

Jeffery MacDonald- The Crime Scene

It was as if the crime was put in the charge of amateurs instead of trained investigators.

Many people, including civilians, roamed through the crime scene that was never properly secured, greatly interfering with the collection of evidence.

The agents did not draw lines around the bodies prior to this examination, making it difficult to determine the original position of the bodies.

They moved things in the kitchen, made coffee using MacDonald's coffee pot, washed dishes in the sink, used the toilet, sat on the furniture, read magazines and listened to their stereo, long before all the evidence was collected or the investigation was complete.

They also allowed the trash to be picked up without being checked for evidence!

The investigators indicated that MacDonald picked up an overturned flower pot, but Kenneth Mica, MP, stated it was not MacDonald. At the Army hearing, 6 months after the crime, Mica testified MacDonald was taken to the hospital early in morning.

Shortly after that, a long haired man wearing jeans and a field jacket, uprighted the overturned flower pot. Then he sat down on the couch in the living room!

No one knows who this man was, when he came or left.

He was not part of the investigative team.

The children were still on their back when MacDonald was taken to the hospital, but they were photographed on their sides.

At the scene a medic described seeing wounds in Kristen's back. These wounds were not exposed in the photographs or when the bodies were on their backs, as MacDonald last saw them. This brings up the question of "how many people had the opportunity to change the positions of the bodies? And why would anyone do that?"

A bloody adult palm print found on the foot board of Jeffrey and Colette's bed on the morning of the murders. The print did not match Jeffrey, Colette, Kimberly or Kristen. It also did not match any of the people known to be at the murder site that morning. Despite extensive efforts by the FBI, the source of this bloody palm print continues to remain unidentified according to CID lab reports, CID lab notes, prosecution memo, FBI report on palm print.

They claimed there was no blood on the phones as there should have been since MacDonald used the phones to call for help. Investigators used the phone to call for additional back-up. No finger prints were ever found on either phone, not even the Agent's fingerprints. An entire family lived in this apartment, yet not one fingerprint was ever found on the phones.

Who wiped the phones? Did the Agents do it before and after they used them?

It was 3 days before the investigators looked for evidence at the exact area where MacDonald said he woke up after the attack, by then many people wearing wet shoes and boots had moved through the area. This should have been one of the first areas checked.

By the third day, nothing remained where he had laid unconscious, but two pajama fibers, a hair and a small spot of blood. Between so many people going in and out, as well as gurneys to transport MacDonald to the hospital and the bodies of the victims, evidences were destroyed.

Then the Esquire magazine was discovered with a bloody finger smudge on it. Of course, MacDonald's fingerprints would be on it, as he had read it, but a CID agent's fingerprints were also found on it. This was because they read the magazines while at the scene.

The government's theory is MacDonald got the idea to stage the crime scene from an article about the Manson gang murders in California.

A wooden club, knife and ice pick found outside the back door, by Agents. This potential evidence was compromised when it was handled prior to being photographed.

On the green chair's lower front panel, a downward swipe of blood was found. This would have occurred when MacDonald, moved her to perform CPR.

A crime scene photograph shows a throw rug, flipped up at Colette's feet, as if she had she been moved downward.

When investigators cut the floor to remove a bloody footprint to take preserve and take to the lab, it was destroyed.

MacDonald's pajama bottoms were thrown away before they were checked.

MacDonald remembered he had given Kristen a bottle, so his fingerprints as well as Kristen's should have been on the bottle.

Called to the scene to give the official pronouncement of death, Dr. Neal stated when he was examining Kristen, his weight on the bed caused the bottle to move, then someone pick up the bottle and moved it to another spot on the bed. MacDonald had already gone to the hospital at this time.

When the bottle was checked, there were no fingerprints found on it, not even that of the person seen moving it. So what happened to all the prints?

William Neal, MD, the doctor who examined Colette at the scene for any signs of life, admitted he moved her body, he actually turned her over to check her back area and he thinks he may have placed her in a different position from how he had found her. It is highly possible he placed her

on the fibers. Major Joe Parson, Assistant Provost Marshal, also confirms that Dr. Neal did roll the bodies over while he was examining them.

