

The Truth about Terri Schiavo

LEGALIZED MURDER IN AMERICA

1 - CARLA IYER'S AFFIDAVIT

Affidavit
State of Florida
County of Pinellas

Before me, the undersigned authority, personally appeared Carla Sauer Iyer, R.N., who being first duly sworn, deposes and says:

1. My name is Carla Sauer Iyer. I am over the age of eighteen and make this statement of my own personal knowledge.

2. I am a registered nurse in the State of Florida, having been licensed continuously in Florida, from 1997 to the present. Prior to that, I was a Licensed Practical Nurse for about four years.

3. I was employed at Palm Gardens of Largo Convalescent Center in Largo, Florida, from April of 1995 to July 1996, while Terri Schiavo was a patient there.

4. It was clear to me at Palm Gardens that all decisions regarding Terri Schiavo were made by Michael Schiavo, with no allowance made for any discussion, debate or normal professional judgment. My initial training there consisted solely of the instruction, "Do what Michael Schiavo tells you or you will be terminated." This struck me as extremely odd.

5. I was very disturbed by the decision-making protocol, as no allowance whatsoever was made for professional responsibility. The atmosphere throughout the facility was dominated by Mr. Schiavo's intimidation. Everyone there, with the exception of several people who seemed to be close to Michael, was intimidated by him. Michael Schiavo always had an overbearing attitude, yelling numerous times such things as "this is my order and you're going to follow it." He is very large and uses menacing body language, such as standing too close to you, getting right in your face and practically shouting.

6. To the best of my recollection, rehabilitation had been ordered earlier for Terri by medical professionals, but I never saw any being done or had any reason at all to believe that there was ever any rehab of Terri done at Palm Gardens while I was there. I became concerned because nothing was being done for Terri at all, no antibiotics, no tests, no range of motion therapy, no stimulation, no nothing. Michael said again and again that Terri should not get any rehab, etc. I and a CNA named Roxy would give Terri range of motion anyway. One time, I put a wash cloth in Terri's hand to keep her fingers from curling together, and Michael saw it and made me take it out, saying that it

was therapy.

7. Terri's medical condition was systematically distorted and misrepresented [to the public]. When I worked with her, she was alert and oriented. Terri spoke on a regular basis while in my presence, saying such things as "mommy," and "help me." "Help me" was, in fact, one of her most frequent utterances. I heard her say it hundreds of times. Terri would try to say the word "pain" when she was in discomfort, but it came out more like "pay." She didn't say the "n" sound very well. Other ways that she would indicate that she was in pain included pursing her lips, grimacing, thrashing in bed, curling her toes or moving her legs around. She would let you know when she had a bowel movement by flipping up the covers and pulling on her diaper.

8. When I came into her room and said, "Hi, Terri," she would always recognize my voice and her name, and would turn her head all the way toward me, saying "Haaaiiii" sort of, as she did. I recognized this as a "Hi," which is very close to what it sounded like, the whole sound being only a second or two long. When I told her humorous stories about my life or something I read in the paper, Terri would chuckle, sometimes more a giggle or laugh. She would move her whole body, upper and lower. Her legs would sometimes be off the bed, and need to be repositioned.

I made numerous entries into the nursing notes in her chart, stating verbatim what she said and her various behaviors; but by my next on-duty shift, the notes would be deleted from her chart. Every time I made a positive entry about any responsiveness of Terri's, someone would remove it after my shift ended.

Michael always demanded to see her chart as soon as he arrived, and would take it in her room with him. I documented Terri's rehab potential well, writing whole pages about Terri's responsiveness, but they would always be deleted by the next time I saw her chart. The reason I wrote so much was that everybody else seemed to be afraid to make positive entries for fear of their job, but I felt very strongly that a nurses' job was to accurately record everything that bears on a patient's condition. I upheld the Nurses Practice Act, and if it cost me my job, I was willing to accept that.

9. Throughout my time at Palm Gardens, Michael Schiavo was focused on Terri's death. Michael would say, "When is she going to die?" "Has she died yet?" and "When is that __ gonna die?" Other statements which I recall him making include, "Can't you do any-

thing to accelerate her death; won't she ever die?" When she wouldn't die, Michael would be furious.

10. Any time Terri would be sick, as with a UTI or fluid buildup in her lungs, colds, pneumonia, Michael would be visibly excited, thrilled even, hoping that she would die. He would call me, as I was the nurse supervisor on the floor, and ask for every little detail about her temperature, blood pressure, etc., and would call back [later] frequently [on the phone] asking if she was dead yet. He would blurt out, "I'm going to be rich!" and would talk about all the things he would buy when Terri died, which included a new car, a new boat, and going to Europe, among other things.

