

# Criminal Law News

online



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# **Policing young people in the United Kingdom**

**Sally Ramage**

The highest proportion of victims of all crime and anti-social behaviour are children and young people and because of their age and maturity, should always be considered as vulnerable. The aim of the police is to prevent children and young people from becoming victims of crime; empower young victims of crime and anti-social behaviour to cope with the effects of their victimisation; divert children and young people away from crime; educate children and young people about the consequences of crime as victims and perpetrators; and promote the five key outcomes for all children and young people, in particular helping them to '*Stay Safe*' and to disseminate good practice through neighbourhood policing teams, neighbourhood watch, schools, youth clubs and other similar groups that engage with children and young people.

The police recognise that some children and young people, for reasons beyond their control, are more likely to become involved in anti-social behaviour and criminality than others and so the aim of the police To take a lead in identifying and diverting those children and young people at greatest risk of becoming involved in anti-social behaviour or criminality, before they enter the criminal justice system and before they are socially excluded. Increasing responsibility is being placed upon the police and all other agencies from all sectors to work in partnership in the delivery of services to children and young people from birth to adulthood. This responsibility now extends far beyond the youth justice system and is encapsulated within the legal duty to ensure that all children and young people are able to; Be healthy; Stay safe; Enjoy and achieve, Make a positive contribution; Achieve economic well-being.

Only a small proportion of our young people come into contact with the Youth Justice system as offenders, but a significant proportion do so as victims and witnesses. These and many other children and young people experience different risk factors throughout their lives that increase the likelihood of them coming to harm or becoming involved in criminality. Positive engagement with the police and their local communities will help us to identify and support

those children and young people who are at risk and help all children and young people to enjoy a positive role within their communities.

Even though only a small proportion of young people commit crime, some of them do go on to become prolific offenders and cause great suffering and misery within communities. Police processes are in place to identify these young people early in their criminal careers and develop the best youth justice practice to divert them from crime into more positive activities and lifestyles. For those that persist in offending, or commit serious crimes, the police resort to the full weight of the law. When in 2008, the UK government conducted a review of the implementation of the Human Rights Act; it found that the Human Rights Act has had no significant impact on criminal law, or on the Government's ability to fight crime other than on the UK counter-terrorism legislation. It found that the Human Rights Act has not significantly altered the constitutional balance between Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary but has been beneficial to the development of policy by central Government. The Human Rights Act has been widely misunderstood by the public, and has sometimes been misapplied in a number of settings and therefore the government ordered a review of how police, probation, parole and prison services balance public protection and individual rights and has legislated to ensure that public protection is given priority.

The police try to develop consultation mechanisms for children and young people to communicate openly with the police at the local level, ensuring that all communication is properly recognised and valued in order to share a better understanding of the issues for different children and young people and the police. The police try to work with local community and agency partners to identify children and young people at risk and to ensure local activities, initiatives and opportunities for high risk children and young people, including those committing or at risk of anti-social and criminal behaviour, truants from school, etc. meet their individually identified needs and those of their families and wider communities.

## **Follow Amanda Knox's money: Supreme Court in Italy: Knox and Sollecito's appeal reheard on Meredith Kercher's murder conviction**

**Sally Ramage**

The police in Perugia, Italy have never given what they perceive as a clear motivation for the murder of Meredith Kercher, a British university student enjoying an exchange programme at the University of Foreigners in Perugia. Taking the alternative psychological perspective on personality advocated by Mischel and Shoda (1995) would recast the way we think about crime and criminality. Criminality is viewed as an underlying disposition that provides motivation to offend, and crime as the behaviour that results when opportunities (or situations) exist that allow that disposition to manifest itself. Briar and Piliavin (1965) many years ago wrote about “situationally induced motives to deviate.” However, as Birkbeck and LaFree (1993: 130) have observed, “criminologists find it easier to conceive of situations as opportunities than as motivating factors.” This observation accurately reflects the dominance of a traditional trait orientation in criminology. In contrast, if we take seriously behaviour-situation regularities as representing the basic structure of personality, then we would view dispositions as the inextricable linkage between situation and behaviour, and crime and criminality become inseparable.

