

A photograph of a person lying on a wooden staircase, framed by the legs of a person standing in the foreground. The person on the stairs is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and light-colored pants. The person in the foreground is wearing dark pants and a belt. The background is a plain wall.

MURDER MOST FOUL

True Crime Stories of Murder and Mayhem

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A Bedroom Clue Nailed the Kinky Killer

It was January 14, 1982, another cold and gray morning in the Portland, Oregon suburb of Oak Grove. To most people in this Pacific Northwest metropolis it was just like any other day, at least as far as the weather was concerned. It was a day with little or no sunshine, conditions of which most area residents had become accustomed. By day's end, however, the weather would take a backseat to yet another brutal murder in the Rose City, a wild, gruesome slaying that the police believed could only have been committed by a pervert, a sexual sadist who fulfilled his wildest fantasies by carrying out an inhuman act of savagery and indecency.

The story actually began in nearby Milwaukie at Rex Putnam High School's faculty lounge, where the teachers usually meet for coffee before classes begin. Normally, talk among the teachers ranged from discussions about the usual things people talk about—weather, jobs, home life, etc. But on this winter morning conversation was centered on 44-year-old health and physical education teacher Ann Johnette Peery who failed to show up at the faculty lounge for her morning coffee, giving her coworkers reason to express their concern.

Their unease was readily understandable. Johnette, the name by which she preferred to be called, usually arrived at the school by 6 a.m. and was always one of the first to show up for work. It was generally agreed by her coworkers, however, that on this morning she must have overslept or had car trouble, or was possibly even sick in bed. She would probably arrive or call soon, they decided. As time slipped by quickly without any word from Johnette, their concern increased.

It wasn't until she failed to show up for her 7:30 a.m. class, however, that the already worried school officials had reason enough to suspect something

dreadful may have happened to the middle-aged teacher. Little did they know, they would never again see Johnette alive.

She was known for her reliability, and Rex Putnam High's principal, Roy Mattingly, knew Johnette would have called the school to inform them she wouldn't be coming in that day—unless, of course, she was unable to do so because of circumstances beyond her control. It was with that thought in mind that Mattingly decided to call Johnette's father to inform him of the mysterious circumstances.

Her father, who lived only a few houses away from Johnette's residence where she resided with a roommate, arrived at his daughter's home within minutes after being notified by the school officials. As he drove by the house at 7:55 a.m., he saw that Johnette's car was still parked in the carport. Knowing that her first class was at 7:30, her father naturally thought it peculiar and entered the house to investigate.

Once inside, he noticed that the backdoor was ajar, a fact that only served to add to his already mounting fear. Making his way quickly through the house he called out his daughter's name repeatedly. No reply. There was only silence and the sound of his voice. When he reached Johnette's bedroom only Poody, her cat, was there.

"Poody! Where's Ann?" he asked foolishly, hardly expecting an answer. After finding nothing, he made his way to Johnette's housemate's bedroom, only to find pillows and piles of bedclothes on the bed. Finding neither Johnette nor her roommate anywhere in the house, the confused and worried father climbed back into his pickup truck and headed for home.

Knowing that something was dreadfully wrong, the distraught father ran into his own home yelling, "Emergency! Emergency! Ann is missing!" Scrambling for the telephone and shaking with fear, the frantic man

immediately called the Clackamas County Sheriff's Office and reported the suspicious circumstances concerning his daughter.

In the meantime, Johnette's roommate, Susan Jones, had just returned home after having spent the previous evening at her boyfriend's house. Expecting that Johnette would have already left for work, Susan was surprised to find her roommate's car still parked where she had left it the night before. Thinking that Johnette may have had car trouble, Susan guessed that her roommate had gotten a ride to work with her father or one of the other teachers, or had possibly called in sick.

After deciding that Johnette was not anywhere in the house, Susan went into her own bedroom and was surprised to find her bed in a state of disarray. The pillows were out of place, and the bedclothes were all bunched up making the bed look as if an insomniac had attempted to sleep there. As she was calmly scrutinizing the situation, her cool-headedness quickly turned to panic when she saw the pair of feet and lower legs uncovered in the bed!

In a panic Susan screamed and rushed out of the house and into the adjoining workshop, from where she immediately telephoned the Oak Grove Fire Department. It was not known why she called the fire department instead of the police; perhaps it was the only emergency number readily available.