11. When Michael visited Terri, he always had the door closed and locked while he was with her. He would typically be there about twenty minutes or so. When he left, Terri would be trembling, crying hysterically, and would be very pale and have cold sweats. It looked to me like Terri was having a hypoglycemic reaction [from too much insulin in her blood], so I'd check her blood sugar. The glucometer reading would be so low it was below the range where it would register an actual number reading. I would put dextrose in Terri's mouth to counteract it. This happened about five times on my shift as I recall. Normally, Terri's blood sugar levels were very stable, due to the uniformity of her diet through tube feeding. It is my belief that Michael injected Terri with regular insulin, which is very fast-acting.

12. . . [Carla Iyer, the author of this legal affidavit, mentions an LPN who was very anxious for Terri to die. But when Carla phoned the police about this, she was terminated from the nursing home.]

13. . . [Carla tells how that LPN was very friendly with Michael, never shouted at by him, always did what he told her to do, and, while on duty at night, would have long calls from him on the phone.]

14. While at Palm Gardens, I became fearful for my personal safety. This was due to Michael's constant intimidation, including his menacing body language, vocal tone and mannerisms.

—Carla Sauer Iyer, R.N., affidavit made September 2003.

2 - ATTORNEY'S LAST VISIT

Statement by Attorney Barbara Weller (who with David Gibbs III of the Gibbs Law Firm of Seminole, Florida, represented Bob and Mary Schindler in their efforts to save the life of their daughter, Terri.)

When Terri Schiavo's feeding tube was removed at 1:45 p.m. on March 18, 2005, I was extremely surprised . . . [She mentions how she had been certain that state or federal government authorities would step in and prevent it from happening, because they had a legal right to do so.] I had done the legal research weeks before, and was fully convinced that Gov. Bush had the power, under our co-equal branches of government,

to issue a reprieve in the face of a judicial death sentence intended to lead to the starvation and dehydration of an innocent woman, when scores of doctors and neurologists were saying she could be helped.

All morning long, as I was in the room with Terri and her family, we were telling her that help was on the way. Terri was in good spirits that morning. The mood in her room was jovial, particularly around noon-time, as we knew Congressional attorneys were on the scene and many were working hard to save Terri's life. For most of that time, I was visiting and talking with Terri, along with Terri's sister Suzanne Vitadamo, Suzanne's husband, and Terri's aunt, who was visiting from New York to help provide support for the family. A female Pinellas Park police officer was stationed at the door outside Terri's room.

Terri was sitting up in her lounge chair, dressed and looking alert and well. Her feeding tube had been plugged in around 11 a.m., and we all felt good that she was still being fed. Suzanne and I were talking, joking, and laughing with Terri, telling her she was going to go to Washington, D.C. to testify before Congress, which meant that finally Terri's husband, Michael, would be required to fix her wheelchair. When that was done, Suzanne would be able to take Terri to the mall shopping and could wheel her outdoors every day to feel the wind and sunshine on her face, something she has not been able to do for more than five years [because her husband refused it].

When I noticed Terri's window blinds were pulled down, I went to the window to raise them so Terri could look at the beautiful garden outside her window and see the sun after several days of rain. As sunlight came into the room, Terri's eyes widened and she was obviously very pleased . . . [More about their talk together.]

Suzanne and I continued to talk and joke with Terri for probably an hour or more. At one point Suzanne called Terri the "bionic woman," and I heard Terri laugh out loud heartily for the first time since I have been visiting with her. She laughed so hard that for the first time I noticed the dimples in her cheeks.

The most dramatic event of this visit happened at one point when I was sitting on Terri's bed next to Suzanne. Terri was sitting in her lounge chair and her aunt was standing at the foot of the chair. I stood up and leaned over Terri. I took her arms in both of my hands. I said to her, "Terri, if you could only say 'I want to live,' this whole thing could be over today." I begged her to try very hard to say, "I want to live."

To my enormous shock and surprise, Terri's eyes opened wide; she looked me square in the face, and with a look of great concentration, she said, "Ahhhhhh." Then, seeming to summon up all the strength she had, she virtually screamed, "Waaaaaa." She yelled so loudly that Michael Vitadamo, Suzanne's husband, and the female police officer who were then standing together

1 outside Terri's door, clearly heard her. At that point,
2 Terri had a look of anguish on her face, such as I had
3 never seen before, and she seemed to be struggling
4 hard, but was unable to complete the sentence. She
5 became very frustrated and began to cry. I was horri-
6 fied that I was obviously causing Terri so much an-
7 guish. Suzanne and I began to stroke Terri's face and
8 hair to comfort her. I told Terri I was very sorry. We
told her she didn't have to say it any more, and that I
would tell the world that she had tried to say, "I want
to live."

Suzanne and I continued to visit and talk with
Terri, along with other family members who came and
went in the room, until about 2:00 p.m., when we were
all told to leave—after Judge Greer denied yet another
motion for stay and ordered the removal of the feed-
ing tube to proceed. As we left the room, the female
police officer outside the door was trying to keep from
crying.

