

I am Marie Sontag. I am Robbie Simpson's sister. Our St. Clair County Medical Examiner, Dr. Daniel Spitz, conducted a partial, not complete, autopsy, on Robbie. The day after the autopsy, approximately 10 days before he even received the toxicology report, he issued a death certificate stating that my brother had committed suicide.

It is our opinion that Dr. Spitz did not have sufficient information as to the circumstances regarding the death of Robbie to come to a conclusion that Robert Simpson committed suicide.

- ✍ Mary Palmateer, St. Clair County Medical Examiner's office, told us that she had received a phone call from a deputy with the St. Clair County Sheriff Department the night this occurred who told her that he was at the scene of a suicide.
- ✍ Mary Palmateer later told our family she did not know that Robbie had died in another person's home and that the homeowner was present when Robbie was shot.
- ✍ Dr. Spitz conducted a partial autopsy the day after Robbie's death not knowing that information.
- ✍ No one from the sheriff department was present during the autopsy to give Dr. Spitz information as to the circumstances surrounding Robbie's death.
- ✍ It is highly unlikely that Dr. Spitz had any photographs taken at the scene. Dr. Spitz told me that with a contact wound to the head Robbie would not have started bleeding until after he fell down to the floor there in the home. The photos show blood on top of a desk, along the side of the desk and all around the body of Robbie.
- ✍ It is unknown if Dr. Spitz even had a copy of the sheriff department report prior to the autopsy. If he did, he only would have had the initial report from the deputies and nothing from the investigator assigned to the case as he did not submit his first report until January 9th, 13 days after he was called to the scene.

As to the autopsy report itself:

- ✍ Other than the address of where this occurred, there is no information in the autopsy report as to the circumstances leading up to Robbie's death.
- ✍ There is no documentation as to what appears to be blood drops on Robbie's clothing.
- ✍ There is no documentation as to any blood being present on Robbie's hands and / or arms.
- ✍ No photographs were taken of Robbie's hands to show if there is any visible gunshot residue on them. Mary Palmateer later told me there was none visible but this was not documented in his report.
- ✍ Robbie's cap is seen lying on the floor by his head in scene photos. This could be valuable evidence. The investigating deputy told our family that he had the cap at one time but the sheriff department no longer has it. What happened to it? Did Dr. Spitz ever see it?

Dr. Spitz did not document in his report "the names and addresses of any persons present at the autopsy." This is in violation of Michigan State Law, section 52.205 (3). Mary Palmateer said she was ill and not present. No one from the sheriff department was present. An assistant in the morgue told me he couldn't remember if he was present. Who was with Dr. Spitz, anyone?

The toxicology report dated January 5, 2007 indicates that Dr. Spitz did not record the date and time that he obtained the sample from Robbie. He also did not record the source he obtained the sample from.

On March 5, 2007 my grandfather, Robert Jackson, and myself met with Mary Palmateer and spoke to her about the case. Mary told us that when she spoke at the Law Enforcement Seminar on February 27, 2007 she told the officers that if they call and say they have a suicide she would hang up on them.

We have copies of the St. Clair County Health Department annual reports for the years 2001 – 2005. Included in these documents is a report from the Medical Examiners Office here in our county. During that 5-year period 82 deaths were ruled undeterminable. In the year 2005 alone, of the 93 autopsies conducted, 24 were found to be undeterminable.

After you read the report we believe that you will have questions in your mind, as we do, as to what actually happened to Robbie that night. As our commissioners, you are Dr. Daniel Spitz's supervisors. Our family is asking that at this point Robbie's death at least be ruled as undeterminable, if not homicide, as Dr. Virani believes it should.

Thank you.