

SAM HOWELL  
Director, Mississippi Crime Lab  
PHONE INTERVIEW  
NOVEMBER 1, 2016

He did no personal testing; he is reading to me from the Crime Lab reports. I can disclose the fact that he told me these things.

I asked who logged evidence in and where it came from. (He would prefer that I get an SDT and get all the reports, but he told me that:

What was logged in and where it came from?

From the autopsy, they got blood. It was negative.

GUN RESIDUE KITS: MPD delivered theirs on all three on March 26, 2014. Crime Lab did another on Christian. The Crime Lab's report is the qualified one; Sam says that the testing takes up some particles, so that is not the one they relied on; i.e. when MPD tested, they took enough of the sample to cast doubt on the second report. So, there are FOUR GSR reports.

The GSR sample for Dylan from MPD – we have report.

The GSR sample for Whitley from MPD – we have report.

The GSR sample for Christian from MPD. (GSR on both palms and on back of right palm and left palm.)

The GSR done by Crime Lab on Christian; this was the one done on the sample from the SME. It only says 'indicative particles.'

BIOLOGICAL SAMPLES:

Toxicology on Christian's blood: Result is negative, and they MAY have a 'stain card' of the blood that allows them to make a comparison. The actual sample is discarded after 6 months, but that doesn't mean they can't test anymore if they have a stain card. We'll have to request that; no one else has, nor has any agency asked the Lab to compare the blood to anyone else's. This came from the SME.

They did some DNA testing on the gun. There was *no blood on it*. The DNA that was taken from the gun produced a DNA profile that says *there was a mixture of two profiles, i.e. could be from two different people*. However, the level of allels in the sample taken from the gun are very low. Sam knows that an exclusion can be done from that sample, but he's not sure that they could get a positive if they compared it to another person's DNA. (Analogy is secretor/non-secretor analysis on blood prior to DNA.) THEY HAVE A REPORT ON THIS. There has been no

request from anyone to compare that profile to anything else taken from anyone else. No one has tested Christian's blood against the DNA samples that they have. No law enforcement agency has submitted DNA samples to the Crime Lab from any other suspect.

In other words, the Crime Lab's results from the samples reflect 3 loci, and the presence of melagenin. The melagenin means that the source is male. In order to get a really reliable DNA match, they generally need 13 loci, but with three, they can very possibly exclude someone.

GUN AND CASING: They have a .45 semi-automatic and some test fires. They have the projectile from tub, and they have a new firearms testing request that was submitted in June; somebody wants the gun to be compared to the bullet – it hasn't been done yet. Bratu requested the test, but clearly didn't pursue it at the time, but see the note below.

The gun was fired to create test fires initially for purposes of later comparisons. The trigger pull was fine, so the gun is in good working order. There is a 4.5-pound pull required to fire it; i.e. this is no hair trigger.

NOTE: Sam says that you cannot tell from GSR what kind of gun it came from. Whitley's statement is a joke.

I asked Sam who had requested reports from the Crime Lab. He said that Chris Scott and D. Thompson requested the gunshot residue results. They got some prints, and they were run through the IBIS system, which is Aphis for guns; they were looking to see if the gun was used in another crime. Trent Weeks requested that report. He asked for reports of latent prints, test fires and serology from the gun and the handle. The Coroner asked for reports on the blood.

Interesting note: In June, Bratu requested tests on the gun (test fires) and the serology. There has been a request for latent prints on the un. He did this in June.