



STATE OF WISCONSIN - VS - Linda Sue La Roche

eyewitness observations; the complainant relies upon the statements of the defendant, if any, inasmuch as they are contrary to the defendant's penal interests and are, therefore, to be believed.

**The complainant thereby informs the court that the basis for the above charge is as follows:**

On July 21, 1999, a passerby, walking his dog, discovered the body of a white female was located on 92nd St in the Town of Raymond, County of Racine. The body was approximately 40 paces south of the power lines and laying about 25 feet off the west side of the road. It appeared that she had been dragged from a vehicle down the slight embankment and laid on the ground in-between the first and second row of com. The ground beneath the body was dry and the witness who called police took the same walk every morning and had not seen the body there the day before.

The victim's body appeared to have sustained a lot of trauma. Post-mortem lividity was beginning to become visible. There was a lot of bruising on the face and upper torso. The torso itself appeared to have some type of abrasions like road rash. The left ear was noticeably deformed. Estimates based on the condition of the body were that it had not been there more than 12 hours.

Later that day, an autopsy was conducted. The victim appeared slightly malnourished. The body, from head to foot, had several suspicious marks, bumps, abrasions and lacerations throughout. These were documented by Dr. Kelley, pathologist at the Milwaukee County Medical Examiner's Office. The victim's clothing, consisted of only a gray western style shirt and black sweatpants.

Dr. Kelley reported that the x-rays revealed the presence of broken ribs. Later internal examination revealed that on the right side ribs #6 through #11 were fractured. On the left side ribs #9 through #11 were fractured. These fractures were post-mortem. There were 4 lacerations and a mark to the left posterior side of the head caused by blunt trauma. The blows did not fully penetrate the scalp, but not the skull. Dr. Kelley advised that these injuries occurred shortly before death. The left ear was abnormal and later determined to be similar to what is commonly called a "cauliflower ear". Per Dr. Kelley, the lower portion of the ear sustained a penetrating 45 degree incised wound from a sharp object. Though it penetrated the ear, it did not nick the neck behind the ear.

The victim's nose was broken. There was a rectangular mark on the bridge of the nose possibly from eyeglasses. There appeared to be swelling toward both eyes from the bridge of the nose that was recent. The left cheek area was discolored. The lower lip was split open on both ends. A review of the "mark" indicates a blunt object with a "V" cut out.

The right side of the face had what Dr. Kelley called possible burn marks, possibly from some type of chemical. The burns covered 25% of her body and ranged from partial to full thickness. Dr. Kelley said there were more lacerations inside the mouth that appeared to be older injuries. The lacerations on the lower lip was due to blunt trauma. On the right temple area were two of the same oval type marks.

The throat and upper chest area had discoloration from burns/scalding similar to the area of the right side of the face. The front torso had markings similar to what is commonly called road rash. It extended from the pubic hair line to the mid-breast area.

The left side of the body had another mark similar to the 14" three-quarter circle. It was also bruised. The left elbow contained fluid, as a result of an infection DR Kelley advised he did not find fractures to the hands or feet but found fresh lacerations.

The right side of the body was heavily bruised also. The right fore arm had a large apparent burn mark. The rear of the torso displayed deeper discoloration in the upper back area along with the similar discoloration described above as possible burns. The lower back and upper buttocks were lightly scratched

STATE OF WISCONSIN - VS - Linda Sue La Roche

consistently with having been dragged. The lower legs were both heavily bruised. There was swelling in the knees and feet area, due to infection.

Per Dr. Kelley, the cause of death was Homicide by Sepsis Pneumonia as a Result of Infection from Injuries Sustained from Chronic Abuse. No drugs were found in Peggy's system.

The broken nose, incise wound to the left ear, and the injuries to the head were fresh injuries occurring shortly before death. The abrasions to the stomach area; the burning/scalding; and the branding marks were inflicted within 3 to 5 days of death. There was an indication that the victim had ribs that were broken and healing at the time of death, in the same area of the newly broken ribs. Dr. Lazoritz of the Milwaukee Children's Hospital did look at photos of the ear injuries and advised that he believed that both ears were either swollen or slightly swollen as a result of the victim being pulled or tugged by the ears. They could have also been a result of being recently beaten.