"There's a body in my bed," the distraught woman told the dispatcher. "It's my roommate, I think. I don't know who it is in my bed, but I think it's my roommate."

Within minutes police and fire department emergency vehicles converged on the house, located in the 13700 block of Southeast Laurie Avenue, their lights flashing and sirens wailing. And only seconds after their arrival, homicide detectives and fire department officials were at the bedside of a woman identified as Ann Johnette Peery. They were aghast at what they saw.

Ann Peery was lying face up on the bed, with a pair of red-handled scissors pushed firmly into the area of her chest which housed her heart. She was wearing a black bra, and had a pair of black bikini panties pushed halfway up her thighs, as if they had been forced on. The cops could see at a glance that the panties were not hers, as they were too tight and obviously could not have been pulled or pushed any further up her thighs.

Why had the panties, several sizes too small, been placed on her body? The cops made note of the oddity. At this point the detectives couldn't even begin to speculate about it, but it seemed a reasonable presumption that the victim's killer placed them on her as part of a kinky sexual ritual understandable only to a twisted mind.

Perhaps the most macabre aspect of the victim's appearance was that of her eyes, open and staring at the ceiling, the whites fiery red from hemorrhaging, likely caused by the black, half-slip undergarment that had been knotted tightly around her neck.

It wasn't long before the crime lab specialists began to arrive at the scene of the obvious murder, and they immediately set about their work by taping off the yard and entrance to the house identifying it as a crime scene. Once this task was completed, they conferred briefly with the detectives to obtain any helpful information, and then proceeded to survey the exterior and interior of the premises in an attempt to determine the point of entry and path of the perpetrator. They soon had a rough idea as to what order the house would be processed.

Crime lab investigators and police photographers took pictures of the body from many angles and photographed the interior of the house carefully before moving anything. They knew it was their job as much as the detectives' to protect a crime scene and avoid contamination or destruction of any important evidence that might be present.

Once the house was photographed, police fingerprint technician Clifford Daimler from the State Bureau of Identification began dusting the single story dwelling for fingerprints, of which there were many. He knew most of the prints would probably belong to the victim and her roommate and that he would probably have to go through a tedious process of elimination.

Daimler concentrated his efforts on windows and window ledges, tables, door facings, and anywhere else he might be able to pick up good impressions. But he paid particular attention to the mirrored wall in Ms. Peery's bedroom where he lifted two identifiable thumb and palm prints. It was significant evidence, provided, of course, that he could match the prints to a suspect.

While Daimler continued his work, which took more than three hours, forensic scientist Steve Snider from the Oregon State Police Crime Labs arrived and proceeded to look for such minute clues as hairs, clothing fiber and blood. He took samples of what appeared to be pubic hair from the victim's own bed, as well as samples from the bed her body was discovered in. It was a lengthy process in which Snider took samples of hair from the floor as well, the samples of which would have to be screened to separate animal hair from human hair. He also took blood samples from the bed Mrs. Peery was lying on, just in case there turned out to be more than one blood type present. He paid particular attention to the bottom sheet, which was covered with a good deal of blood, and decided to take it back to the lab to extract the blood samples.

When Snider pulled the bedclothes apart to free the bottom sheet from the bed, he discovered a gold Waltham wristwatch tangled in the sheets. In spite of the clues uncovered so far, however, the investigators knew they would be of little use to the detectives until they could match the evidence to a suspect.

According to Deputy Wayne Smith, information officer for the Clackamas

County Sheriff's Department, no weapon was inside the house and no evidence of a burglary was present. So what was the motive? The cops wondered. Were they simply dealing with a sick, perverted person who got his kicks by murdering an innocent victim? Or was there a connection between the victim and the killer? If there was a relationship between victim and killer, it would make the cops' job in solving the case somewhat easier, provided they could uncover the relationship. But so far all they had was a dead body on their hands, and they knew they had a lot of ground to cover if they were to uncover a relationship if, in fact, any relationship existed.

When the medical examiner arrived, he made a preliminary examination of the body, taking notes as he went along. He could not tell the detectives for certain whether or not Ms. Peery died as a result of strangulation or as a result of the stab wound to her chest. He refused to comment further about the case until an autopsy was performed. The body was then placed inside a black body bag and taken to the county morgue.

