

1 OFFICER S. LANGFORD,  
2 having been duly sworn, testified as follows:

3 DIRECT EXAMINATION

4 BY MR. ASLETT:

5 Q. Ma'am, would you please state your name for the  
6 record.

7 A. Officer Sheridan Rowe Langford.

8 Q. You mentioned -- you just said Rowe Langford. Did  
9 you get married recently?

10 A. Yes, I did.

11 Q. When did you get married?

12 A. Oh, oh, my gosh -- three years ago? Two years ago?  
13 Don't tell my husband this.

14 Q. Were you Officer Rowe back on August 20, 2010?

15 A. Yes, I was.

16 Q. But now Langford?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. What do you do for a living, Officer?

19 A. I'm a crime scene investigator.

20 Q. Okay. For what agency?

21 A. The Houston Police Department.

22 Q. How long have you been a crime scene investigator for  
23 the Houston Police Department?

24 A. Since 2006.

25 Q. Have you been with HPD longer than just 2006?

1 A. Yes. I've been with them since 1999.

2 Q. What did you do for HPD from 1999 to 2006 before you  
3 became a crime scene investigator?

4 A. Well, I started out in patrol, and then from there, I  
5 became a print unit, which is like a -- a CSU that works  
6 property crimes or assaults, just crimes short of death, and  
7 then I went to a tactical team, where we ran felony warrants,  
8 and narcotics.

9 Q. So you've had to chase defendants down from time to  
10 time?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. What was your career before, if any, before you went  
13 into HPD?

14 A. I taught sixth grade science for ten years.

15 Q. And, you know, you're not the first officer who's  
16 said that they've gone from teaching to law enforcement.  
17 That's a pretty radical shift. Why'd you change?

18 A. Hmm, I didn't like the direction that the school  
19 systems are going, the standardized testing and whatnot.

20 Q. Okay. Fair enough.

21 Briefly, if you could just describe your educational  
22 background, start with college -- I'm sorry -- start with high  
23 school, work our way up. Where did you go to school?

24 A. North Carolina. I finished high school in North  
25 Carolina, and then I started out at East Carolina University,

1 with a major in geology. And came to Texas. And the oil  
2 business kind of crashed, and I took that science background  
3 and finished the degree at U of H with an elementary education  
4 degree.

5 Q. Let's talk about being a crime scene investigator.  
6 What sort of things do you have to do to become a crime scene  
7 investigator with HPD?

8 A. We do a lot of on-the-job training and outside in  
9 other agency training in death investigations.

10 Q. And if you could, just briefly describe what sort of  
11 training you undergo.

12 A. Well, we have bloodstain analysis of death  
13 investigation, because a big part of my job is looking at a  
14 body and determining whether the cause of death is an accident,  
15 a natural, or a possible murder, so I need to know what's  
16 normal and what's not normal.

17 Q. And is there both field training and classroom  
18 training involved in all this?

19 A. Yes, there is.

20 Q. About how much classroom training do you have to go  
21 through?

22 A. It varies. I could do -- my goodness, like 40 to 80  
23 hours or more per year depending upon what year and what  
24 classes are available.

25 Q. Do you have to train with or tag along with another

1 crime scene investigator as you're learning how to become one?

2 A. Yes, you do.

3 Q. And so you've been doing this for about, I guess, the  
4 past eight years now. About how many scenes -- if you don't  
5 know just let me know -- about how many scenes would you say  
6 you process in a year?

7 A. In a year?

8 Q. In an average year.

9 A. Oh dear, I -- I don't -- I don't know.

10 Q. Few or many?

11 A. Many.

12 Q. Okay. And do those include homicides?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Had you investigated homicide scenes prior to  
15 August 20, 2010, or suspected homicide?

16 A. Oh, yes.

17 Q. Okay. I want to talk about how you process a scene  
18 when you arrive just in generally -- in general, what you do  
19 when you get there, the whole process. Tell us what you do  
20 generally from start to finish.

21 A. Well, generally we -- we arrive on a scene, then we  
22 meet with the patrol officers or homicide investigators if  
23 they're already on the scene. I'll do a walk-through of the  
24 scene, just basically to get an idea of what kind of scene it  
25 is, what sort of evidence I'm looking at, and how I need to

1 process that evidence.