Bill Ivory, CID denies that Dr. Neal moved the body and Agent Shaw backs him up. However, Shaw's boss, Agent Grebner and three MP's saw Shaw in the backyard conducting a search for weapons while Dr. Neal was doing his examination.

The investigators claim the crime scene was staged.

They base this theory on the fact that the coffee table was found turned on its side, as opposed to on its top. Their theory is the table was "top heavy" and could not have landed on its side unless it was placed that way. The lead investigator, Bill Ivory, substantiated this theory by explaining the 30 times or more times investigators kicked the table, it always fell on its top.

Before the hearing, Colonel Rock went to the crime scene to test Ivory's theory and reports. In the presence of witnesses, Colonel Rock kicked the coffee table. It fell on its side, hitting the rocking chair and resting on its edge.

Colonel Rock returned to the hearing to establish that his one kick, contrary to Ivory's claims, resulted in the coffee table coming to rest, exactly as seen in the crime scene photographs. Exactly as Ivory had claimed was impossible.

The Army Colonel and the CID investigator were at odds on the case. They should be working together, yet they aren't able to agree on vital evidence.

MacDonald's wallet was missing, it was later learned the ambulance drivers had taken it.

Now that you have a better idea of the crime scene, take a closer look at the evidence.

Evidence

For 3 years, the defense team persistently complained the government held them off, preventing them from conducting their own independent investigation of the evidence. Just days before the trial, the defense was finally allowed to see the evidence but did not allow time to run their own independent studies. The judge should have ordered the prosecution to give allow the defense ample time and access to all the evidence.

Human skin found under Colette's fingernail on left hand was lost. The loss was not reported.

The Weapons

The heavy, splintery stick, used as a club, belonged to the MacDonald household, without a doubt. But there are questions as to if it was kept indoors or outside. Colette used it in the backyard when she painted Kimberly's bed.

The club, knife and ice pick, initially found in the yard, were handled so poorly by CID investigators, the investigators actually returned the weapons to the yard, for photographs during a staged, second "official finding" according to overwhelming evidence.

Under oath, Military Policemen testified the weapons were first discovered and reported at 5:00 am. However, the weapons were not photographed, at that time, as they should have been. A medic's statement suggests the weapons evidence was carelessly handled. The Fort Bragg CID leader gave confirming testimony that he was shown the weapons at 5 am. Yet, under oath, the 2 lead detectives swore the weapons were found shortly before 7 am, at first light. Records prove that neither the Medic nor the Military Policemen, who testified they saw the weapons at 5:00 am, were at the murder scene when lead investigators insist the weapons were found. How is this possible?

Another mystery is the knife MacDonald pulled out of his wife's chest and threw on the floor in the bedroom. No finger prints were found on the knife. MacDonald's prints should have been on the knife.

Three witnesses saw the bloody knife next to the dresser.

CID Chief Grebner and MP's Mica and Trevere documented they saw blood on the knife blade and handle. Trevere told the Grand Jury there was blood on the knife.

Yet CID lab techs reported only a minuscule trace of blood on the blade and none on the handle. Clearly, someone had to wipe the knife clean, but why?

MacDonald had already been taken to the hospital, yet almost all of the blood disappeared.

Even more mysterious, the same knife was later proven not to be one of the weapons used!

Despite extensive efforts, neither knife found was traced to the MacDonald house.

The CID thought they had a witness, a baby sitter who had seen the bent, dull Geneva Forge Knife in the MacDonald apartment, but she was misunderstood. Her mother accused the CID of trying to manipulate her.

At the Army Article 32 hearing, when the baby sitter testified, the prosecution didn't question her about the weapons. Later when the CID interviewed her again she denied ever seeing knives, the club or ice pick in the MacDonald house.

At the Grand Jury investigation she testified that she had not seen the Geneva Forge knife, but the Old Hickory knife. On the stand however, she surprised the prosecutor when she refused to confirm seeing the knife. Later that day, she took the stand to claim she did now remember using an ice pick in the MacDonald home.

Five years later she again told the same story to the trial jury.