Between 1999 and 2019, the identity of the victim was simply that of Jane Doe. On 9/23/19, the Racine County Sheriff's Office received a tip from a concerned citizen that a woman, identified as Linda Sue Laroche, of Cape Coral, Florida, was telling people that she had killed a woman back when she lived in Illinois. It was learned that in 1999, Laroche lived in McHenry, Illinois, with her then husband and her five children. Three of the children lived in her home, two in the area.

In October 2019, Investigators from the Racine County Sheriff's Office interviewed one of Laroche's children upon receiving this tip and learned that back in 1999, they had living with them a woman by the name of Peggy Lynn Johnson, 3/4/76. Laroche, a registered nurse, took Peggy in because she was homeless. The arrangement was that Peggy would act as a nanny and housekeeper in exchange for living with the family.

Laroche's children recall that Laroche was very abusive to Peggy and that it was not uncommon for Peggy to have signs of injuries from Laroche. At times when not working for the family, Peggy would be made to sleep and stay in a crawl space under the home. Laroche was verbally and emotionally cruel to Peggy, at times screaming at her like an animal. One recalled Laroche stabbing at Peggy's head with a pitchfork, one recalled Laroche slapping Peggy in the head and face. They all recalled seeing Peggy with injuries and one even asked Peggy what had happened to her after noticing a black eye. Peggy told the child, who was then an adult, that Laroche had punched her.

In November of 2019, Laroche's former husband, RWJ, also confirmed that Laroche was extremely abusive to Peggy. That Laroche was what some described as a "force to be reckoned with". RWJ reported that he recalled seeing Peggy at his home for the last time. He had come home from work and found Peggy lying on the ground lifeless. Laroche told him Peggy had overdosed and she was going to take her away from their house so they would not be involved. Laroche told him to take the kids out for ice cream. He recalled Laroche being gone for approximately 2 ½ hours and then returning home without Peggy. RWJ states that he never saw Peggy again.

On November 5, 2019, Investigators began interviewing Laroche. Laroche admitted to having taken Peggy into her home back in McHenry, IL in around 1994. She was aware that Peggy's Mother had died when Peggy was a senior in high school, so she took her in and arranged for her to finish high school. Laroche admitted that between 1994 and 1999, she was abusive to Peggy. Laroche claimed that Peggy would steal, have men come to see her at their house, and that she would go into the crawlspace of their house to steal medications. Laroche claimed that she worked in a jail program as a nurse and that the facility had no monitoring of their drugs, so she brought them home and hid them in her crawl space.

On the night Peggy went missing, Laroche said she came home and found Peggy standing at the kitchen counter with pills in her hands. Laroche stated that she asked what was going on and that Peggy dumped the pills down the drain. Laroche stated that a few minutes later after dumping the medication down

STATE OF WISCONSIN - VS - Linda Sue La Roche

the drain, Peggy fainted and that she took Peggy outside for fresh air. She stated she didn't know what to do and that she thought about calling an ambulance but didn't. It should be noted that Laroche is Registered Nurse and has been since 1987. She stated that RWJ was home at the time and that she told him to take the kids out of the house to get ice cream because the event would be traumatic for them. Laroche advised that Peggy's eyes were fluttering but she eventually woke up. Laroche advised that at this point, she decided she couldn't handle Peggy anymore and took her to a phone booth at a nearby gas station near Belvidere, IL. Laroche advised that Peggy called her grandmother and that she then conveyed Peggy to a nearby restaurant and met with Peggy's grandmother. Peggy was turned over to her grandmother and that she has not seen her since. Laroche remembers this incident occurring in 1999.

When confronted with the fact that Peggy's grandmother had been interviewed by police and said she had never met Laroche or her husband, Laroche later changed her story and admitted that she was not sure who the person was that she left Peggy with.

The following day, November 6, 2019, Laroche again spoke with police and now admitted that after Peggy took the pills, Laroche had left her home and drove Peggy to Wisconsin. Laroche admitted to letting Peggy out of the car in a rural area and leaving her by the side of the road. Laroche asserted that Peggy was not injured at all when she dropped her off and that something must have happened to her after she dropped her off, contradicting the information regarding the condition of Peggy's body at autopsy.

In 2019, through the use of Familial DNA testing, members of Peggy Johnson's family were located and her identity confirmed.

Subscribed and sworn to before me on 11/07/19

Electronically Signed By:

Patricia J Hanson

District Attorney

State Bar #: 1021793

Electronically Signed By:

Inv Hipper

Complainant