2           Then I come back to the scene with a camera and I  
3 shoot my way into that scene. Then depending upon what kind of  
4 scene it is, I will videotape that scene. And then the last  
5 thing I do would be pick up evidence or process evidence.

6           Q. Let's talk about how you process or collect  
7 different types of evidence. How would you process a piece of  
8 physical evidence, let's say a piece of bloody clothing you  
9 might find?

10          A. First I'm going to photograph that bloody clothing  
11 as I find it. Then I will, depending upon if I can't see it,  
12 like it's all crumpled up or whatnot, I'll unfold it, and  
13 photograph that. Then if it's wet I'll take it to the drying  
14 room so that it dries out. I -- from there, if it's going to  
15 the drying room, I then wait generally 24 hours, it'll be dry,  
16 and then it's packaged there, and then taken to the HPD  
17 property room.

18          Q. When you're collecting all this evidence are you  
19 wearing gloves?

20          A. Yes.

21          Q. Okay. Do you try to look out for and collect DNA  
22 evidence at scenes?

23          A. I do.

24          Q. And if you see a piece of evidence that might contain  
25 biological material or DNA, how do you go about collecting that

1 evidence?

2 A. It will depend upon what the -- where the evidence  
3 is, you know, I'm obviously wearing clean clothes but -- I mean  
4 clean gloves. When --

5 Q. How do you collect a piece of -- or how do you test  
6 to determine whether a piece of evidence might have biological  
7 material or DNA evidence? How do you get the DNA samples?

8 A. Okay. So for my DNA swabs?

9 Q. Correct.

10 A. I will take a, hmm, it's -- they're like glorified  
11 Q-Tips. They're just basically two sterile cotton tip swabs  
12 that are on little bitty sticks, and they're about this long.  
13 They come in a sterile package. I tear the end of the package  
14 off. Then I'll moisten them -- I'm sorry, need to slow down.  
15 Moisten them with distilled water, swab the, be it an article  
16 or a surface, then I put that back in the same sterile  
17 container that I -- or package that I got it out of, and then  
18 from there I'll seal that in an envelope or a small box, and if  
19 I seal it in the box, I put the box in an envelope.

20 Q. What -- do you have any role as far as interaction in  
21 a homicide investigation with the actual body of the victim?  
22 What -- when you arrive on a scene and there is a body there,  
23 do -- what is your role as far as doing things to that body as  
24 far as looking for pieces of evidence, do you have anything to  
25 do with that?

1           A.    Well, the scene belongs to me, but the body belongs  
2 to the medical examiner's office, and so if there is evidence  
3 on that body that I see, I can tell the medical examiner to  
4 collect that.

5           Q.    And if a victim has been removed to the hospital and  
6 is no longer there when you arrive, do you have any further  
7 interaction with that body necessarily?

8           A.    It -- it will depend upon the scene.  Some scenes I  
9 actually can go to the hospital to photograph the body, and in  
10 other scenes if the body's already been taken to the morgue and  
11 sealed, then it just goes straight to the medical examiner's  
12 office.

13          Q.    While you're processing the scene do you take  
14 measurements of where various things are?

15          A.    Yes.

16          Q.    And do you create diagrams to -- for your own  
17 purposes later on when you're -- you finish processing the  
18 scene?

19          A.    Yes, I do.

20          Q.    Okay.  I want to move forward and talk about the  
21 particular scene that we're here about today.

22                On August 20, 2010, were you dispatched to a possible  
23 homicide scene?

24          A.    Yes.

25          Q.    Do you recall about what time that was?

1           A.    Let me check.  Okay.  This would be at -- we arrived  
2 at that scene at 10:04.

3           Q.    P.M.?

4           A.    P.M.

5           Q.    So this was at night then?

6           A.    Yes.

7           Q.    And do you recall the address that it was in?

8           A.    Yes.  It was at -- I have to have glasses.  Not only  
9 can I not remember how long I've been married but I have to  
10 have glasses.