Apart from failing to show the motivation for the murder, for which Rudy Guede was already convicted but acquitted in charges of burglary and theft, this case peculiarly has a prosecution which cannot find any DNA evidence of students Amanda Knox and Raffaele Sollecito within the murder room itself, despite a vast amount of spilt blood from the victim.

However, it has long been published in American Criminal Justice journals that it is possible through new and improved techniques for detecting and distinguishing trace evidence—to find minute quantities of materials such as blood, chemicals, fibres, glass, hair, plant material,

or plastics.<sup>1</sup>

Because trace evidence samples can look similar and the environments where they are found are often complex, identifying unique characteristics and establishing a link can be difficult. Older techniques often cannot distinguish such evidence due to these challenges. The NIJ article tells that:

*‘Secondary ion mass spectrometry (SIMS) can be divided into two operational types: dynamic and static. The semiconductor industry has used dynamic SIMS for years, mainly for analysing bulk metals. Static SIMS provides information about organic compounds “adsorbed” onto a surface. (Adsorption is the binding of a substance on the surface of another and is distinguishable from total absorption.). The principle behind static SIMS is simple: the trace sample is bombarded with a high-energy atom. The term “static” indicates that the degree of surface bombardment is low enough so the chemical composition of the surface is not changed. Intact molecules, their fragments, and atoms are “sputtered” into a gaseous state from the surface. Some fraction of these particles are charged, or ionized, and can then be measured using a mass spectrometric detector. The detected masses help to identify the surface chemistry of the trace evidence. For example, an ion at mass 550 indicates a hair conditioner chemical and is easily differentiated from an ion having a mass of 270, which is derived from heroin... Static SIMS easily detects illegal drugs such as cocaine and heroin on the surface of single synthetic fibre samples. ...*

### **First locate the evidence**

The advent of DNA technology and databases has made semen stains found at the scene of a sexual assault the most valuable piece of evidence. The problem is that the semen stains must first be located and sampled.

The Italian police did indeed use fluorescence detection. The conventional method—fluorescence detection—illuminates the crime scene with light from a high-intensity lamp

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<sup>1</sup> See NIJ, Issue 249.

while an investigator views the area through optical filter glasses. This method has a number of drawbacks. Although semen fluoresces, the light it emits is weak compared to surrounding room light, thereby hindering detection. *If the crime scene is indoors, investigators must turn off all lights and black out the windows to maximize the method's effectiveness.*

This takes time and effort and increases the possibility that investigators will contaminate the area. Moreover, when blacking out a room, many other substances besides semen fluoresce, such as food spills and animal urine. In order to complete their search in a reasonable amount of time, investigators often collect all questionable fluorescing materials. Thus, detecting and documenting semen stains become the task of technicians back at the crime lab. The use of a Criminalistics Light-Imaging Unit (CLU) at the crime scene offers significant improvements over conventional approaches.

CLU is a multispectral imaging system that uses various colours of light to view the substance or structure being examined. It can locate body fluids at crime scenes under normal lighting conditions. By using a strobe lamp, signal processing, and improved optics, CLU rejects surrounding light and thereby improves both the sensitivity and specificity of the area being viewed. CLU is five times more sensitive than current fluorescing methods.

CLU allows investigators to find fluorescing evidence under normal lighting conditions and to easily view and highlight images of suspected evidence at the crime scene. Furthermore, CLU greatly reduces the chances of crime scene contamination. Luminol was indeed used at the crime scene by the Italian police.

## **Fingerprints**

CLU's fluorescence reflectance capability may allow fingerprints to be found without pre-treatment. Conventional fingerprint detection involves pre-treating evidence and using physical and/or chemical development processes. In some cases, these processes are ineffective, require additional illuminating equipment, and involve safety risks.