Bloody Foot Print

At 4:50 am, when an investigator arrived, reported he saw a footprint still drying. It takes very little time for a thin layer of blood to dry on a hardwood floor.

It is unrealistic to believe the foot print was wet after 90 minutes, as the government claimed. A bloody footprint on the hardwood floor was lost as it was collected to take to the lab.

They claim the footprint fell apart when they sawed the wood out of the floor. Government documents described, a wet, Type A blood found on the floor in the master bedroom on and near the throw rug.

Shortly before MacDonald was taken from that room, he was seen standing on his feet in that bloody area. Three witnesses told how he struggled off the gurney in the hallway, attempting to enter his children's rooms. To get off the gurney in its low position, 8" from the floor, MacDonald would have had to put his lower body into one of the doorways leading off the 3' wide hallway, such as the door where the bloody footprint was found just 10" inside the room.

Imbedded within the bloody foot print was a fiber matching a throw rug in the master bedroom where MacDonald stood earlier. Also if one's foot is wet, there would be more than just one foot print. Stepping once will not completely remove it. So the evidence suggests that MacDonald made the footprint when he struggled off the gurney, not before.

Hair Evidence

A brown hair found in Colette's left hand did belong to MacDonald or anyone else in the home.

A month after the murders, CID Agents secretly removed hairs from one of MacDonald's sweaters and labeled the samples as the "known hair of MacDonald." They were disappointed when the lab identified it as horse hair. Due to this error, the government untruthfully reported they were too small to test, according to CID lab notes note R-11, CID exhibit E-5.

The government added a new evidence claim

Long after the murders, at the 1974 grand jury investigation, an FBI Lab Technician introduced new evidence he claimed was delivered to him, that year, in a vial, marked as "part of the debris evidence collected by the CID from the bloody bedspread at the crime scene, on the bedroom floor." He then introduced a bloody hair matching Colette's, allegedly found entwined with a long sewing thread, said to be from MacDonald's pajama top. (The original lab note seems to suggest that the entangled items had already been mounted on a slide. A general note written later however indicates otherwise.)

This was viewed as damning evidence that supports the government's claim that Jeffrey and Colette had a vicious fight.

It is a common forensic requirement for photographs to be taken of the hair and thread before separating them, but the FBI Lab Technician did not do this. He washed away the alleged blood on the hair to make a microscopic examination. So the only "proof" that a bloody hair was entwined with a fiber is solely based on the word of the FBI Lab Technician.

There is something drastically wrong with this claim. In previous years, numerous examinations of the debris from the bedspread were recorded by the Army CID. These lab notes revealed a bloody hair was among the debris found, but the hair matched Kimberly's hair, not Colette's. The FBI found only one hair matching Colette in the debris from the bedspread. As documented, the CID had already found, examined and cataloged that hair. In a deposition prior to the Army hearing in 1970, the CID Technician who controlled this evidence explained how he washed hairs taken from the bedspread in preparation for microscopic analysis. So the question is, how did entwinement develop? If the bloody hair was Colette's, why was it identified as Kimberly's? If the hair was washed by the CID, how did it remain bloody for the FBI?

A Bloody Adult Palm Print

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The Pajama Top

According to the government theory, MacDonald forgot he put his pajama top over his wife and proceeded to stab her with the ice pick. They say the pajama top was in folds was not flat on the body. The 48 circular holes in the fabric could be matched to the 21 ice pick wounds, but there were in fibers where out fibers should have been and out fibers where in fibers should have been.

No examination was made to determine how much Colette's pajama top shifted with the ice pick thrusts into her chest, there had to be some shifting of her pajama top because there were 3 holes in the back, yet she had no ice pick wounds to her back. This would also bring about some shifting of MacDonald's pajama top. No attention was paid to the relative sizes of the thrust holes to MacDonald's pajama top by the Lab Technician. One of the FBI Technicians testified that some of the holes in the blue pajama top were maximum width for the ice pick representing thrust up to the hilt.