In the meantime, detectives went door-to-door probing for information that might shed some light on the case. Information, though, was sketchy at best. One neighbor reported hearing someone attempting to open a sliding glass door at the back of his house on the night Ms. Peery was murdered, but, unfortunately, was unable to see who it was. Richard Moore, another neighbor, told the cops that a white 1973 Mercury Cougar had been speeding away from the neighborhood that same night, almost colliding with Moore's pickup truck at the intersection of Courtney Road and Laurie Avenue, less than two blocks from the victim's home.

Angered by the near collision, Moore told the cops that he had looked extensively at the Cougar through his rear-view mirror in an effort to get its license plate number, but it was too far away to make it out. He did say, however, that there was only one person in the car, a man with short hair. He

also told the detectives he had seen the car in the area two or three times within the preceding month, and could identify the vehicle so readily because he was impressed by the good condition the ten year old car was in.

As the investigation continued, people began expressing their feelings about the brutal death of Ann Johnette Peery.

“She was such a gentle creature,” said a Portland Community College physical education instructor. “She pioneered the field of exercise in this state. Her death is a real loss to our profession.”

Such comments about her dedication to her profession clearly are not overstatements. In 1976, Ms. Peery wrote and published a book, *Exercise for Retirees*, and was a member of the Oregon chapter of the President’s Council on Physical Fitness. She was also an exercise consultant for the Oregon State Alliance of Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, an organization for retirees.

“She was a dedicated and loyal instructor,” commented the continuing education specialist at Clackamas Community College. “In nursing homes, when she walked in the door, people would just rush up and hug her.”

The next day Dr. William Brady, state medical examiner, reported some findings. Ann Johnette Peery, he said, was killed by a stab wound to the heart. There was a second wound, approximately one-half inch from the other, and was “characteristic of scissors.” Brady said that a pair of red-handled kitchen scissors was wedged firmly in the chest, so firmly, in fact, that he had to “exert considerable strength” to pull them out. Brady said that the scissors were pushed between two ribs, went through the chest wall membrane, and on through the pulmonary artery which leads from the heart to the lungs. The wound “continued through the heart and out its back side into a lung.” Brady said that heavy bleeding as a result of the wound drained three to four pints

of blood into the chest cavity.

“All of the signs were that she had been asphyxiated,” said Dr. Brady. “There was severe hemorrhaging in the eyes, which is common in strangulation victims. But she died of a stab wound.”

According to Brady, the hemorrhaging of the eyes was a clear indication that she had been choked until she reached a state of unconsciousness, and that she was most likely unconscious when the stab wound was inflicted.

Ms. Peery had also been beaten, according to Dr. Brady. She had a deep cut, inflicted over her left eyebrow that was “characteristic of an injury to a prize fighter,” and also had a massive bruise at the top part of her nose. She also had three bruises to her scalp. Brady said that results of the tests, which proved contrary to original suspicions, revealed that she had not recently had sexual relations.

In the meantime Detective Sgt. Roy Reed of the Clackamas County Sheriff’s Department, revealed that no apparent motive had been uncovered and that no suspect was in custody. Reed said that his office was working closely with the Clackamas County DA’s office, the Oregon State Police, the Oregon State Police Crime Labs, and the state Bureau of Identification in an aggressive attempt to crack the case. In announcing the details of the investigation so far, Reed also urged citizens living in the same vicinity as Ms. Peery to come forward if they had any information to offer, stressing the importance of being able to identify the driver of the 1973 Mercury Cougar seen speeding away on the night of the victim’s death.

The cops followed up on one fruitless lead after another, a frustrating effort to say the least. But they persevered nonetheless, certain they could crack the case given enough time. But first they needed a suspect to zero in on, a suspect with a motive.

After exhausting all their potential leads, Sergeant Reed and his men returned to Ms. Peery's residence to talk with her roommate once again. They asked Susan Jones to supply them with the names of everyone Johnette associated with, and stressed the importance of identifying any men she had been dating. Ms. Jones told them that she had been dating two or three men, two of which she knew for certain.

According to Ms. Jones, Johnette most recently dated a man by the name of Ronald Bolster, a licensed massage therapist. Jones told Sergeant Reed that Johnette met Bolster through a personal ad placed in the weekly newspaper *Williamette Week*, and that she appeared to care a great deal about him. She also told Reed that Johnette had been dating one of the janitors at Rex Putnam High School, LeRoy Wayne Earp. Ms. Jones told Sergeant Reed that Earp worked the night shift at the school and cleaned the gym and shower rooms, thus giving him the opportunity to come in contact with Johnette. According to Jones, it was common for Johnette to have coffee with Earp as he came off shift at 6 a.m. and was known to date him from time to time. But Johnette broke off her relationship with Earp after she met Bolster. Although Jones knew little else about the relationship between her murdered roommate and Earp, she told the cops she thought Earp drove a white 1973 Cougar!