11                    Okay.  It's 1300 Redford.

12           Q.    Apartment 1708-A?

13           A.    Yes, 1708-A.

14           Q.    And is that location in Houston, Harris County,  
15 Texas?

16           A.    Yes, it is.

17           Q.    Okay.

18                    MR. ASLETT:  Your Honor, permission to approach the  
19 witness?

20                    THE COURT:  You may.

21           Q.    (By Mr. Aslett) Officer Langford, I'm just going to  
22 show you a couple of maps here that were previously labeled as  
23 State's Exhibit 1, State's Exhibit 2, and State's Exhibit 3.  
24 Could you tell the jury what State's Exhibits 1, 2 and 3 show,  
25 just generally?



1           A.    They're just maps of the -- the area leading to  
2 the -- I believe the apartment complex.

3           Q.    Okay.

4           A.    Yes.

5           Q.    And do these three maps, State's Exhibits 1, 2, and  
6 3, fairly and accurately depict the area around 1300 Redford  
7 Street, Houston, Texas?

8           A.    Yes, they do.

9           MR. ASLETT: Your Honor, State offers State's  
10 Exhibits 1, 2, and 3 into evidence after tendering to Defense  
11 counsel for inspection.

12          MR. HOCHGLAUBE: I have no objection, Judge.

13          THE COURT: State's 1, 2, and 3 are admitted without  
14 objection.

15          MR. ASLETT: Permission to publish, your Honor?

16          THE COURT: You may.

17          Q.    (By Mr. Aslett) Officer Langford, when you're working  
18 as a crime scene investigator in August 2010, were there any  
19 particular areas of the city that you were assigned to or did  
20 you go all over the place?

21          A.    No, the crime scene unit has the whole city.

22          Q.    Okay. And this particular scene was in southeast  
23 Houston area, correct?

24          A.    Yes.

25          Q.    For the record, I'm showing State's Exhibit No. 2

1 also showing the apartment complex, and State's Exhibit No. 3.

2 Tell us as best you can remember what the scene  
3 looked like to you when you first arrived.

4 A. As I recall, when I arrived it was already dark, and  
5 I didn't go in because at that point we didn't have a search  
6 warrant, and while they were obtaining that, I went to the  
7 hospital to photograph the complainant and then came back to  
8 the scene.

9 Q. Did you speak with homicide investigators to sort  
10 of get up to speed on things that had happened up to that  
11 point?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. And did you learn whether the victim in the case,  
14 Flora Ryan, had died yet?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. Which hospital did you end up going to?

17 A. Oh, the one off of Beamer, in that area, south -- I  
18 think it's Southeast Memorial.

19 Q. Tell us what you did when you arrived at Southeast  
20 Memorial Hospital?

21 A. I went into room W1-301, which is like a major trauma  
22 room in the ER, and photographed the complainant.

23 Q. Was the complainant alive at that point?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Tell us what you remember about the condition of the

1 complainant's body as you're photographing it?

2 A. She had a lot of bruising.

3 Q. Anything else that you can remember about that?

4 A. Vaginal bleeding.

5 Q. Did you photograph the bleeding -- bruising?

6 A. Yes, I did.

7 Q. And did you photograph her vaginal bleeding?

8 A. Yes, I did.

9 MR. ASLETT: Your Honor, permission to approach the  
10 witness?

11 THE COURT: You may.

12 Q. (By Mr. Aslett) Officer Langford, I'm showing you  
13 what's been marked as State's Exhibits 4 through 9. If you  
14 could generally tell the jury what these are.

15 A. These would be photographs that show the complainant  
16 as I saw her that night.

17 Q. And do these photographs fairly and accurately depict  
18 Flora Ryan's body as it appeared to you when you photographed  
19 her on the night of August 20, 2010?

20 A. Yes.

21 MR. ASLETT: Your Honor, State offers into evidence  
22 State's Exhibits 4 through 9 after tendering to Defense counsel  
23 for inspection.

24 MR. HOCHGLAUBE: I have no objection, Judge.

25 THE COURT: State's 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 are admitted

1 without objection.

2 MR. ASLETT: Permission to publish, your Honor?

3 THE COURT: You may.

4 Q. (By Mr. Aslett) Officer Langford, I'm going to show  
5 you these one by one on the projector. I want you to tell us  
6 what we are looking at in each of the photographs. First  
7 State's Exhibit No. 4.

