

Final Practical Exam: Report

Avery Willets

Department of Cyber Security, University of Advancing Technology

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Professor Pollock

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Facts of the Case

On 11/5/19 at around 1400 hours, neighbors called 911 and reported the sound of a gunshot from the area of the victim's residence: 1700 N. New Colony in Phoenix, AZ. The victim, Haley Duff, was found to have been killed by a gunshot wound to the head. Neighbors reported seeing a male with gym shorts, a t-shirt, flip flops, and described as "gray" run from the house of the victim at approximately 1405 hours, about 5 minutes after the gunshot was heard.

The autopsy of the victim concluded the following: The victim died of a gunshot wound to the head, the gun found at the scene was consistent with the wounds the victim received, there was no gunpowder residue on the victim's hands, and the fingerprints show that the victim was indeed Haley Duff.

Evidence

Found near the victim were a gun, a sticky note, and a 500 GB USB hard drive. The gun was shown to match the properties of the wounds of the victim and had one round missing, indicating that it was the weapon used to kill the victim. The lack of blowback or gunpowder residue on the victim's hands indicates that the victim did not kill herself, and was instead shot by another person. However, the serial number for the gun was partially removed, so it is difficult if not impossible to know who bought the gun based on the number. The sticky note contained a username and password for an Instagram account, "Hilaryduff00", presumably belonging to the victim. The 500 GB USB hard drive was scanned and found to be wiped, but upon being scanned for latent fingerprints, contained fingerprints for the victim and a man named Upton O'Goude.

The Instagram account contained on the sticky note held several pieces of key information. It contained pictures of the victim, confirming that it belonged to her. Prior to the incident, the profile contains comments by the victim indicating her poor mental health. It also contained messages between the victim and an account by the name of "uptonogoude", presumably ran by the suspect Upton O'Goude. Timestamps indicate that the first contact between the two was on 2019-10-12 at 3:55:36. The account run by the suspect reached out to the victim, taking advantage of her emotional vulnerability by acting sympathetic to her feelings. The two continued talking over the next month, eventually making plans to meet in person. The last known post created by the victim was posted on 2019-11-05, at 09:24:17, approximately 5 hours before the gunshot was reported.

The profile "uptonogoude" also contained vital information. The photos within the profile match the description of the man leaving the crime scene, identifying the account owner as Upton O'Goude. Furthermore, the account was shown to have been created on 2019-10-08, just four days before Upton O'Goude reached out to the victim for the first time, indicating that the account was created for the purpose of messaging someone. It is also important to note that Upton O'Goude resides in Las Vegas, NV, and came to Phoenix to meet with the victim shortly before the victim was killed.

While Upton O'Goude's laptop may have once contained important information, it was mishandled by a detective and shut off before the RAM could be collected. Therefore, it is unlikely that it will be able to be properly used in court.

All the aforementioned evidence has already been collected. It is recommended to obtain a search warrant for the residence of the suspect, as well as any information which can be obtained regarding the flight and tickets of the suspect to have a further understanding of the timeline of events.

Presumed Timeline

The presumed timeline of events is as follows. On 2019-10-08, the suspect Upton O'Goude created the Instagram account "uptonogoude". At around the same time, the victim Hilary Duff posted several captions and comments indicating her possible poor mental health. On 2019-10-12, the suspect first made contact with the victim, taking advantage of her emotional vulnerability to do so. Over the course of the month, the two continued to talk, eventually making plans to meet in person. At some point before 2019-11-05 at 1400 hours, the suspect flew from Los Angeles to Phoenix. The suspect and victim presumably met and did a photoshoot on 2019-11-05, either before or after the victim's final post at 09:24:17. It is unknown what occurred in the approximately 4.5 hours between the victim's final post and her death. The suspect killed the victim at 1400 hours, then fled the scene and was seen by witnesses.