Detectives immediately went to work checking on the background of each man, paying special attention to Earp. Turning up little information about Bolster, the cops were shocked by the details that surfaced concerning Earp.

According to police records, Earp was paroled from the Oregon State Penitentiary on March 21, 1980, after serving 14 years for the 1966 murder of 26-year-old Portland cocktail waitress Carol Jean Charlson. Charlson's nude body was found inside the trunk of Earp's car two days after she had been murdered after police were put on Earp's trail by his wife and

stepfather. He was arrested in eastern Oregon at a Pendleton motel.

Following an autopsy, it was determined that Ms. Carlson had been strangled with a necktie and that she was two months pregnant when she was killed.

According to police, Earp testified at his 1966 trial that he had picked up Ms. Charlson on the night of August 1, 1965, and the two had driven to Portland's Washington Park where they had sexual relations in his car.

"The next thing I remember," Earp said at his trial, "is drinking a bottle of beer. I looked down at Carol and made some remark for her to get dressed. I turned and looked again, and she had this necktie around her neck."

"Earp said they had some trivial argument," Detective Gordon W. Morgan said at the 1966 trial." He explained that Carol had started scratching him with her fingernails. "He said, 'I must have gone crazy,' and then he put his head down and said, 'Nobody deserves to die.'" Earp was subsequently found guilty and sentenced to life in prison for that slaying, with a possibility of parole in ten years.

Police records show that Earp has a long history of crime, beginning years before the Charlson murder and continuing throughout his stay in prison. In 1961, when he was 21-years-old, he was arrested for reckless driving following a high-speed chase in which 15 Multnomah County sheriff's deputies were involved. Later that same year, in September, Earp was charged in Clackamas County with auto theft.

As the Peery case progressed the cops could see that the earlier crimes Earp allegedly committed became more serious. Five months after the auto theft charge, Earp allegedly entered an East Multnomah County home where he purportedly beat a woman on the head with a tire iron and raped her teenage daughter.

Earp led an equally aggressive and violent life in prison. In 1967 he was involved with six other convicts who attempted to shoot their way out of prison with homemade shotguns, and stole a prison forklift as a means to get over the wall. The attempt was a failure.

In 1972, Earp went to Portland on a prison detail to pick up a shuffleboard to take back to the prison in Salem. While at a service station stop he succeeded in escaping by crawling through a restroom window. But the escape to freedom was short-lived. Two days later, donning a wig, Earp was recognized by police and arrested.

With this sudden turn of events and the unleashing of information concerning Earp's past, an arrest warrant was issued for the ex-convict by Clackamas County District Court Judge Robert D. Burns. Police agencies in the Portland area issued a statewide all-points-bulletin for the paroled killer, stating that he was now the chief suspect in the ritualistic slaying of Ann Johnette Peery.

Although Earp was the chief suspect in the case, police nonetheless questioned Ronald Bolster, the other man Johnette had been dating, as a matter of routine. Bolster refused to talk to the cops, telling them to talk to his attorney. It was later learned, however, that Bolster was out on the night of January 13th, only hours before Johnette was believed to have been murdered, and that she had called him three times leaving messages on his telephone answering machine.

In the first call, Johnette was said to have seemed very happy.

“Hi, this is Johnette,” she said on the tape. “I love you a lot.”

The second and third calls, however, were more personal, more affectionate.

“I love you. I love you. I love you. I love you, Ronald,” according to

police who released the details as an example of the recordings.

When asked if it was unusual for her to call so many times on the same evening, Bolster purportedly replied through his attorney: “Oh no. It was marvelous. She did that often. She knew the recording machine only had a limited amount of time for a message, so she’d just call back until she’d finished what she was going to say. We talked about living together. “I don’t remember who brought it up, but I said something and she said, ‘If that’s a proposal of marriage, I accept.’”

When Bolster was questioned again later with his attorney present, he seemed more cooperative. He said that he and Johnette had spent the night together at her home on the evening of January 11th, and said that they spent the night of January 12th together at his home.

