The Importance of Bloods Spatter: A Review of The Literature

By Amanda Walker

The importance of blood spatter has always been questioned. Many people, mainly lawyers (Anderson), have argued that blood evidence is unreliable and irrelevant to criminal cases. In reality, blood evidence is one of the most important pieces of evidence and can be the deciding factor of a case (Akin, Zubakov, Adam). In some cases blood evidence has been deemed unusable and compromised. This judgment has been made because many researchers bend the rules and work outside of the guidelines given to them, thus compromising the evidence and in turn, ruling it inadmissible in court(Reilly). These mistakes are unacceptable and need to be avoided whenever possible. After going through several articles, a gap in research and the cause of these mistakes has been realized. In many of the articles the talk of the importance of forensic evidence is clearly expressed, what isn’t expressed is how important it is to follow the guidelines and rules of evidence collection. This omitted information is causing so many people to be uninformed of the rules and thus causing them to deviate from them and contaminating the evidence.

As a forensic scientist there are many guidelines you have to follow (Peschel). If these guidelines aren’t followed evidence can be contaminated, and ruled out in court. Without these vital pieces of evidence criminals are able to evade arrest and thus allowed to stalk the streets once more. In order to prevent evidence contamination, researchers discuss and study how to improve the technology already around (Taylor, Zubakov, De Bruin et al.). What isn’t discussed within the majority of these papers is how to work with the researchers in order to follow the guidelines and prevent evidence contamination.

In many research articles, authors lay out the paper in such a format that allows the reader to see exactly the way the experiment was conducted, and with what the experiment was conducted with (Creamer, De Bruin et al., Randall, Taylor). This layout allows the reader to have an idea of how the evidence is handled, but not a true understanding of how important it is to correctly handle the evidence. These papers need to have a more in depth instruction that gives people a direct and clear idea on how evidence needs to be kept. By including this material in research papers future researchers will be able to avoid any mistakes when conducting experiments.

The actual guidelines and rules to blood spatter collection and preservation are almost never discussed in academic articles or papers. This poses a serious issue by not informing the public and unaware researchers of the procedures that need to be taken. When the rules of blood spatter collection finally do come into light, it’s being used in a way that is negative to the case. When people finally pay attention to the collection of blood evidence it’s almost always in the negative sense in that the blood is corrupt and compromised, leaving it unusable in court (Reilly). By discussing the actual rules and guidelines to blood spatter collection the possibility of evidence coming up as corrupt become very slim thus allowing the evidence to be used in court as it should be. The ability to discuss the correct way of collection also allows for outside parties (Judges, Jury, or even Lawyers) to better understand the blood spatter and to realize its importance (Anderson).

Many researchers have come up with academic articles discussing how important blood spatter is, and how the background knowledge of blood spatter is important (Adam, Peschel et al,). These papers are extremely important to the blood spatter field because they do give the background knowledge that is completely necessary for any forensics researcher to know. Though very informative, these articles lack the guidelines and rules to blood spatter collection. This is important to these papers because it doesn’t matter how much knowledge you have on the subject of blood spatter evidence, if the blood is deemed corrupt or compromised, it’s completely useless to the case.

In all, researchers discuss almost everything except the actual rules of blood collection. This topic left out can be a researcher’s worst nightmare in court when their evidence is deemed unusable due to improper handling. Guidelines need to be discussed more openly and more often in order to prevent such mistakes from happening and to keep the blood evidence relevant in the court. In order to keep this corruption from happening, an educational course should be implemented and required in order to start a forensics position. This course would teach the rules and guidelines to incoming researchers and in turn might help avoid possible contamination.

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