Colette's autopsy report showed no such up to the hilt wounds were inflicted. 1 -1/2" was the deepest ice pick wound listed on Colette, in the autopsy report. The ice pick blade was measured by the government as .120" wide. According to government's measurements, the ice pick blade would have penetrated an additional 1 -1/2" to cause a maximum width hole as found in the pajama fabric.

Another oversight was the lack of attention paid to the direction of bent fibers in the garment holes. CID conducted a study of directionality in 1971 and drew certain conclusions concerning

11 holes. An independent study a short time later by the FBI resulted in the same conclusion. The FBI stabbing through the pajama top experiment ignored these findings.

An example: The experiment concluded holes numbered 20, 21, and 22 in that sequence, one above the other, represented a single thrust through folded material into Colette's chest. However, both the CID and FBI directionality studies concluded that hole 20 penetrated the pajama top from the inside to the outside, while holes 21 and 22 penetrated from the outside to the inside. It is impossible to fold a cloth so a single thrust through 3 holes can duplicate these directions.

Who Removed the Pajama Top?

This concept becomes irrelevant if the eye witness accounts of the 3 Military Police, first on the scene, are true. When independently interviewed, early on, they each said the blue pajama top was not on Colette's body when they arrived. One MP stated he was sure he knelt on the pajama top while giving Jeffrey mouth to mouth resuscitation.

The 3 MP's recalled that one of Colette's breasts was visible. This gives credence to MacDonald's version of why he laid his pajama top on her chest. Yet, the question remains, "who removed it? Why do the government's photographs show the pajama top covering both breasts?"

A bath mat was photographed on Colette's lower body. The government contends MacDonald used the bath mat to wipe the murder weapons before he threw them out the back door, under bushes. Then he placed the bath mat on Colette's body to disguise the stains, they claim. The bath mat had been clean; initially it was thought to have been among freshly laundered items on the chair.

Military Policemen deny that the bath mat was on the body when they arrived. One MP stated part of Colette's abdomen was exposed and that the bath mat did not appear on the body until 15 minutes after his arrival. This corresponds with another eye witness who first saw the bath mat at her feet. Even though the wiping marks of the weapons on the bath mat do not point to any specific individual, prosecutors insisted MacDonald placed the bath mat on his wife's body.

A crime scene photograph shows this bath mat at her feet, the edges slightly turned up, as if her feet had pushed it when MacDonald slid her down from the chair to perform CPR. Yet in the evidence, two different CID photographs show the same bath mats on different areas of the body. So where was the bath mat? If it were at her feet, how did it get on her body in the photographs? Obviously someone moved it. MacDonald had already been taken to the hospital. The only people who should have been there were investigators.

Much has been made of the blood evidence found at the crime scene. According to the government, they were able to reconstruct what happened due to the fact that each member of the MacDonald family had a different blood type. While this is true, it does not take into account that any person committing this crime could have carried blood from one victim to another and throughout the apartment.

Now the logical question would be -- How seriously was MacDonald really injured?

Really injured

Over the years there have been conflicting descriptions as of Jeffrey MacDonald's wounds. Statements like "barely hurt" or "only scratches with a few cuts and bruises" were used to describe his condition.

Medical and court records substantiate MacDonald was knocked unconscious. MacDonald was taken to Womack Army Hospital. His injuries outlined below were documented by the doctors there who examined him; Dr. Severt Jacobson, Dr. Merrill Bronstein and Dr. Gemma.

Wounds to MacDonald's head included discolored, swollen, scraped blunt trauma to the left forehead at the hair line, and a smaller bruise on the right forehead. On the left posterior portion of his head, covered by his hair, was a contusion.

There was a large bruise on the left shoulder and left upper arm. A complete, through and through knife wound, that entered one place and exited another, was found on the left bicep muscle along with several puncture wounds. There were cuts on the left hand and fingers, in the web of the index finger and thumb.

4 – 5 puncture wounds were found above the heart area, on the left chest. The right chest wound was 3/4" wide, going into the anterior chest, between the ribs, at the 7th intercostal space that collapsed his lung. A 3" long, jagged laceration down the rectus muscle, in the left upper quadrant of the abdomen intersected another knife laceration, extending outward and down. These 2 different knife wounds formed an inversed "V" with the outer side of the laceration slightly shorter than the inside.

