening / concentration estimation. In literature, various materials and objects like chilly powder, corrosives, metal or wooden sticks are introduced into genitalia as a part of punishment for being unfaithfulness or infidelity. Males suffering from depression due to erectile dysfunctions, premature ejection and impotency may indulge in extreme frustration cases. In this psychological profiling of the accused can also be helpful in knowing for such abnormal instincts. At times, provocative words by female partner about their male -hood could trigger such impulsive murder and mutilation.



Figure 1. Female victim with crushed head and foreign object (Wine bottle) in genitalia



Figure 2. Female victim with remnants of burnt material and burnt small twigs in head area.



Figure 3. Disfigured head and face with protruding brain substance and Post-mortem burns visible over face, neck and chest areas.



Figure 4 . Naked female body with foreign object in genitalia

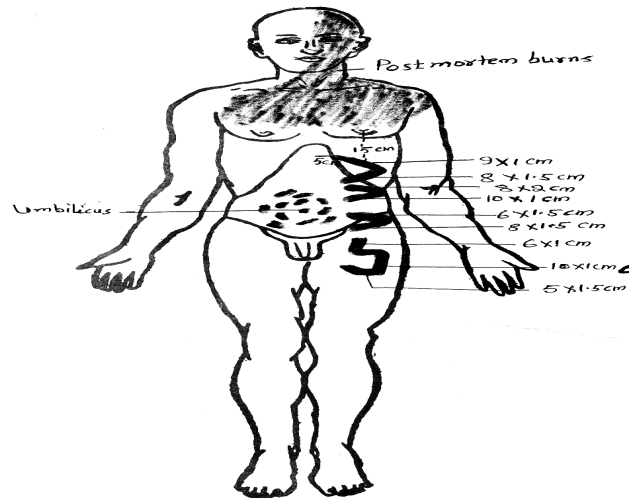


Figure 5. Postmortem burns and abrasions with artifact abrasions (Ant bites) over the

References:

1. Kunz J, Gross A: Victim's scalp on the killer's head. An unusual case of criminal postmortem mutilation. *Am J Forensic Med Pathol* 2001 Sep; 22(3): 327-31.
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3. Srch M. Homicide and Mutilation of the body – review of the literature. *Soud Lek* 1996 Feb; 41(1): 305.
4. Steyn M. Muti murders from South Africa – a case report. *For Sci Int.* 2005 July; 16; 151(2-3): 279-87.

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2. Mukherji JB. *Forensic Medicine and Toxicology*. 1 st Ed. Calcutta: Academic Publishers; 1981. p.72.

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