

Discussion: Case Study - Sheila Y. (Page 5.14)

This is a difficult case. It may take you an hour or more to both view and analyse the case.

The video has been heavily edited to make it manageable as a learning tool.

Page 1. Notes and guiding questions

Describe the main characteristics of the speech pattern, in terms of tonality (fundamental frequency), inflexion and prosody.

Consider how your assessment of her voice corresponds to what you see.

Consider the time frame over which the presentation has evolved.

What do you notice about her delivery on 'difficult' subject areas?

What do you notice about the timing and nature of her cough?

What is her attitude to the skill (or lack of skill) in the interviewer and what might this imply in terms of her own work?

What observations do you make about her social life and relationships? How do you interpret these factors?

What aspects of her presentation are compensatory to her situation?

Can you imagine and describe the elements in her working life that you consider might shape her demeanour?

Ask where the centre of gravity is in the case.

Prioritise what should be repertorised.

Repertorise the case.

If you have access to a computer repertory:

Consider symptom weighting, then filters (what filtering is appropriate and why?)

If you apply exclusions which rubric or features must be retained in the analysis?

When you have completed the repertorisation: write your considered treatment below, with a reason for your choice:

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A. Overall impressions

Now that you have analysed the case, have you selected

1. Plant
2. Mineral
3. Animal

What aspect of the prosody or presentation influenced your choice?

Hopefully you selected mineral due to the factual straightforwardness of the narrative and her frequent use of the finite complement. However, there is very little 'structural materialism' in her account and her life priorities are 'soft' ones, rather than competitive or driven ones.

There is very little forcing and no aggression in the gestures. Many of the archetypal key words for the minerals is missing.

Which particular class of minerals is not generally associated with this prosody?

Hopefully you identified that the transitional metals are unlikely contenders for treatment in this case. Speech patterns with less directional, materialistic and driven qualities are generally associated with the non-metals (think of the sympathetic and cooperative communication style of Phosphorus, for example)

Which class of minerals is most compatible with the main presenting complaint?
(Consider what prevents her from working?)

(The differential short-list will be presented on page 6.)

What does the voice, clothing, posture, hairstyle, suggest is a key feature in the case?

Which rubric most accurately reflects this?

Consider the work she does 'uncovering sex abuse rings' and her role as a prosecution witness in court; also consider her commitment in the face of 'threats and intimidation' from the world of organised crime - what quality do you feel she presents in her narrative as she describes her work?

Hopefully you identified the acids as the mineral group most likely to correspond to fatigue.

The differential also includes *Causticum* and the *Kali salts* and possibly the *Arsenicum* salts.

Looking at paragraph 35, is there support for any of these remedies or groups?

What imperatives make her so organised? Is she organised just for the sake of it? Is she organised out of habit or a 'jobs-worth' attitude to procedure? Is she organised due to insecurity or a fear of uncertainty? What does the spontaneity of her private life indicate?

Hopefully you identified her main motivation as care for abused children (and the future prevention of abuse in other victims). Perhaps you recognised her 'empathic' approach to her working life. Her hobbies also suggest a humanistic personal philosophy, rather than idealism per se.

These features tend to suggest that she is not merely a slave to duty, and her morality is complex rather than polarised.

This does not exclude *Causticum*, but she presents with weakness rather than physical paresis. General fatigue tends to support the acids.

Have you identified the best indicated remedy?

If not, repertorise using the following features:

1. Weakness, with a filter for minerals and / or a filter for the acids
2. Mannish women
3. Fearlessness in the face of danger

Conclusion:

By this stage you I hope you have identified *Fluoric acid* as the main contender for the case.

Unfortunately most materia medica texts provide a poor essence for *Fl-ac*. They are generally limited to the pathological features of the remedy.

Consider that the main pathogenesis in this case, is the need to become resistant to dangerous men and impervious to male aggression (as it is associated with cross-examination in a court of law.)

The patient's main compensatory response has been a gradual masculinisation and hardening of her stance.

Fluorine is highly toxic and cannot be eliminated by the body, it has to be combined with the hydroxyapatite of bones and teeth, in order to take it out of circulation and prevent cellular damage.

The consequence of fluorine in the bones is a hardening of the bony structure and a loss of the capacity in the bone for plastic remodelling by osteoclasts and osteoblasts. This engenders a certain kind of rigidity, but one that is confined to the skeletal structures.

The essence of this case rests on the fatigue of the acids and the hardening (sclerosis) of the fluorine salts, set against a psychological androgenisation, which is manifesting socially, sexually, physiologically and in the speech pattern, voice register and attitude.

One of the interesting incongruities is the emotional dissociation reflected in her voice, as she speaks about her work. Consider what this means in the context of someone who feels deeply and is able to cry. (This is unusual.) In general, men tend to be more disassociated than women in terms of the way their voices reflect their emotional mien.(social conditioning?).

It is as though she has evolved selective hardening of certain defences and restricted the rigidity to an uncompromising attitude to effectiveness at work, while maintaining a soft and spontaneous relationship to friends and the children she interviews.

The transcripts of the review appointments are available in the workbook.