

David Randle

The case of David Randle involves a possible coerced confession to the homicide of Sophie Lorek, an elderly woman in Randle's neighborhood. Randle knew Sophie through working odd jobs for her, the last time being December 14, 1990 when he fixed a toilet for her. On December 18, 1990, Sophie Lorek was found in her kitchen with a butcher knife at her feet and a pool of blood around her. A medical examiner later revealed that she had three stab wounds to the chest and one slash wound to the neck. She died due to these wounds, though a time of death was unable to be ascertained. There was broken glass on her windowsill, though the detective on this case, Detective James Boylan, did not believe it was possible for someone to enter through the window. Therefore, it is not certain how the person came in to commit this murder.

Following is the story that was introduced through the confession of David Randle. There are no witnesses and the only evidence is the coerced confession that Randle signed. During the incident, it was claimed that Randle was fixing Sophie's toilet, and he came down to her being in a heated argument on the phone. When Randle emerged from the bathroom, Sophie took the receiver out of the wall and was waving a wooden-handled kitchen knife at him. It was after this knife was waved at Randle that he took it from her, shoved her, and proceeded to stab her. The chain of events that occurred in the confession was also bizarre, which makes it less likely for this confession to be true. There also appears to be no motive or reason for Sophie to pull the receiver out of the wall, attack Randle with the knife, and have him take it from her.

It was also alleged that David Randle had taken Sophie's snub-nose colt revolver, which was the basis on which Detective James Boylan went to Randle's home and put him under arrest. Detective Michael Tillman's son told him that he had seen Randle with this snub-nose revolver and about \$1,000 on him. After hearing this information, Detective Boylan went to Randle's home and arrested him on January 4th, 1991, and the court found that the police had probable cause to do so given the evidence of the revolver. On a subsequent court date, Randle was allowed to reopen the hearing on the motion. In this hearing Detective Tillman testified that not only was his only son not in Chicago during December 1990 or 1991, but also denied that he had told the police that his son had any knowledge of the murder. Though he said this, Detective Boylan and Beverly Draper, a police dispatcher's aid, both testified that they did have the conversation about the revolver with Tillman. Boylan and Draper's statements overruled the new testimony given by Tillman, and it did not change the court's previous ruling of probable cause. Though this is the case, it is important to note that this revolver had never been found or recovered.

Detective Boylan and his colleague, Detective Timothy McDermott, were the ones who began the interrogation with David Randle, where Randle expressed that he did not have any knowledge of what happened to the victim Sophie Lorek. He also said that he had gone to a motel that night with his brother Frank and two girls, and that he had paid for this hotel room in cash. His brother had been taken to the police station alongside Randle, though nothing was documented regarding what occurred after this.

Later, Detectives George Basile and George Wilkins spoke with David Randle at Area 2 while Detective Boylan and his colleague were out questioning Randle's brother. Area 2 is of significance, as it was later found to be a place that had many reports of torture occurring, with an investigation discovering that out of 142 cases half of them had endured abuse or torture. When Wilkins left the room and Randle was alone with Basile, Randle made his admission that he was at Sophie Lorek's house on the night of the murder. It is believed that Detective Basile is the main perpetrator of the coercion of Randle into admitting he had murdered Sophie Lorek. Randle later signed a statement, written by Assistant State's Attorney Matthews, that agreed upon his admission and that he had been treated fairly. Though he did this, he later stated that he actually did not read the statement before he signed it. His conviction at trial was also almost solely based on his confession, and there were no eyewitnesses or physical evidence placing Randle at the crime scene.

David Randle also was treated unfairly when being denied medication. He was taking Dilantin for seizures, which he was supposed to take this three times a day. When Detective Basile heard of this, he dropped the bag of his Dilantin on the floor and stepped on it. After denying Randle his medications, he then proceeded to grab his testicles and keep squeezing them until he finally confessed that he had stabbed Sophie Lorek. When he went to the hospital to finally get his medications, he told the doctors of his hurting testicles. Randle also consistently alleged that during the course of questioning at Area 2 Basile had squeezed his testicles in order to get a confession.

Alongside this, a clinical psychologist, Dr. Robert Wilson, examined Randle and said that he had a very low IQ and suffered from perceptual abnormalities, attention deficit problems, and a lifelong learning disability, which could have also affected his abilities to understand his Miranda Rights or what exactly was going on during the process of his trial. Randle argues that he had ineffective assistance of counsel in these matters, as "his trial counsel fell below the objective standard of reasonableness in two aspects: (1) the failure to call Dr. Robert Wilson or any other mental health professional at the hearing on the defendant's motion to suppress or at trial and (2) the failure to call the doctor from Cook County jail as a witness at the suppression hearing."

The judge in this case was Judge Egan on December 29, 1995. David Randle's attorneys were Charles H.R. Peters, Daniel S. Brennan of Schiff Hardin & Waite in Chicago. ASA Matthews and Detective Boylan and Detective Basile were all major players in this case. Since the motion to suppress, the systemic abuse in Area 2 over the last 10 years was discovered, Jon Burge was suspended from the Police Board of Chicago after he was found guilty of abusing another person in Area 2, and there was a report released that concluded that abuse was an ongoing practice in Area 2. In 1995, on direct appeal from his conviction, Randle argued that the trial court made a mistake in thinking that his confession was voluntary and not coerced. The Appellate Court deemed that ASA Matthews was more credible than Randle in these matters. After the initial jury trial, Randle was convicted of first-degree murder, armed robbery, and felony murder. He was sentenced to serve 100 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. His rehearing was denied March 5, 1996. In 2003, Randle tried raising his coercion claim in a Successive Post-Conviction Petition, but it was dismissed on procedural grounds without actually reviewing the merits of the

case. Even after this, Randle reported once again his claim of coercion with the Special State's attorney, but the case was closed because of lack of corroborating evidence.

The Torture Commission reviewed this case in 2012 and found that there is cause for the review as "by a preponderance of evidence, there is sufficient evidence of torture to conclude the Claim is credible and merits judicial review for appropriate belief."

David Randle is currently on parole and is projected to be discharged on December 15th, 2018.