The United States have already fine-tuned the Smithpeter's camera which is now able to detect other types of evidence through a process called reflectance imaging. This technique uses the visible rather than the ultraviolet spectrum of light, allowing for the location and

identification of blood evidence on dark surfaces. CLU also can detect untreated fingerprints on transparent, dark, and multi-coloured surfaces.

### **Reflectance imaging**

The camera's video-recording feature works like a camcorder. This allows investigators to view and record the entire search process. Law enforcement personnel can produce individual images of possible evidence for presentation in court. Sandia National Laboratories has refined the CLU prototype for law enforcement fieldwork. Commercial cameras currently used by local law enforcement do not include the reflectance-imaging capability. Scientists have designed a handheld version of the camera for crime-scene investigators so they can do both fluorescence and reflectance imaging.

### **Blood Spatter Patterns and Trails**

Investigators often reconstruct a crime using blood trails and spatter patterns, both of which are difficult to see on dark surfaces. Police commonly spray the chemical reagent luminol on suspected areas. When luminol encounters blood, it reacts and phosphoresces, giving off a faint glow.

But luminol has a number of limitations. First, blood treated with luminol produces such a faint glow that it is difficult to see and photograph. Investigators must either wait for or create a dark environment to take the needed photos. Second, the reagent occasionally gives false reactions, causing the possible loss of several genetic markers. Third, luminol causes latent and possibly bloody impressions to smear, and it makes some diluted stains unavailable for further analysis. Fourth, luminol is cumbersome and expensive to use on large areas.

Visualizing blood trails and spatter patterns through CLU's reflectance-imaging capability will reduce the need for luminol use.

### **Knox: another inconsistency**

Amanda Knox, who was convicted with Raffaele Sollecito and then cleared, on appeal, of murdering her British flatmate Meredith Kercher in Perugia, Italy, at first said that she may return to Italy to face a retrial. She told *USA Today*:

*My lawyers have said that I don't have to... I'm still considering it, to be honest.'*

### **What the Coroner said**

Luca Lalli was the coroner who examined Meredith Kercher's body. He said that she suffered dozens of cuts and bruises. She had finger bruises around her neck, she had a bruise on her chin and over her mouth, 'as if someone pressed a palm to her chin, covering her mouth and scratching her nose. She had identical bruises on each of her inner elbows, compatible with her arms being held back. There were also small, finger-like bruises on her body consistent with a female hand and, on her pillow, a small bloody shoeprint that could never be positively identified beyond the range of Italian sizes 36 to 38, (Knox wears size 37).<sup>2</sup>

### **The timeline of this murder case is as follows:**

#### **The murder in Perugia of student Meredith Kercher**

date of event	details of event
1 November 2007	Meredith Kercher is murdered in her flat in Perugia.
2 November 2007	Local police officers discovered Ms Kercher's body.
6 November 2007	Police arrested Amanda Knox, a housemate of the Victim.
6 November 2007	Police arrested Sollecito, student boyfriend of Knox
6 November 2007	Police arrested Patrick Diya Lumumba, the local publican in whose business Knox was employed part-time.
20 November 2007	Police in Germany arrested Mr Rudy Guede, a vagrant and known to Knox.
20 November 2007	Police in Italy successfully applied for Guede's extradition.
20 November 2007	Italian police release Mr Lumumba after detention of 24 days in police custody. No charges are made re Kercher's murder.
28 October 2008	Guede, having confessed to the murder of Kercher, struck an agreement with police and after a swift trial, Guede was found guilty of Kercher's murder and sentenced to 16 years imprisonment.
28 October 2008	In summing up the case against Mr Guede, the judge ruled that Knox and Sollecito must also be trial for Kercher's murder.
4 December 2009	After a much publicized murder trial at which the world's media were present, Knox and Sollecito were

<sup>2</sup> Nadeux, B.L. (2010) *Angel face: the true story of student killer Amanda Knox*, New York: Beast Books, at page109.



	found guilty of Kercher's murder. They were sentenced to 126 and 25 years respectively.
3 October 2011	After an appeal hearing in the High Court, Knox and Sollecito were acquitted.
26 March 2013	Prosecutor's appeal case against Knox and Sollecito's acquittal was heard and the court overturned their acquittals, meaning that Knox and Sollecito must be retried for Kercher's murder.

