

Case Report

Planned Overkill of Paramour with Cycle Spokes by a Physically Challenged: A Case Report

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ABSTRACT

A 35-year-old male was found dead with a metallic wire twisted around his neck and both his eyeballs punctured with metallic probes. The deceased was killed as a revenge for having illicit relationship with a neighbouring woman. At autopsy, the weapons were found *in situ* on the neck and the eyeballs. The case highlights the gruesomeness of the overkill murder with description of atypical injuries, which were produced by the unique hand-made weapons. The paper highlights the preparedness of the accused and the postmortem findings along with the photographs, owing to its rarity.

Keywords: Overkill murder, Cycle spoke, Strangulation, Eyeball puncture

CASE REPORT

A 35-year-old man medium built was found dead in a closed room in a pool of blood. A metallic cycle spoke was found twisted around his neck. The two ends were coiled and padded with cloth to form a grip. The knot was present on the anterior part of the neck. Two small metallic cycle spokes found penetrated into eyeballs of the deceased. These spokes were similarly coiled, padded with cloth to hold as grip and ends were pointed. The crime team arrived and the body was sent to mortuary for autopsy. On investigations, the police found that the deceased was allegedly having physical relationship with the neighbouring women for some time. The husband of that woman, a rickshaw puller by occupation, was physically handicapped in his legs. His son worked as a watchman and the family belonged to a low socio-economic status. Further investigations revealed that the husband of that woman and her son had the knowledge of this relationship. On interrogation, the husband agreed to have hatched a plan and made the typical weapon from the spokes of the cycle wheel, a few days before the attack (Figure 1). As he was physically handicapped, he

and his son together waited for an opportunity to take revenge on the paramour. On the fateful night, when the paramour arrived at the woman's house, both her husband and son strangled him with the metallic wire and during the struggle, the husband of the woman punctured the eyeballs of the paramour with the metallic probe.

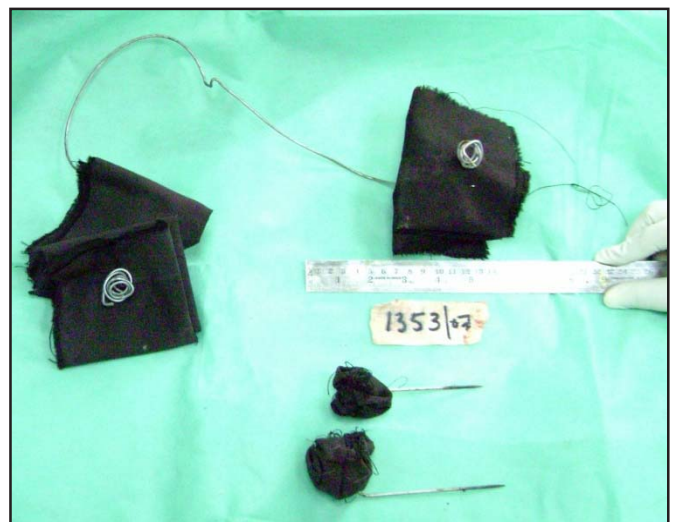


Figure 1: Weapons made out of cycle spokes with padded grip

Autopsy Findings

Body was brought into the mortuary in a state of rigor mortis. Postmortem staining was present on back and dependent parts of the body except pressure points. Tip of the tongue was found entangled in between the teeth. Face and conjunctivae of both eyes were congested. Bluish discoloration of nail beds was present. Dried blood stain was present over the nose. The metallic cycle spokes were found twisted around the neck and secured by a knot on the front of neck. Two small cycle spokes were found *in situ*, puncturing the bulbar conjunctive just lateral to cornea associated with haematoma. The spokes had entered the eyeball upto the posterior chamber with vitreous leak (Figure 2). A metallic wire was found tightly coiled around the neck with a twisted knot on the antero-lateral aspect of the neck. On removing the metallic wire from the neck, a ligature mark of width ranging from 0.3 to 0.5 cm was present (Figure 3). It was encircling completely around the neck over middle one-third of the neck, 9 cm below the mentum and 6 cm above the supra sternal notch on the anterior midline of the neck. On the lateral aspect of the neck it was 9 cm below the right mastoid tip and 10 cm below the left mastoid tip. The knot mark of size 1x0.5 cm was horizontally placed on the neck, 2.5 cm from the midpoint of right clavicle, 11 cm from tip of right shoulder, 14 cm from the right mastoid process and 3 cm above the sternal notch. On dissection of neck, the area beneath the wound showed haematoma



Figure 2: Pointed ends of cycle spokes found penetrated deep into eyeballs



Figure 3: Strangulation mark around the neck

in the muscular plane. Greater cornu of hyoid bone showed fracture associated with haematoma. Stomach was empty. All organs were congested. The cause of death was asphyxia as result of strangulation by ligature. All injuries were antemortem in nature.

DISCUSSION

Human mutilation is defined as “the act of depriving an individual of a limb, member or other important part of the body; or deprival of an organ: or severe disfigurement’ and it covers the term ‘dismemberment’¹. Criminal mutilation has been classified into defensive (with the motive to dispose the body), aggressive (where the killing and mutilation is due to outrage) and offensive (that includes lust and necrosadistic murders)^{2,3}. Studies document defensive mutilation to be the most common form of mutilation^{3,4}, but there are also studies indicating that offensive mutilation is equally common^{2,5}. Mutilation can be antemortem or postmortem. Antemortem mutilation can be a part of overkill. Overkill means killing in excess of what is intended or required⁶. It occurs usually in revenge killings wherein the perpetrator inflicts injuries on the victim far more than actually required to kill the victim. Homosexual-related homicides tend to be

more violent with overkill. The number and extent of injuries are also found to be more^{7,8}.

In our case, the accused were husband and son of the woman with whom the paramour (victim) had illicit relationship. This was discovered by them and waited for an opportunity to take revenge on the paramour. The husband had carefully planned the attack with preparation of ligature material and the metallic probes from the cycle wheel spokes. As he was physically handicapped, his son was also asked to be a partner in this crime. Both father and son strangled the victim by looping the ligature suddenly around the neck and twisted it to the point of asphyxiation. The husband of the woman had disclosed to the police that he had attacked with the metallic spokes onto the eyes from the front side sitting on his chest. According to him he had an intention to scoop out the eyes of the paramour, which had seen his wife in a bad taste. At autopsy, both the eyeballs were found to be punctured up to the posterior chamber, which shows the injury was inflicted with sufficient force and out of revenge. We report this case as overkill, because the injuries in the eye was inflicted out of revenge and was in addition to the strangulation, which was itself sufficient to cause death in an ordinary course of nature.

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