

ME #83-094
LOPEZ
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AUTOPSY FINDINGS

Stab Wounds of Chest

POSTMORTEM EXAMINATION UPON THE BODY OF
WANDA LOPEZ

On February 5, 1983, at approximately 8:45 A.M., an autopsy was performed by Dr. Joseph C. Rupp, Nueces County Medical Examiner, upon the body of Wanda Lopez in the autopsy room at Memorial Medical Center. The body is identified by a card type tag.

When first viewed in the Memorial Medical Center autopsy room, the body is clad in brown slacks and green panties which have been cut from the body.

The body is that of a well developed, well nourished, adult, white female, measuring 63" in length, weighing an estimated 170 pounds, and appearing the recorded age of 24 years. Body hair is of normal distribution. The hair of the head is black. The eyes are brown. The pupils are round, regular and equal. The teeth are natural and in a fair state of hygiene. There are no needle tracks in the arms. There are no old wrist scars. There are no defense wounds of the hands.

There is an endotracheal tube and a plastic airway in place. There is an IV in the right wrist. There is an IV in the left ante cubital fossa. There is an IV in the left hand. There is a chest tube in the left side of the chest. There are EKG patches on the chest. There are resuscitator burns of the chest. There are abrasions in the center of the chest from resuscitatory efforts. There are stab wounds of the body. One of these stab wounds has a drainage tube protruding from it. The other has been sutured shut.

STAB WOUND #1: This wound is located 18" from the top of the head in the left anterior axillary line. It is oriented in the 11 to 5 o'clock direction and is $\frac{1}{2}$ " in length. The wound penetrates the 5th intercostal space into the left chest cavity and goes almost completely through the lower lobe of the left lung. This wound goes from front to back, from left to right, not deviating appreciably in an up or down direction.

STAB WOUND #2: This wound is located 19" from the top of the head in the left midaxillary line. The wound is oriented in the 8 to 2 o'clock direction, and is 1½" in length. The wound is just at the lower level of the breasts. The wound penetrates the 7th intercostal space into the left chest cavity, and passes almost completely through the lower lobe of the left lung. This wound goes from front to back, from left to right, in a slightly downward direction.

As a result of these two stab wounds, there is approximately 2 liters of blood in the left chest cavity.

Aside from the traumatic injuries just described, autopsy findings are as follows:

Upon opening the body cavities, there are no adhesions. There is a left hemothorax of approximately 2000 ccs of liquid and clotted blood. There is a small amount of blood in the pericardial sac as the result of resuscitatory efforts. There are no adhesions, and all of the viscera have their normal anatomic positions.

HEART: The heart weighs 320 grams. The coronary vessels have their normal origin and distribution and show no significant atherosclerotic change. The heart valves are competent. The myocardium is dark red, moderately firm and homogeneous, showing no evidence of fibrous scarring or recent infarct.

LUNGS: The lungs have a combined weight of 890 grams. The left lung is atelectatic when viewed in situ. The pulmonary vasculature is unremarkable. The respiratory tree contains bloody, mucoid material. The lung parenchyma shows a moderate amount of underlying anthracotic staining. The parenchyma of the lungs is moderately edematous. There is no significant natural pulmonary disease. There has been some aspiration of blood.

LIVER: The capsule of the liver is intact. The gallbladder and biliary tree are normal. There are a few small lymph nodes at the base of the liver. The parenchyma of the liver is dark red, moderately firm and homogeneous, showing no evidence of fatty change or fibrosis.

SPLEEN: The spleen weighs 130 grams. The capsule is intact, and not tense. The parenchyma of the spleen is dark red, soft and homogeneous.

PANCREAS: The pancreas weighs an estimated 70 grams. It has the usual tan, lobular parenchyma and is normal in its gross appearance.

ADRENAL GLANDS: The adrenal glands each weigh an estimated 6 grams. They have the usual yellow lobular cortex and thin pearly gray medullary zone.

KIDNEYS: The kidneys have a combined weight estimated at 325 grams. The capsules strip with ease revealing smooth, light reddish-brown, cortical surfaces. Upon section, the cortex has the usual thickness. There is a moderately prominent line of demarcation at the corticomedullary junction. The ureters are unobstructed. The urinary bladder is empty. The external genitalia and perineal region are unremarkable to inspection. The uterus is small, symmetrical and estimated not to weigh more than 100 grams. The endometrial cavity is lined by a moderately thick layer of tan tissue. The uterine tubes and ovaries are normal.

AORTA AND GREAT VESSELS: The aorta and great vessels have their normal origin and distribution and show no significant atherosclerotic change.

GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT: The gastrointestinal tract is normal to inspection and palpation. The appendix is present.

NECK ORGANS: The laryngeal structures are patent. The cornu of the thyroid cartilage and hyoid bone are intact. The trachea and larynx contain some aspirated vomitus. The thyroid gland is small, symmetrical and normal in its gross appearance.

SKELETAL SYSTEM: The axial and appendicular skeleton are intact to inspection and palpation.

HEAD: The scalp and skull are intact to inspection and palpation.

TOXICOLOGY: Blood alcohol - Negative.

JCR/jf


Joseph C. Rupp, M.D.