There were several punch marks across the center of the abdomen. Merrill Bronstein, MD, described the abdominal laceration as "gaping" --exposing the fascia of the muscle. The doctor stated this wound should have been sutured, but they were more concerned with the serious chest wound, bubbling blood froth with ever quick breath, indicating a collapsed lung, so the abdominal wound was taped closed.

MacDonald's injuries did not include any fingernail scratch marks according to CID reports and an interview with Dr. Severt Jacobson.

At the Article 32 hearing, in 1970, every doctor who had examined MacDonald was asked if it were possible for him to stab himself, causing the lung to collapse. All of the physicians agreed it was considered too dangerous. Dr Gemma explained the liver changes position with each inhalation and exhalation. If the knife was angled downward slightly, it might need only to go in 2 – 3 inches to damage the liver.

James Blackburn, one prosecutor, told the jurors at the 1979 trial that MacDonald only had a bump on the head, a cut on the left arm, a paper cut on his finger, several abrasions on his chest

and an incision on his chest. He also stated that MacDonald sustained no defense type wounds on his body, arms or hands consistent with an ice pick. That was not true.

At the 1979 trial the same doctors who testified this couldn't be self-inflicted wounds changed their opinion. They testified it was possible to control the depth of self inflicted wounds. On cross examination, Dr. Jacobson made it clear he was not suggesting that MacDonald had wounded himself. He reconfirmed earlier testimony that if MacDonald were to inflict a wound upon himself, he would have chosen a different location, because vital structures in this area that would make it extremely risky.

In a 1989 interview, Dr. Jacobson was asked why the change in the doctors minds. He responded that during the grand jury hearing, the prosecutor's information convinced him that he was testifying about a man who had murdered his family. The prosecutor showed him evidence -- proof -- MacDonald had done it. Despite this admission, the CID still claims, to this day, all his injuries were self inflicted.

What about Colette and the children -- Did their autopsies give any clue to the identity of the killer?

Autopsies

Thomas Noguchi, MD was the pathologist hired to do an Independent Review of the reports of the victims, he writes the following report.

"Based on my review of the autopsy reports, photographs, and investigative reports and at scene and the reviews of others, the following is my opinions and medicolegal interpretation of the wounds and injury patterns.

Colette MacDonald:

1. Three types of weapons were involved in the attack on Colette
 - (A) A blunt object with a square contact area
 - (B) A knife
 - (C) An ice pick
2. The wounds were inflicted while she was alive.
3. The three types of wounds were inflicted within a short interval of time.
4. The blunt force injuries are on the right side of the face indicating that the assailant was left handed.

(Regarding the above, it is interesting that Jeffrey was right handed. However, Greg Mitchell was left handed.)

Kimberly MacDonald:

- (1) Two types of weapons were involved in the attack on Kimberly:

- (A) A blunt object with flat surfaces.
- (B) A knife

- (2) The wounds were inflicted while she was still alive.
- (3) Most of the injuries are found on the right side of the body.
- (4) The blunt injury to the right side of the face was inflicted first.
- (5) The blunt force injury was delivered by a left handed person.
- (6) The wounds were inflicted within a short interval of time.

Kristen MacDonald:

- (1) Two types of weapons were involved in the attack on Kristen:
 - (A) A knife
 - (B) An ice pick like piercing object.
- (2) The injuries were sustained with she was still alive.
- (3) The ice pick type wounds were inflicted first followed by the stab wounds on the chest.
- (4) The stab wounds in the back were inflicted after the injuries to the front of the body.
Additional ice pick type wounds were inflicted on the chest as she was dying.
- (5) There are linear wounds on the neck which appear to have been caused by a constrictive force delivered by a ligature, such as a thin rope or a heavy string.

Based on the sequence of injuries and the types of injuries on the three deceased, my opinion is that there were multiple assailants, at least one of them whom are left handed, and carrying a blunt object, a knife and an ice pick type object are involved. The activities appeared to be well coordinated."

This was signed by Thomas Noguchi, MD

The autopsies don't really implicate anyone but do they exclude any one?