

Dr. Jose Acosta Interview 2-Dec 11, 1992

I am standing in Dr. Acosta's office, located in the lab at Illini Hospital. I have handed him a copy of Viola Lucas's autopsy and asked if he would explain it to me.

DA: "When you are talking about cause of death, that is the event that people die of, and then you also have to say what the mechanism is by which death occurred. In other words, the stabbing is an event but what happened? Did he puncture the lung? Did he cut the heart out? Whatever. That's your mechanism. I think what he [the doctor] was trying to say here [indicating a passage in the autopsy] is that the stabbing is to an artery which is in one of the main branches coming out from the cervical area of the aorta. Stabbing or cutting an artery causes hemorrhage or bleeding, and edema which is swelling of the tissues by fluid caused by that cut. That's your mechanism of death. Death is due to the stab in the neck."

BS: "Would it be accurate to say..."

DA: "It's death by stabbing of the neck."

BS: "So, the knife punctured the artery and she bled to death internally, is this correct?"

DA: "Internally, yes."

Dr. Acosta then helped me put together a drawing of the injury to illustrate the nature of the injury and to better show the location of the cuts.

END OF INTERVIEW □