

# Amanda's Frozen Body a Dilemma For Would be Homicide Investigators

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Dr. Silvia Comparini: "There's a mark under the angle of the jaw on the right side called a bruise or a contusion, which is the classical kind of mark that fingerprints leave. Inside, there is evidence of compression deep into the neck, hemorrhage of the inside of the carotid artery, which usually is evidence of some sort of force applied to the artery. That's why I call this manual strangulation."

There are many mysteries surrounding the disappearance and death of Amanda Wienckowski, but one of the most vexing may be her whereabouts between Dec. 5, 2008, when she went missing, and Jan. 9, 2009, when her frozen and battered body was found stuffed into a garbage tote just steps away from where she'd last been seen.

Freezing a body makes it almost impossible to determine a time of death, a trick used to great effect by Richard Kuklinski, the New Jersey based Mafia hitman who was given the underworld nickname "The Iceman" for his technique of freezing his victim's bodies to mask the time of death.

Investigators who have worked on the case feel certain that Amanda was killed on the day she went missing. The killer or killers would then have had to hide the body for 35 days before placing in it the garbage tote, which was discovered in an alcove of the New Covenant United Church of Christ at the corner of Spring and Clinton streets in East Buffalo.

The pastor of the church told police he was certain the tote, which belonged to the Buffalo Housing Authority, and not been there the day before and must have been placed in the alcove during the night.

Dr. Silvia Comparini, a renowned Los Angeles-based pathologist, has her own theory. An expert in her field, Comparini has performed over 6,300 autopsies and witnessed or supervised more than an additional 12,000 autopsies. She has conducted 1,000 homicide scene investigations and given expert witness testimony in over 650 criminal, civil and military trials.

Comparini was retained by Amanda's family to perform a second autopsy after the botched job done by the Erie County Medical Examiner's office, and also took the time to visit the crime scene personally.

Using measurements made by the original medical examiner who was present when Amanda's frozen body, folded at the waist, was removed from the tote, Comparini measured the tote's interior and concluded that the body had already been frozen when it was placed in the container.

And she believes two, and possibly even three people had put her in the tote, because of the bottom up positioning of the body.

In the crime scene photographs, Amanda was head, and feet, and knees down. One leg was somewhat straight. If she truly was put into the garbage tote first, and not somewhere else, it would be improbable one person could get her into the tote that way.

"The shape of the body, which was frozen solid, does not match the shape of this container," Comparini concluded. "So Amanda was first put into what I think was the trunk of a mid-sized car, based upon the dimensions of the frozen-solid body which the original medical examiner took."

As with so many other aspects of this baffling case, Comparini's apparent solving of one mystery merely serves to create several more in its wake. Now, not only is the identity of the killer unknown, but the identity of his accomplice or accomplices must now be determined as well.

But nothing at all will happen with the case unless, somehow, the Erie County Medical Examiner's ridiculous determination that Amanda was not murdered is thrown out or overturned and the case can be reopened.