### **The Media 'courtship'**

The case has drawn intense media interest in Italy, the UK and the US, and put the Italian police and justice system under great scrutiny. Ms Knox told *USA Today* on Tuesday 24 September 2013, that the thought of returning to Italy for the retrial was 'scary'. She added:

*'But it's also important for me to say: "This is not just happening far away from and doesn't matter to me. So, somehow, I feel it's important for me to convey that. And if my presence is what is necessary to convey that, then I'll go.'*

The Italian courts cannot compel her to return for the retrial but they could request her extradition - at which point it would be up to the US authorities to determine Miss Knox's fate, the BBC correspondent stated.

### **ABC TV interviewed Amanda Knox**

In a separate interview with *ABC TV*, Ms Knox said claims that she was a 'she-devil' and 'a heartless manipulator' was untrue. She added that what happened to her 'was surreal but it could've happened to anyone'.

She stated on television:

*'It's one thing to be called certain things in the media and it's another thing to be sitting in a courtroom fighting for your life while people are calling you a*

*devil. For all intents and purposes I was a murderer, whether I was or not. I had to live with the idea that that would be my life.'*

As to the Kercher family, Ms Knox said she wanted to say to the Kercher family that:

*'My need for justice for myself is not in contradiction with theirs. I hope that that eventually I can have their permission to pay respects at her grave'.*

The *ABC TV* interview was timed to coincide with the June 2013 release of Ms Knox's autobiography, *Waiting to Be Heard*, for which she was reportedly paid more than \$4million (£2.5m), according to the Washington reporter for the *BBC*, Mr David Willis. In her book Amanda Knox maintains that on the night of Meredith Kercher's death she was at Raffaele Sollecito's flat smoking marijuana and watching a movie.

### **Knox, Sollecito and Guede**

Both Ms Knox and Mr Sollecito maintain their innocence. Ms Knox insists that on the night of Meredith Kercher's death she was at Mr Sollecito's flat smoking marijuana and watching a movie. Another man, Rudy Guede, originally from Ivory Coast, was convicted in a separate trial and sentenced to 16 years for the killing. Miss Knox and Mr Sollecito were tried and sentenced to 26 and 25 years in prison respectively after being convicted of murder and sexual violence in December 2009. Ms Knox received an extra year's imprisonment for slander after she falsely accused Mr Lumumba of committing the murder. However, they were freed on appeal by a court in Perugia four years later in October 2011 after doubts were raised about the forensic evidence against them.

### **The victim's family**

Prosecutors and lawyers for the Kercher family then challenged the acquittals of Knox and Sollecito which were subsequently overturned by the Court of Cassation because of the way the appeals process had been handled. The Court of Cassation's judges sharply criticised the appeal court, saying its ruling had been full of deficiencies, contradictions and illogical conclusions.

### **The published court ruling**

The Supreme Court ruling (published in June 2013) said the appeals court judges had ignored some evidence, considered other evidence insufficiently, and undervalued the fact that Ms Knox had accused an innocent man. The appeal court judges were also criticised by the Supreme Court for not taking into account the sentence against Guede, which said he had not acted alone. The re-run of Ms Knox's and Mr Sollecito's appeals began in Florence on 30 September 2013 and is technically not a new trial, but a continuation of the original one and therefore not considered 'double jeopardy.' If this new hearing confirms the original convictions of Knox and Sollecito, Italy would then be expected to request Knox's extradition. However, the US is famously reluctant to hand over its citizens.