“Did you spend any time together on the night of the 13th?” he was asked.

“No,” Bolster responded.

“Where were you that night?”

“At home.”

Bolster also said he arrived at his home at approximately 11 p.m. after spending some time with another woman he met through the ad he placed in *Willamette Week*. He informed the woman that he planned to live with Johnette. Little else was learned about his relationships.

On January 16, 1982, Oregon State Police Trooper Craig George spotted a white 1973 Mercury Cougar at 4: 14 a.m. parked on the shoulder of a ramp leading from Rooster Rock State Park onto the eastbound lanes of Interstate 84 in the Columbia River Gorge area east of Portland. After

checking its registration with a state police dispatcher, Trooper George learned that it was registered to none other than LeRoy Wayne Earp.

Inside the car, on the auto's passenger seat, George found a woman's slip, a pair of striped men's boxer shorts, and two pairs of women's panties. Checking the surrounding area, George found several additional pairs of panties and assorted women's undergarments that had been strewn along a nearby embankment, along with several plastic garbage bags and a brown paper sack.

Upon closer examination, Trooper George discovered that one of the bags contained about 20 pornographic "stroke books," the kind found at adult bookstores. Inside the paper sack George found a tennis ball canister which contained an empty beer bottle, cotton balls, and a disassembled plastic syringe.

Before the car was towed away, Oregon State Police Crime Lab technicians were called to the scene to go over the abandoned vehicle in a search for additional evidence. It was discovered that some of the women's panties had been soiled by what appeared to be seminal fluid, a strong indication that the person who was in possession of the panties may have masturbated into them while sexually fantasizing. Later, at the crime labs, the stains were confirmed to be seminal fluid. And analysis of a substance found inside the syringe turned out to be a strong amphetamine.

In the meantime, according to an article published in *The Oregonian*, a Portland newspaper, it was revealed that Marion County parole officers had been told that Earp allegedly threatened a woman from Salem. The woman, Cathy Elsinore, was purportedly told by Parole Officer Dave Dunn that she should tell her story to the state parole board. Instead, out of fear for her life, she moved out of state.

“Dave Dunn has my written statement in the files,” Ms. Elsinore said when she called *The Oregonian* from an unidentified location in the eastern part of the U.S. “I’m telling you this because I hate being afraid. I miss Oregon a lot.” She added, however, that Oregon was “too easy on these convicts.”

According to the report, Ms. Elsinore said she met Earp in 1981 through an acquaintance who had been introduced to him at the Marion County Jail in Salem, where Earp was being held for a parole violation at the time.

According to Ms. Elsinore, Earp asked her to become a prostitute for him. When she refused, he told her he wanted to have sexual relations with her, making threatening remarks in an attempt to persuade her to turn tricks for him as her pimp.

When Dunn and one of his associates visited Ms. Elsinore, she was told of Earp’s prior murder conviction. When she described Earp’s actions, Dunn purportedly told her that his conduct was similar to that of when he murdered Carol Jean Charlson in 1965.

“There’s no doubt that he’s going to do it again,” Ms. Elsinore quoted Dunn as having said. “It’s just a matter of time.”

Elsinore said it was clear to her that Dunn was afraid of Earp.

“He was afraid of Earp’s associates, and he told me that,” she said. “If they can’t handle that kind of danger, they shouldn’t be parole officers. They advised me to lock my doors. Dunn said that Earp had strangled and raped and killed somebody before. Dunn said this is the exact same pattern Earp used before.”

According to a state board of parole file, Earp’s remarks concerning

the slaying of Carol Jean Charlson are as follows:

“I was popping pills and drinking and I ran into this girl that I had met before at a tavern. I don’t recall much of it. I evidently strangled her with my necktie. The doctor says that the same thing happened to me that happened in the correctional institution (an earlier imprisonment), schizophrenia. The other doctors couldn’t all agree. I’m going to keep fighting this case. I’m appealing it. You can’t give up.”

All of his appeals failed.

During this period public sentiment was aroused concerning the early release of convicted killers, a sentiment that obviously was intensified to outright anger because of the death of Ann Johnette Peery. Among those expressing their concern were 110 staff members of Rex Putnam High School, where Ms. Peery taught. They expressed their concerns in a letter written and hand delivered to Governor Vic Atiyeh, calling upon him to investigate the 1980 parole of LeRoy Earp.

