

Witnesses Describing Motive and Method in Hans Reiser Murder Trial

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Week six in the Hans Reiser murder trial began Monday combining both motive and method, at least according to how prosecutors want jurors to see it, over why and how the Linux programmer's wife was killed.

One witness, a former Olympic judo coach who awarded the defendant a black belt, testified Hans Reiser was proficient at choking, a popular move in that sport. Prosecutor Paul Hora alluded to that method of murder during his opening statements. Testimony by judo expert Willy Cahill was the first time jurors heard from somebody other than prosecutors attesting to the defendant's high-level skills at the martial arts.

Another witness, Stanford children's doctor Peter Koltai, testified that the defendant accused his wife of having Munchausen Syndrome by Proxy, a rare disease where mothers invent illnesses for their children so they can be operated on. That has been a recurring theme throughout the trial _ that Hans Reiser was accusing his wife of having that disorder. The doctor was the first medical professional to discount that theory.

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