AMSEC 06 -- Eberling's Motive

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MOTIVE

Richard Eberling was jealous of the Sheppards. In interviews with Cooper and letters that Eberling wrote, he constantly made negative comments about Sam Sheppard. He would say things that would make one believe he idolized Marilyn and then say things that put her down.

Ed Wilbert, a former employee of Eberling, made the statement that "You know Marilyn was going to blast him, and told him so. She didn't like him." Exhibit 42 Affidavit by Alan Gore.

Eberling's attitude toward Marilyn Sheppard was elicited in interviews. Some of these comments include:

Cooper: "What do you think of her (Marilyn) as a companion?"

Eberling: "I thought she was a pretty swinging girl. A little bit spoiled. She was one of the golden girls from Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights. She kept a distance. My men raved about her."

Cooper: "What do you mean 'golden girls'?"

Eberling: "It's the gals that are raised and pampered. They're the highlight of the season, the rare catches."
Cooper: "What could Marilyn have done differently—to change the outcome?"

Eberling: Gives answer ref. Sam and adds "...He was a pampered spoiled brat."

Cooper: "I understand that Marilyn Sheppard had an unhappy childhood, so why do you say .......... ?"

Eberling: "She was raised by aunts. She was pampered and spoiled. Pampered and spoiled in high school. Pampered and spoiled when going out with Sam. Cleveland Heights High School was quite a high school. Sam--I'm sure he was a spoiled brat and allowed a lot of privileges."

Cooper: "Do you think that is unfair?"

Eberling: "Yep. They lived in a golden era. We in Westlake, we lived in cornfields in Westlake. Now Westlake is creme de la creme."

Cooper: "How is it you understand that .......... so many men don't?" (Prior dialogue dealt with Eberling's view on why men are better off than women.)

Eberling: "I've always had that. Its always been with me. Marilyn--I think she was class conscious. The way she lived, the way she was raised on the east side. The east
side was raised to think they were better. Just like Bay Village looked down on people in Westlake."

Cooper: "We had talked to an employee of yours and he said that she caught you trying to steal."

Eberling: (Making a face) "Nope. Nope. Nope. There was nothing there to steal out of this house. That house was bare."

Cooper: "Actually, this was Ed Wilbert."

Eberling: "He couldn't have said that. He was not aware I was stealing. Where did you find him?" (Cooper noted that Eberling made a very peculiar face, part-wonderment, part awe, part pleasure.)

Cooper: "It wasn't easy."

Eberling: "I don't think he bad mouthed me. (He only worked at the Sheppards once.) I never discussed my clients with him. How would he know that I took something out of the Sheppards' house?"

Cooper: "Actually, he was quite reluctant. He said that she caught you trying to steal."
Eberling: "Bullshit. Bullshit. That's not true. Maybe its jealousy on his part. Because he never made it .........."

Cooper: "How would you feel if you did something you didn't know about?"

Eberling: "I would be lost in another world. If you are referring to my blackouts. I don't honestly think that I ever went into another personality. I'm ashamed of what I did. But I paid my debt to society. I'd love to have it blacked out, but I can't. I can't live with it forever. I think I'll die before I leave here. ........"

Cooper visit with Eberling, September 17 - 18, 1994 Exhibit __43__. Eberling was jealous of Sam Sheppard's athletic ability, particularly Sam's participating in sports in high school. Eberling told Cynthia Cooper in interviews and letters that his foster mother would not permit him to participate in sports. He resented this. The only items found broken in the Sheppard home the night of the murder were Sam and Marilyn's athletic trophies.

Dr. Paul Kirk, a renowned criminalist, was brought into the Sam Sheppard case by Sheppard's defense counsel. During the post trial period, Kirk conducted his own investigation. Regarding the broken trophies he wrote, "Under no conditions would this assist in establishing the event as the work of a burglar ...... It is completely consistent only for someone who hated the Sheppards, or who was jealous of their athletic tendencies and abilities." Exhibit __44__. Page 35 Item 6 of Affidavit of Paul Leland Kirk dated April 26, 1955.
In an interview with Eberling in August 1991, the following dialogue was conducted. Exhibit 45, Cooper affidavit. A section of this interview is addressed at this point to show how the murder continued to trouble Eberling.

This portion of the interview began with a discussion about whether Eberling had ever had psychiatric care. He said that he had seen a psychiatrist in the late 1950's.

Cooper: "How long did you see doctors?"

Eberling: "The second doctor --- I went eight months and backed away."

"Dr. Karnosh -- must have been a year and a half."

"He told me I was hiding something and 'til it came out, I wouldn't have peace."

Cooper: "Before the murder, did you know Marilyn was pregnant?"

(Cindy Cooper: a reaction from Richard Eberling as if becoming pale at the thought.)

Eberling: "She didn't show. I'm looking right now, she didn't show. Marilyn wore very California type clothes -- a blouse, a pair of shorts."
Cooper: "What was so upsetting to you that you went to a shrink about it?"

Eberling: "It bugged me. It drove me nuts. It gave me a lot of hell. Even to this day. I put it out of my mind for 26 years. I knew that he told a lie.