It was not immediately known what action, if any, was taken by Governor Atiyeh. However, Hazel G. Hays, chairwoman of the Oregon Parole Board, had some comments concerning the efficiency of the board.

“Overall, I would say that this board, no matter how it’s seen by the public, is putting all it has into its job,” Hays said.

In the meantime, among all the furor and public outcry over Ms. Peery’s brutal death and the shortcomings of the parole board—regardless of what its bureaucrats said—police stepped up their efforts to locate and apprehend LeRoy Earp. Stakeouts were set up and manned around the clock near his parents’ home in northeast Portland, and off-duty policemen were sent out on additional patrols. In spite of their efforts, however, Earp seemed nowhere to be found.

Two days later, on January 18 at approximately 4:20 p.m., an anonymous caller informed police that Earp was inside the Fred Meyer shopping center located in the 6600 block of Northeast Glisan Street in Portland, not more than two blocks from his mother and step-father's house. It was not known why he was in that area, so close to police stakeouts, but it was assumed he was in need of assistance and was attempting to make his way past the cops to his parents' house.

Portland Traffic Officer Jay A. Drum answered the radio call and soon spotted Earp crouching down in the fabric department of the store. Clad in a plaid shirt, light khaki work pants and a blue jacket, Earp tried to shoulder past the officer but without success.

"I went over to the guy and asked him if he had any identification," Drum said. "He said he didn't and gave me the name of Ray Wyatt. Then he lunged into me and tried to get by me. There was a brief scuffle, and we got the cuffs on him. He didn't have anything to say. I guess he figured his day was done."

He was then taken to the Multnomah County Courthouse Jail, to await transfer to the Clackamas County Jail in Oregon City.

It didn't take long for reporters and photographers to converge on the jail in large numbers. Some of the newsmen and newswomen decided to wait until Earp made an appearance, however, hoping to get a shot at him with a camera. When Earp was finally brought past the group of reporters and photographers he was obviously angered by their presence, at first kicking out and spitting at them. When he saw the cameras, he attempted to hide his face.

At his arraignment in the courtroom of Clackamas County Circuit

Judge Winston L. Bradshaw, Earp pleaded not guilty to the aggravated murder charges leveled against him in the stabbing death of Ms. Peery. Aggravated murder is charged whenever murder is suspected during the course of another felony, such as burglary. His trial was tentatively scheduled to begin on June 7, 1982.

Months rolled by, and the furor over Ms. Peery's violent death eventually subsided during the interim since Earp's arrest and the time his trial began. But finally, on June 14th in the Clackamas County Circuit Court of Judge Howard J. Blanding, the furor would be renewed as evidence was presented to a jury of three men and nine women, and to a packed courtroom of spectators in which there was standing room only.

During his opening statements, defense attorney John Lowe claimed that Earp fled Ms. Peery's house after finding her body with what appeared to be a kitchen knife protruding from her chest. Lowe said Earp went to a nearby shop to buy a packet of cigarettes, after which he noticed a brown paper bag in his car's back seat. The bag, said Lowe, contained items from Peery's home. Later that morning, said the attorney, Earp threw the contents of the bag over an embankment at Rooster Rock State Park.

Lowe said that Earp spent the entire day along the banks of the Columbia River, which runs by the park, with the fear that police were searching for him. Lowe said that Earp later hid in a stall in the women's toilet at the park, until being surprised by a group of women bowlers from Hermiston en route to a tournament in Portland. After Lowe inferred that Earp was being set up to take the blame for Ms. Peery's murder, Clackamas County Prosecutor Andy Eglitis questioned one of the women bowlers.

According to the witness, Diane Turner, there were eight people in the bowling party heading for Portland when they stopped at Rooster Rock State Park at approximately 7:30 p.m. Two of the women, Ms. Turner and Sandi

Simpson, went into the ladies room.

“Then this man (Earp) jumped out at me from one of the stalls and scared me to death,” testified Ms. Turner. “He came flying out at me and I went directly into a stall and he started talking to Sandi.”

According to the witness, Earp told them he had been “rolled” and left stranded at the park with only \$20 in his pocket. He offered the \$20 to the women for a ride into Portland and they agreed, but only took \$15 of it.

“He appeared very nervous to me,” Ms. Turner said. “When he pulled out of the park another car pulled in and he was looking at the car as if he was anticipating something. Down the road he appeared very aware of what was going on with both sides of the road.”