Knox, 26, spoke out in a magazine interview in which she stressed her innocence and stated that her refusal to show up at the hearing is not an admission of guilt. She had been convicted of murdering and sexually assaulting student Meredith Kercher in Perugia, Italy, with her then boyfriend Raffaele Sollecito, 29, in 2009. Knox's Italian ex-lover begged for cash on *British TV* to fund his representation at the retrial for the murder of Meredith Kercher. Raffaele Sollecito, 29, appealed to viewers of ITV's *Daybreak* for help to pay his legal bills if he returns to Italy to attend this Supreme Court hearing. He said on *Daybreak* that his life has effectively been ruined. He said:

*'I cannot find a normal life, a job, a career or something to focus on instead of the trial, how to pay lawyers.'*

### **Interviewed by magazine Oggi**

Amanda Knox has revealed that she wishes to meet the parents of murdered Meredith Kercher and visit Meredith Kercher's grave. In her interview with *Oggi*, Knox spoke in front of a camera on the side of a hill overlooking her home town of Seattle, dressed in a blue T shirt, ear rings and wearing little make up she appeared tense as she answered questions under a steel grey sky. In this interview with Italian glossy weekly *Oggi* she stressed her innocence and insisted that not appearing at this Supreme Court hearing was not an

'admission of guilt'.<sup>3</sup> Amanda Knox said that an 'abyss of pain' stands between her and Meredith Kercher's family but she one day wants to visit the grave of her murdered friend with Meredith's parents.

### **Knox's words**

Her words were:

*'Contact the Kerchers? I haven't yet tried. There is this abyss of pain that separates us, that has grown during the trial. I haven't had the courage to cross it. Millions of times I've thought about it and millions of times in my own way I haven't done it because I am scared that they will think it a legal strategy or a media one. I don't want them to think of me like that. I read what they said about the trial, about Meredith. I've read John Kercher's (Meredith's father) book. I was absorbed and annihilated by the trial, by prison. I still don't have the strength to cry, to digest the loss of Meredith. I would like to meet them, one day I would like to go with them to the grave of my friend. I don't want to impose myself on their pain, I hope that I can meet them halfway, even if for now it is too early, they still think I am guilty and that is something that hurts me a great deal.'*<sup>4</sup>

In March Italy's Supreme Court rejected that ruling and ordered a fresh trial which will begin in Florence.

Knox explained why she would not be going. She said:

*'I am trying to rebuild my life. I have only one. I cannot risk exposing it to danger and another injustice. I don't have the money to go back to Italy. Not going back is an admission of my innocence; it is not an admission of guilt. There is always the fear of another unjust verdict. I still have faith in Italian justice. That's why I am still here fighting.'*

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<sup>3</sup> In 2009, Amanda Knox was initially convicted of murdering and sexually assaulting Meredith Kercher with her then boyfriend Sollecito.  
<sup>4</sup> Meredith, 21, was killed in 2007. Sollecito and Knox were both convicted of her murder in 2009 and then cleared on appeal. Their murder trial ended in 2009 with Knox being given 26 years jail, while Sollecito, got 25 years - however in 2011 an appeal court overturned the verdict after it emerged that forensic police had bungled in gathering the evidence against them and as a result it was considered flawed and unreliable.

*There is no trace of me in that room- in the room where my friend was killed. It is impossible that I could have taken part in such a situation and not exists in that room, that is the proof of my innocence which has been ignored. The proof of innocence is the fact that there is no trace of me in that room, I would ask anyone to answer logically, to prove how you can take part in a murder, an orgy, where I supposedly have the murder weapon in my hand and not leave a trace. This is proof of my innocence and it is being ignored but I have faith that if people look at this logically without any prejudice they will see I had nothing to do with this. They have robbed me of four years of my life, everything that I could say I said in a hundred court hearings, everything that I possessed, happiness, ingenuity, faith in others, was taken away. I was a little girl when they threw me in jail - now I feel as if I am 40 years older than I am.'*

Knox continued:

*'I did not kill Meredith. I did not kill my friend and I even thought about going to Florence because it drives me mad to think that someone can puff out their chest and point their finger at my empty chair and stain me with a crime that I didn't commit. I can understand that you can try and build up an allegation, a conviction, even if there is no damning proof and no motive but they have really exaggerated against me.'*

Knox also revealed how she had been to see a psychologist. She said:

*'I've been twice, my mother insisted on it. I didn't want to go because I had been seen by the psychologists in jail and I can't say they helped much, they just wanted to fill me with anti depressants. The first time I went I couldn't say a word. The second time I spoke for 15 minutes solid and at the end I had a panic attack. I couldn't and I still can't, get rid of all the sadness and of the sensation of feeling trapped. I feel like one of those animals that is hunted by a bigger animal. After I was*

*cleared I thought everything would be OK, that things would have returned to what they were like before, happy, carefree. I tried to convince myself that everything was going well, that it was just a question of time and that the sadness would pass. But it didn't pass, the sadness went on, the months slipped past and I was still freaked out, exhausted. Now I have accepted this limbo, even if perhaps I will go back to the psychologist - not even writing my book cured me....I can understand the investigators. They were under pressure; they had to find the guilty ones quickly. On my part they got a rapid and wrong idea from my behaviour, my presumed coldness and they decided that I had something to do with the murder, they didn't know exactly what but in some way I was involved, I was guilty and I deserved jail. I'm very angry with the prosecutor Giuliano Mignini and the investigators but I will forgive them instantly if they admit their mistake. They don't have to say sorry, just that they regret it. I don't want revenge. I would feel such a relief if Mignini admitted he made a mistake. To say that I was innocent would signify that not only had a mistake been made but a mistake had been made on top of another and another to cover up a whole bunch of mistakes. The investigators, the judges, don't want to admit this to themselves and to the public...it's all a question of reputation but justice is made up of human beings and human beings can make mistakes.'*

Knox also spoke of Sollecito in her interview when she said:

*'... We speak all the time, I encourage him, and I tell the whole world that he is innocent. He knows that we have lived through a nightmare. He knows that I can count on him and he can count on me. How can my attending court in Florence help him? He is suffering more than me in all this - the unjustified conviction, the media and the prosecution it's all being carried out by his country, his people but I have no power. I am simply his friend, a proud friend.'*

Certainly, the Kercher family lawyers, Francesco Maresca and Serena Perna do not agree with Knox and Sollecito's decision not to attend the fresh trial which is expected to last from 30 September until end of November 2013, with a verdict due by the end of December 2013.

### **Books published about this murder**

There have been many books published on the subject of the murder in Perugia of British university student Meredith Kercher. Among these books are:

- \* *Murder in Italy: Amanda Knox, Meredith Kercher, and the murder trial that shocked the world*, authored by Candice Dempsey and published in 2013 by Amazon as an e-book;
- \* *Waiting to be heard* authored by Amanda Knox and published in 2013.
- \* *Honour bound: my journey to hell and back with Amanda Knox*, authored by Raffaele Sollecito in 2013;
- \* *Numerology for Amanda Knox* authored by Ed Peterson and published in 2013 by Create Space Independent Platform;
- \* *Trial by fury* authored by Douglas Preston and published by Amazon in 2013 as an e-book;
- \* *Walking with Amanda* authored by Florisbela Inocencio and published in 2013 by Amazon as an e-book.
- \* *Single attacker theory of the murder of Meredith Kercher and the murder trial that shocked the world*, authored by Candice Dempsey and published in 2013 by Amazon as an e-book;
- \* *Meredith, our daughter's murder and the heart-breaking quest for the truth*, authored by Mr Kercher and published in 2013 by Hodder & Stoughton;
- \* *The Amanda Knox story: a murder in Perugia*, authored by Kimberley Brown and published in 2013.
- \* *The fatal gift of beauty* authored by Nina Burleigh and published in 2012 by Broadway Paperbacks;
- \* *L'assassino di Meredith, anatomia del processo di Perugia*, authored by M. Montagna and published in 2012 by Aracno.
- \* *The study abroad murder: trial of the century* authored by Will Savive and published in 2011 by Del-Grande Publishing Inc.;
- \* *The monster of Perugia* authored by Mark C. Waterman and published in 2011 by Perception Development;