"Why was Houk's fireplace burning on a very hot night and why didn't police scoop it up?"

"The thing is over done and gone and that's it."

Eberling suddenly asks "Why do women fight back when they are raped"

The following information was obtained during an interview with Eberling March 27 and 28, 1993. Exhibit __46__, Cooper affidavit.

Eberling discusses washing windows at Sheppards on July 2, 1954. He stated, "Guest room Marilyn was sleeping in. Her slippers were perched outside the bed. Pink slippers. Gray carpet. Blue walls. Twin beds, white bedspreads, white curtains. A sewing machine. A chair. That was all borrowed."

Cooper: "Describe the room."
Eberling: "There were two beds. Spool beds -- Jennie Lynn ... rounded at the corners. There were headboards -- wood. Same as the footboards. With white washable bedspreads. Priscella curtains. There was a sewing stand. On the lake side. No machine. I don't know if it was in it or not. There was a doily on top if it. And a chair. A wooden chair with tied-on upholstery. With a gray carpet. Blue walls. Marilyn's slippers were on the side of the bed. It told you there was trouble in the household (the slippers). Cause she was sleeping in the guest room."

Cooper: "Anything else -- any kind of night stand?."

Eberling: "There was an insignificant night stand. With a lamp (demonstrate how it had crossed poles with shades that dip down). There was a doily. A white doily. Square. Not cotton ... more woven. There was a closet on the right hand side. I was never in the closet. It was closed when I was in there. You had to shut the outside door to get in the closet (because of the way that the doors closed).

Later Cooper engaged Eberling in conversation concerning Esther Houk. Eberling has maintained Esther Houk threatened to kill Marilyn Sheppard and that Sam and Spen Houk covered for her.

Eberling: "Why were Sam and Spen so close -- out water skiing, out boating? It was nothing to go swimming together. They were always together. Should I say you dumb broad, you got a queer husband. All you do is express sympathy for Sheppard and what happened. I think I was considered as family."
Cooper: "Really?"

Eberling: "Yeah. And when things happen, they don't expect that (you'll go blabbing about it.) They can trust you."

In an interview with Eberling September 17 and 18, 1994, Exhibit 43, Cooper affidavit, Cooper and Eberling engaged in a discussion regarding Esther Houk and her possibly being the murderer, Cooper asked "Why were there so many blows?"

Eberling response: "Just the frustration came out. She just beat and beat and beat. Just the insane moment in it. I think she exhausted herself with blows. She spent her energy, trying to beat something out, a devil or a demon that she had in mind. I don't think Dr. Sam Sheppard loved Marilyn. Not when they moved to Bay Village. His position as a physician went to his head. He wasn't street smart. He only knew medicine and that was it."

The following statements were made during an interview Cooper conducted with Eberling on March 27 and 28, 1993. Exhibit 46.

Cooper: "Do you think Marilyn Sheppard was having an affair?"

Eberling: "Nope, that wasn't her nature. I'll never forget how my men looked when they came home and told me about her."
"What men?"

"Ed Wilbert. Bill Saurheimer. They said wow what a dish. She looked like the cover of a magazine. California influence -- tan, a different manner of dress. Women were wearing cutoffs around their knees. Marilyn wore them up, tight."

Did Marilyn flirt with you?

She didn't flirt with me. She didn't flirt with the men. She was strictly a lady.

In a letter written by Eberling to Cynthia Cooper on April 13, 1992, Exhibit 47, Eberling states "Sam was very spoiled in growing up. Being on staff of the family owned hospital made him a superstar, period."

In a letter written by Eberling to Cynthia Cooper dated February 23, 1991, Exhibit 48, Eberling states, "Marilyn Sheppard, she would have gotten rid of dear Sam. Could safely say she would have remarried .......... One last comment Marilyn would still be coaching. Besides teaching classes on exercise for golden ager's. Her second marriage would have been most successful. She had given too much freedom by her father, as Sam was very spoiled by his parents.

During an interview conducted by Cynthia Cooper with Eberling in August 1991, Eberling was asked "Do you get jealous?"
Eberling's response: "CAS (Children's Aid Society). Only in one respect, that'd be on Sunday, when you'd see a neatly groomed child. It looked as if all American parents were there to pick up children. I can remember the couple coming up the drive. That's where the pang of hurt and jealousy comes in. That's the only time. Years ago I would have been depressed and hurt. When I was a little boy, I couldn't go to movies. Sheer hell. I've always had pretty much what I want."

"He (Karnosh - Cleveland Clinic Psychiatrist) told me I was hiding something and 'til it came out, I wouldn't have peace. I knew in the late 60's what it was. It was the truth that came out about the murder. I never liked Sam Sheppard and yet I had that damn feeling of caring. He was arrogant. Condescending. An indifferent attitude. One of the problems I had, he used people and thought he was a gift to mankind. Arrogance. If you don't have humility you are in trouble. A lot of arrogant mannerisms. Sit down, get along, well, and that would come across. I thought - who the hell does he think he is? Where is he coming from?"