The bowlers never saw him again after dropping him off on the outskirts of Portland, but they spotted his picture in one of the newspapers two days later.

Steve Snider, the forensic scientist with the Oregon State Police Crime Lab who processed the victim’s house, took the stand and said that the fabric type and pattern of the panties found on Ms. Peery’s body matched those found inside Earp’s car and those found on the embankment at Rooster Rock State Park. He also said that sales tags found on the panties, including those found pushed halfway up Ms. Peery’s thighs, were “basically indistinguishable.”

Snider also said that pubic hairs taken from Earp after his arrest matched samples he discovered on the floor of the bedroom where Ms. Peery’s body had been found.

“Hair never identifies an individual,” Snider told the jury. “It’s not like a fingerprint. But it can exclude a lot of people. Some of the strands were

microscopically consistent with those taken from Mr. Earp. I could not screen them out. I could not tell them visually apart or microscopically apart from his pubic hair standard.”

(It should be pointed out that DNA technology was in its infancy at the time of this crime and at the time of several other crimes in this collection, and was not yet being utilized fully—if at all—by law enforcement.)

Snider also told the jury he found two partial footprints on a manila envelope and a piece of paper on Peery’s bedroom floor. He also said he found a single drop of blood on the floor near the footprints, as well as a “perfectly circular” drop of blood on the floor at the entrance to the bathroom. He said the bathroom door was spotted with a few spatters of blood, and bloodstains were found on the wall behind the bathroom sink. Bloodstained tissue was found in the toilet, details that had not previously been made public.

Elizabeth Carpenter, another criminalist with the Oregon State Police Crime Labs, testified that all of the bloodstains found in Ms. Peery’s house matched the type of the victim except for one, which was type 0 and matched that of Earp. It matched in other enzyme comparisons as well, she pointed out, stressing that Ms. Perry had blood type A. It was also pointed out to the jury that bloodstains, like hairs, could positively identify a person as a fingerprint can.

Two pharmacists who dispensed Disulfiram, more commonly known as antabuse—a drug used to treat alcoholism—to Earp three times a week, testified that the gold Waltham wristwatch found tangled in the bed sheets with Ms. Peery’s body was very similar to one Earp wore, thus linking Earp to the wristwatch.

“It looks similar,” said one of the pharmacists. “The gold face and the

band look similar.”

According to Clifford Daimler, the fingerprint expert from the state Bureau of Identification, two palm prints found on Ms. Peery’s mirrored bedroom wall matched those of Earp. They were the only prints found that matched Earp’s during Daimler’s three-hour study of Ms. Peery’s house.

Finally, on the 18th day of his trial, LeRoy Wayne Earp took the witness stand in his own defense, a move not typically exercised in a criminal trial due to the issue of opening up the defendant to cross-examination by the prosecution. It’s a risky move that usually does not pay off. In a soft voice, Earp told the jury that he told no one of his prior murder conviction, not even Peery. But somehow she found out about it, and confronted Earp with her knowledge on January 12th.

“I was getting ready to leave work and go home,” Earp said. “I saw Ann Peery and she asked me if I had ever been in prison. It caught me by surprise. I said, ‘Who told you that?’ and she asked me if I was in prison for murder. I asked her again who had told her that and she said it was privileged information. I told her, ‘Yes. I have (been in prison for murder).’ She said, ‘I don’t think you should be working here.’ She turned and walked out the door. It made me feel about that high,” he told the stunned jury, indicating less than an inch with his thumb and finger. “I knew it would cost me my job.”

He then told how he went into the North Clackamas School District offices the next day to get an advance on his pay.

“I was scared to death,” Earp continued. “I thought they were going to hand me my full check and say, ‘That’s it, bub.’”

Instead, he said, he received his advance of \$100 and nothing was said about his prison record. In dramatic testimony, Earp then described finding Peery’s body and how he panicked and fled.

“I knocked on the door, and it came open,” said Earp. “I pushed it open and yelled, ‘Hey, Ann. It’s me, LeRoy.’”

It was approximately 4 a.m. on the morning of January 14th, he said, and he wasn’t at work because he had called in sick.

“I stepped inside and kept yelling her name,” he said. “I walked maybe two, three steps and there was a light coming from the nightlights in her bedroom. I walked on inside and I saw Ann. Ann was dead. She had a knife stuck in her chest. I stood there looking at her and thought, ‘God, I gotta get the hell out of there.’ I hate to admit this,” he said, “but I was thinking more of myself, not Ann or anyone else.”