- \* *Finding justice in Perugia: a follow-up to "Injustice in Perugia"*, a book detailing the wrongful conviction of Amanda Knox, authored by Bruce Fischer and published in 2011 by Amazon as an e-book;
  - \* *Death in Perugia* authored by John Follain and published in 2011 by Hodder & Stoughton;
  - \* *Death in Perugia: the definitive account of the Amanda Knox case*, authored by John Follain and published in 2012 by St Martin's Press.
  - \* *The murder of Meredith Kercher* authored by Gary C. King and published in 2010 by John Blake;
  - \* *Murder in Italy: the shocking slaying of a British student, the accused American girl and an international scandal*, authored by Candice Dempsey and published by Berkley Publishing in 2010; and
  - \* *Darkness descending- the murder of Meredith Kercher* authored by Paul Russell, Graham Johnson and Luciano Garafano and published in 2010 by Pocket Books and,
  - \* *Angel face: the true story of student killer Amanda Knox: the real story of student killer Amanda Knox*, authored by Barbie Latza Nadeau and published in 2010 by Beast Books.
- The murder of the pretty British university student, Meredith Kercher, reminds police and criminal lawyers alike of the so-called 'monster of Florence' as portrayed in the book *The monster of Florence*, authored by Douglas Preston and Mario Spezi, and published in 2000 by Random House Group Limited, a very perceptive book which was much acclaimed for its exposition of the series of killings in Florence not so long ago.

### **The worrying ignorance of comparative criminal law and the influence of publications on the Kercher murder on the public**

The amount of material written by the media today on any one murder case is astonishing and disquieting because it must affect public opinion, and much of the material often shows ignorance of comparative criminal law. It is disquieting that often, the victim's family receive little or no compensation for their suffering and for the death of their relative, yet many suspects, successfully acquitted, go on to receive millions of dollars from book royalties and prepayments by publishers, which reinforces the theory that the media care little for victims and much for salacious details, true or false, which sell books and newspapers. This is certainly the case in the United States ('US') but not so in the United Kingdom ('UK') because here in the UK, recent legislation has stopped convicted criminals from profiting from their crime by way of book writing, television appearance fees and suchlike.



## Conclusions

It is a fear that the true story of what happened to Meredith will never be known, and that the true winners are the publishers and newspapers and lawyers. A young daughter who goes abroad in a university exchange year and who never returns is the worst tragedy and the most unfinished closure for parents. Parents never expect to outlive their children because it is not natural and all five immediate members of the Kercher family will suffer their sad loss forever.



## Be careful what you wish for

Sally Ramage

*'Okay, it's smoke and mirrors. So what?*

*You'd be surprised how much of the legal process*

*Is exactly like that. Just like in Hollywood,*

*Image is everything in the courtroom, dahhhling!'*

Darlene Ricker, American lawyer and legal journalist, in Nash, B., and Zollo, A. (editors) (1995) *Lawyers wit and wisdom*, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Running Press Book Publishers.



Photo: woman lying in a bath full of alleged real currency- Source: Google.

The *Daily Mail* featured a photograph of a wealthy young Philippine woman, Jeane Napoles, following which publication, Ms Napoles found herself under investigation for tax evasion largely, allegedly, due to photos published online of her allegedly privileged lifestyle.<sup>5</sup>

The *Daily Mail* also reported in the same short article that Jeane Napoles' mother is already under police investigation as part of the Philippines' biggest ever fraud case. The photos which they posted featured designer dresses, jewel-encrusted shoes and fast cars, and instead of

admiration of their alleged possessions, there was public condemnation from people in the Philippines, her home country, where an estimated 28 per cent of people live in poverty.



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