8 A. This is a photograph of the sign outside the hospital  
9 room to show you what hospital room she's in.

10 Q. State's Exhibit No. 5?

11 A. This is a, not a close-up, but more of an over-all of  
12 her upper part of her body.

13 Q. State's Exhibit No. 6?

14 A. The left side of her face.

15 Q. And these marks here, are these the bruising you were  
16 talking about earlier?

17 A. Yes, ma'am -- yes, sir.

18 Q. State's Exhibit No. 7?

19 A. The right side of her face.

20 Q. And this black mark here, is this also a bruise that  
21 you observed?

22 A. It does appear to be.

23 Q. State's Exhibit No. 8?

24 A. Her forehead.

25 Q. And finally, State's Exhibit No. 9?

1 A. Vaginal bleeding.

2 Q. What did you do after you photographed Flora Ryan at  
3 the hospital?

4 A. I then left the hospital and returned to the  
5 scene.

6 Q. Tell us what you did next when you arrived back at  
7 the scene?

8 A. At this point I began photographing the scene,  
9 walking through, videotaping.

10 Q. And did you later create a diagram of the scene for  
11 your own reference?

12 A. Yes, I did.

13 MR. ASLETT: Your Honor, permission to approach the  
14 witness?

15 THE COURT: You may.

16 Q. (By Mr. Aslett) And Officer Langford, did you also  
17 later video the scene?

18 A. Yes.

19 Q. Officer Langford, I'm going to show you right now  
20 State's Exhibit No. 10 and State's Exhibit No. 11. If you  
21 could tell the jury what these two exhibits are?

22 A. These are a two-dimensional diagram of the scene, a  
23 map.

24 Q. And did you make both of these diagrams?

25 A. Yes, I did.

1 Q. Shortly after you went to the scene?

2 A. Yes.

3 Q. Okay. And do these fairly and accurately depict the  
4 scene at 1300 Redford, apartment 1708-A, as you found it on  
5 August 20, 2010?

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. I'm going to now show you what's been marked as  
8 State's Exhibits 12 through 75. If you could please look these  
9 over and tell us generally what they are.

10 A. (Complies.) Yes.

11 Q. And what are these?

12 A. These are photographs that I took at the scene.

13 Q. And do these photographs fairly and accurately depict  
14 the scene as you saw it on that night?

15 A. Yes, they do.

16 Q. And finally, if you could tell us what State's  
17 Exhibit 76 is?

18 A. This is a disk of the videotape --

19 Q. And does this --

20 A. -- that I took.

21 Q. Okay. And does this videotape -- well, this DVD with  
22 video on it fairly and accurately depict the scene as you saw  
23 it on August 20, 2010?

24 A. Yes.

25 MR. ASLETT: Your Honor, at this time the State

1 offers into evidence State's Exhibits 10 through 76. I'm  
2 tendering to Defense counsel for inspection.

3 MR. HOCHGLAUBE: May I have just a moment?

4 THE COURT: You may.

5 Ladies and gentlemen, we're going to break for the  
6 day so that he has an opportunity to review those. We will  
7 start back tomorrow morning at 9:30. The bailiff will instruct  
8 you on how to get back to the jury room. Please don't come in  
9 the courtroom. There will be other business being conducted at  
10 that time.

11 We can't start until you are all here. Once you are  
12 all here, we will try to get to you as promptly as possible so  
13 that we might begin, okay.

14 Please remember my admonishments that I gave you  
15 earlier. Also, if you will make sure that from the moment you  
16 get out of your car in the morning as you walk in keep your  
17 badge on up front high where everyone can see it until you get  
18 back in your car in the evening as well so that you don't  
19 overhear conversations you shouldn't overhear.

20 We'll see you in the morning at 9:30.

21 (Jury out.)

22 THE COURT: All right. You may be seated.

23 MR. HOCHGLAUBE: Judge, we don't have any objection.

24 THE COURT: All right. So for the record, State's 12  
25 through 76 are admitted without objection.

1 MR. ASLETT: I believe 10 and 11 as well, Judge.

2 THE COURT: Oh, I'm sorry. And then the two  
3 diagrams, 10 and 11 are also admitted without objection.

4 MR. ASLETT: Thank you, Judge.

5 (Proceedings recessed until September 9, 2013.)

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