He then told the jury he drove to a nearby convenience store and bought a pack of cigarettes and a pack of gum, and when he returned to his car he found the bag containing underwear and other items owned by Peery’s roommate, Susan Jones. Someone had placed the bag on the floor of the back seat of his car, he said.

“I thought whoever it was who put that bag in my car would call the police and they would come after me and shoot me,” Earp testified. “They’d just blow me away. Who’s going to believe me?”

“Mr. Earp,” said his attorney, John Lowe, “can you look the twelve members of the jury in the eye and tell them you didn’t kill Ann Johnette Peery?”

“I did not kill Ann Peery,” said Earp, looking straight at the jury. He was then cross-examined by Deputy District Attorney Andy Eglitis.

“Mr. Earp,” asked Eglitis, “why didn’t you throw that bag out somewhere along the way to Rooster Rock State Park?”

The question raised the possibility that Earp wanted the items to satisfy his sexual fantasies once he reached the park.

“I don’t know. I just don’t know,” Earp replied.

“If you felt the police were after you, why didn’t you keep going east instead of stopping at Rooster Rock?”

“I don’t know.”

“Did you feel Rooster Rock State Park was short of garbage at that time?”

“I don’t understand,” said Earp. A few chuckles could be heard coming from the spectators.

The prosecutor then began summing up his case to the jury, indicating that a possible motive for the murder was to prevent Ms. Peery from revealing Earp’s 1966 murder conviction to school officials, which would ultimately cost him his job.

“Murder, to him, is a sexual act,” said Eglitis, in closing arguments. He speculated that Earp killed Peery in her own bedroom then dragged her to her roommate’s bed. “After he killed her, he then began to dress Ms. Peery. Where did he get those clothes from? From Susan Jones’ dresser. Part of the defendant’s erotic fantasy is the handling of ladies’ undergarments,” the prosecutor told the jury, suggesting that Earp would masturbate while handling the undergarments.

“The evidence is clear, ladies and gentlemen, that this man is a pervert,” Eglitis continued, pointing his finger at Earp. “He engages in sexual acts that the rest of us do not. We are asking you to convict LeRoy Wayne Earp for depriving Ann Johnette Peery of the rest of her life, and for depriving her

father and his family of the joy of their oldest daughter. This man fooled Ann Johnette Peery, he fooled Rex Putnam High School, he fooled Susan Jones, and I suggest he has fooled the two fine attorneys assigned to defend him. Don't let him fool you," Eglitis concluded, resting his case after presenting nearly 400 pieces of evidence and 100 witnesses.

"The state of Oregon has failed in its effort to take the rest of Mr. Earp's life away from him," said Steve Maurer, one of Earp's defense attorneys. "But you must not fail to do your duty and acquit him of this charge."

After being charged with their obligations by Judge Blanding, the jury deliberated less than three hours before returning with a verdict of guilty against LeRoy Wayne Earp, making it the second time he had been convicted of murder. Judge Blanding set sentencing for July 13th.

At his sentencing, Earp denied killing Ms. Peery, speculating that his conviction will be overturned on appeal to the higher courts.

"I don't stand before you a bitter or angry man," Earp told Judge Blanding. "I stand before you convicted of a crime I did not commit. I'm sure the court of appeals will reverse my conviction."

Chained hand and foot, Earp was sentenced to life in prison, for which he must serve at least 30 years before becoming eligible for parole, an automatic result when a conviction of aggravated murder is obtained.

As Earp was being led out of the courtroom, he saw one of the jurors who convicted him. Shaking his finger and rattling his chains, Earp said: "You made a bad mistake, pal!"

And as Earp was being led toward an elevator, an unidentified spectator yelled out, "Smile, LeRoy, you're going home."

LeRoy Wayne Earp is still incarcerated at Oregon State Penitentiary in Salem, Oregon. Since his sentence for the murder of Ann Johnette Peery, he has been convicted of weapon possession, second-degree assault, and supplying contraband to other inmates. At 74-years-old, he will likely never leave prison alive.

Editor's Note: *The names Susan Jones, Ronald Bolster, Roy Mattingly, Richard Moore, Cathy Elsinore, Diane Turner and Sandi Simpson are fictitious names and were used because there is no reason for public interest in their true identities.*



Leroy Wayne Earp

Prison Photo