

AUTOPSY REVIEW BY DR. JUDY MELINEK

Answers below.

If you quote me please refer to me as "Dr. Judy Melinek, a board certified forensic pathologist from San Francisco who is unaffiliated with the case."

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1) How certain can we be that Billey Joe Johnson Jr. died as a result of a single shotgun blast to the left side of his head entering at the left side of his head?

The autopsy report and photographs are consistent with a gunshot wound to the left side of the head. There is inward beveling of the bone on the left skull and the shot was found in the brain. There is no equivocation here. There is no other reasonable cause of death.

2) How probable is it that Billey Joe Johnson could have killed himself in the manner described?

It is highly probable that this was a self inflicted wound given the scene and the circumstances of the case. It is not unusual for people to end their own life when pulled over by the police out of fear of being arrested or incarcerated. I don't have any information about his mental state, psychiatric history or other legal history but these may shed a light on his motivation.

3) Were the entrance and exit wounds inflicted above his ear consistent with being shot with a shotgun at an upward angle?

There is an entrance wound involving his left ear and the direction the shot traveled in the brain appears to be upwards based on the autopsy report findings.

4) Considering that the kickback of a 12-gauge shotgun, how plausible is it that the gun would fall neatly on top of you in the manner depicted in the photos?

I can't assess the kickback of this particular shotgun, because this was not something that was measured. However, if it was positioned to his left and upwards, any kickback would propel it downwards and it would reasonably end up exactly in this position. "Neatly" is an inappropriate term and suggests that it was placed there. There is no documentation or evidence that the gin was moved or disturbed from its initial resting position.

7) In reviewing the original autopsy, are there any questions which may have been left unanswered or tests which could have been performed but were not done to rule out other scenarios?

Was there vehicle camera footage or body cam footage? If yes, were these reviewed?

8) Is it possible that someone else may have shot him either with his own shotgun?

While it is possible somebody else shot him with his own shotgun and staged it to look self inflicted, it is not likely that they could do this and get away with it without blood or other biological material on them, as they would have had to be at close range.

9) Is it possible that another weapon could have been used in the incident?

Yes, its possible. Anything is possible as long as it doesn't violate the laws of physics. But there is no evidence that supports an alternate scenario. The either shot gun at the scene was not matched based on the ballistic findings.

10) Are the injuries consistent with the version of events put forward by the grand jury?

Yes.

11) Are there any alternative explanations as to how the injuries were sustained?

There are many alternative explanations, but they would be speculative and not substantiated by the evidence and scene. In order for us to come to a reasonable explanation of what happened we have to look at the story that was given and compare it to the physical findings and if they are concordant then the story given is the most reasonable explanation

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