The Staged Crime Scene

What is “staging” a crime scene?

- **Staging** is a conscious criminal action on the part of an offender to thwart an investigation
- **Equivocal death investigations** are those inquiries that are open to interpretation

It is not...

- The term "staging" should not be used to describe the actions of surviving family members who cover or redress a loved one, who is found nude or has died in an embarrassing situation. These activities are certainly understandable considering the shock experienced by a relative who encounters the sudden and violent death of a loved one

Equivocal Death Investigations

- The facts are purposefully **vague or misleading**
- The death is suspicious or questionable based upon what is presented to the authorities.
- Deaths may resemble homicides or suicides; accidents or naturals
- They are open to interpretation pending further information of the facts

The Staged Scene

- The presentation of the homicide victim and the manipulation of the crime scene by a clever offender could make the death appear to be a suicide

**TYPES OF CRIME SCENE STAGING**

1. The most common type of staging occurs when the perpetrator changes elements of the scene to make the death appear to be a suicide or accident in order to **cover up a murder**
2. The second most common type of staging is when the perpetrator attempts to redirect the investigation by making the crime appear to be a sex-related homicide
**INVESTIGATIVE STRATEGIES**

1. **Assess the victimology** of the deceased.
2. **Evaluate the type of injuries and wounds** of the victim in connection with the type of weapon employed.
3. Conduct the necessary **forensic examinations** to establish and ascertain the facts of the case.
4. Conduct an **examination of the weapon(s)** for latent evidence as well as ballistics and testing of firearms.
5. Evaluate the **behavior(s) of the victim and suspects**

6. **Establish a profile of the victim** through interviews of friends and relatives.
7. **Reconstruct and evaluate the event.**
8. Compare investigative findings with the autopsy and **confer with the medical examiner.**
9. **Corroborate statements** with evidential facts.
10. Conduct and process **all death investigations** as if they were **homicide cases**