

# Did police omit evidence on priest?

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SANTA CRUZ — Did police gloss over evidence of sexual impropriety when seeking clues to the murder of Father John Karastamatis?

Public Defender Jerry Christensen suggested such Thursday at the public hearing for Edward Bowman, suspected of killing the Greek Orthodox priest.

The idea angered District Attorney Art Danner, who said Christensen was "grasping at straws in light of the evidence."

Danner and Christensen engaged in a heated exchange outside the courtroom as they left for the noon recess following questions about the priest's sexuality.

Just before that recess, Christensen questioned Det. Ron Truhitte about allegations of sexual aggression by Father John and suggested that Truhitte had not followed up on those leads in a timely fashion.

Specifically, he referred to a still-unspecified report that Father John visited a gay bathhouse in San Jose and was "a well-known switch hitter."

Danner objected to the questions, but Judge Richard Kessell overruled him.

Thursday, Christensen raised the

## Mystery, surprise surface

SANTA CRUZ — The preliminary hearing for murder suspect Edward Bowman is unfolding like a daily soap opera.

Evidence has popped up like numbers at a Bingo game; and, after three weeks of testimony, nobody's card is filled.

Allegations still sit without supporting evidence.

Faceless names have surfaced.

The latest clue is a diagram of the murder scene that police found in suspect Edward Bowman's home on River Street.

Det. Ron Truhitte testified Thursday that police found the

diagram there after Bowman's wife, Anna, committed suicide last December.

Truhitte said he interviewed a witness who said she saw Edward Bowman draw the map of the murder scene.

The "stay tuned" question posed by Thursday's revelation is: Why were pieces of evidence marked on that map with the same numbering sequence that officers used at the scene of the crime?

The witness who allegedly saw Bowman draw the map is expected to testify when the hearing resumes Tuesday morning.

questions in the context of the police investigation.

"I think there are inferences that have been somewhat overlooked that the crime could have occurred as a result of sexual behavior as well as burglary and robbery."

Danner contends burglary and robbery were motives for the killing.

Christensen repeatedly has hinted that the priest was killed in a crime of passion.

Truhitte testified that he was

directed to follow up on the tip about the bathhouse. He said he did, but so far has not written a report about his findings. Christensen did not ask about those findings.

Police say there already is one report, submitted by San Jose police after that allegation surfaced several days after Father John was killed in May 1985.

Also Thursday, Christensen accused Truhitte of editing some of the reports he did write.

"If you found something you didn't like, you didn't write it in your police reports, did you?" Christensen asked the detective. "You didn't want to say something bad if you didn't have to."

Truhitte answered "no" to both questions.

Christensen also questioned Walt Kubas, a special agent with the Department of Justice, who interviewed two women parishoners about alleged sexual advances by Father John.

Kubas, a former candidate for sheriff here, said he submitted handwritten accounts of those interviews, but he said he wouldn't call them reports.

"Did you follow the procedures from your 23 years of police work?" asked Christensen.

"Not exactly," said Kubas, adding that the format was different.

After court Thursday, Danner said Christensen's accusations of a selective investigation contradict the evidence. He noted there are more than 2,000 reports in the case.

"I think anybody who has had an opportunity to look at everything the police did would be well-satisfied they did everything they could to produce a lead to get them to a suspect," Danner said.

If anybody is selective about the evidence, it's Christensen, Danner said.