A Holistic Approach to Textile Damage Examinations

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Is textile damage a biology discipline or a trace evidence discipline?
Case Study 1

- The remains of an elderly couple reported missing were discovered underneath the house they shared with their daughter.
- The father had died from blunt force trauma to his head.
- The cause of death of the mother could not be conclusively determined.
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Case Study 2

• A 2yr old girl went missing from the bedroom she shared with her 3 sisters.

• The window was open and the flyscreen had been cut on 3 sides at the bottom to create a flap.
Case Study 3

• After an altercation with the suspect the victim ran inside the back door of his house.
• The suspect shot him through the security door.
• The suspect argued it was an accidental shooting.
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Case Study 4 & 5

• Not all assaults involve biological evidence.
• Corrosive and flammable liquids can also be used.
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Case Study 6

• The victim had been fatally stabbed.
• Crime scene found fibres on the knife blade.
• The knife was then sent for DNA.
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What we are now doing:

• Textile damage sits under the fibres discipline in our Chemical Criminalistics team.
• Crime Scene and Biology staff are cross trained to assess cases and do a preliminary examination.
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