

Case: Brian Hussong

Complete each question briefly but thoroughly.

1. **Brian Hussong was found guilty in the murder of Neil LaFevé. What were the two key pieces of evidence that ultimately led to his conviction? Why were they so critical in this case?**

Both the .22 caliber shells and the voiceprint analysis of Agnes Hussong were key pieces of evidence in this case. A ballistics expert showed that the bullets fired from one of the guns that Brian Hussong owned matched the case shells found at the scene of the crime. Next, Agnes' voice was recorded with wiretaps installed in Hussong's home. It was during that conversation that she admitted to hiding Brian's guns and talking about alibis and such.

2. **List the four secondary pieces of evidence in this case.**

Pool of blood, broken sunglasses, bones, a tooth

3. **Which two people convinced the jury most of Brian's guilt? Why were they so influential?**

William Rathman (the ballistics expert) and Ernest Nash (the voiceprint expert) together convinced the jury of Brian's guilt. They did this through scientific analysis; an objective view of the case. There were no subjective statements from these experts.

4. **What was the significance of this case?**

This was the first sanctioned use of wiretaps in Wisconsin on the home of a suspected murderer.

5. Create a chronology of people and events.

September 24, 1971 – Neil LaFevé does not show up for his Birthday Party. 6:30 PM... wife Peggy calls his boss Harold Shrine.



Harold Shrine drives to the Wildlife Area to investigate. All indications show that Neil had finished his job but Neil was nowhere in sight. He calls Peggy to notify police.

The police search until dawn when his abandoned truck is spotted. A pool of blood, broken sunglasses, spent .22 caliber shells, a shallow grave containing his head and a shallow grave containing his body was discovered.

Sergeant Marvin Gerlikovski orders all poachers previously arrested by LaFève to be interviewed. Interviews lead to one person, Brian Hussong.

Hussong, a repeat offender, refuses polygraph.

Sergeant Marvin Gerlikovski orders a wiretap to be installed in the home of Brian Hussong and his girlfriend Janice.

Recorded conversations between Janice, Hussong's mother and grandmother, Agnes, talk about hiding guns and creating alibis.

Police confiscate guns from Agnes Hussong's home. William Rathman, ballistics expert, confirms that the spent .22 caliber shells came from one of the guns owned by Mr. Hussong.

Ernest Nash, voiceprint expert, confirms the voice of Agnes Hussong in the recordings submitted as evidence.

Prosecutor Donald Zuidmulder completes witness interviews.

Brian Hussong receives a life sentence for the killing of Neil LaFève.