Just as Terri's husband, Michael, has told the
world he must keep an alleged promise to kill Terri—
a promise "remembered" after being awarded a mil-
lions dollars [by the court to be used solely to care for
her for the rest of her life, involving giving her reha-
bilitation] and nearly a decade after the fact;—so I must
keep my promise to Terri. And immediately. Time is
running out for her. I went out to the banks of cam-
eras outside the hospice facility and told the story. Now
I must tell the story in writing for the world to hear.

About four in the afternoon, several hours after
the feeding tube was removed, I returned to Terri's
room. By that time, she was alone except for a male
police officer now standing inside the door. When I
entered the room and began to speak to her, Terri
started to cry and tried to speak to me immediately. It
was one of the most helpless feelings I have ever had.

Just before I left the room, I leaned over Terri and
spoke right into her ear. I told her I was very sorry I
had not been able to stop the feeding tube from being
taken out and I was very sorry I had to leave her alone.
But I reminded her that Jesus would stay right by her
side—even when no one else was there with her. When
I mentioned Jesus' name, Terri again laughed out loud.
She became very agitated, and began loudly trying to
speak to me again. As Terri continued to laugh and
try to speak, I quietly prayed in her ear, kissed, placed
her in Jesus care, and left the room.

—Statement by Attorney Barbara Weller.

3 - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following statements and facts were collected
from various sources:

- On March 18, the day the feeding tube was re-
moved, Michael Schiavo told the press that it was be-
cause he loved his wife, Terri, that he must fulfill her
request to let her die.

- The day after the feeding tube was removed,

Michael gave orders that Terri's parents and relatives
could no longer visit her (although they later returned.)

- Three days after the feeding tube was removed,
on March 20, 2005, Terri suddenly and very mysteri-
ously developed a type of high fever which can be
brought on by the giving of certain drugs.

- The Florida State statute on "persistent vegeta-
tive state" specifies that the person must be (1) un-
conscious, (2) unable to swallow food, and (3) unable
to make any communication. None of these apply to
Terri Shiavo.

- Under normal state law, Terri, who is 41 years
old now, has a right to due process, a right to equal
rights, and a right to live.

- When family members are not in the room,
Michael requires that the blinds be closed. Some be-
lieve he thinks this might help her die quicker. He also
refuses to let her be taken outside.

- The affidavit made by Carla Sauer Iyer, R.N.
(quoted earlier in this study) was presented to Judge
Greer in September 2003. He totally ignored it, along
with an abundance of other evidence offered in court,
repeatedly declaring, then and thereafter, that no evi-
dence has ever been presented that Terri is totally in-
capacitated and unconscious.

- George Greer has been the only judge to which
evidence has ever been presented. No other judge has
ever reviewed the evidence. All higher courts have re-
fused to consider the case.

- Judge Greer issued an order to "prevent the
governor's office from seeking additional information
from witnesses, which also prevents a much desired
interview with Michael Schiavo. Ken Connor, the
governor's attorney, argued that such questioning is
necessary because lawmakers were uncomfortable with
Michael Schiavo's motives."—*Center for Reclaim-
ing America, May 6, 2004.*

"Judge Greer has repeatedly allowed Michael
Schiavo to skirt his statutory duty to file mandatory
annual guardianship plans to establish a ward's ap-
proved plan of care for the coming year. This appears
to be a direct violation of the applicable Florida Stat-
utes."—*Daily Standard, January 30, 2004.*

- "Because the legislature of Florida created
guardianships to be administered by the courts, judges
are mandated to strictly comply with the dictates of
the law. But Judge Greer hasn't."—*Tampa Tribune,
April 13, 2004.*

- "Over the years [Judge] Greer has repeatedly
allowed Michael to shirk his legal mandate as guard-
ian to file annual prospective 'guardianship plans,'
specifying his proposal for providing for Terri's medi-
cal and social needs for the coming year."—*Daily Stan-
dard, April 30, 2004.*

- Three nurses (Heidi Law, Carla Sauer Iyer, and
Carolyn Johnson) have presented testimony in court,
all of which has been ignored by Judge Greer. Each

testified that Michael was abusive to Terri and may have attempted to kill her by insulin injections and attempts to induce pneumonia by turning the thermostat in her room to 64° F.

- Heidi Law, a CNA at the Palm Gardens nursing home who cared for Terri in 1997, filed a sworn affidavit that she was able to feed Terri normally on many occasions. In spite of the fact that Michael required that food only be given through a feeding tube, Terri was able to normally swallow food which Heidi gave her secretly. This included orange and apple juice, and Jello “which she was able to swallow and enjoyed immensely.” The only reason Heidi did not feed Terri more frequently was “because I was so afraid of being caught by Michael.”

- Michael Baden, a top forensic pathologist in the nation when interviewed on Fox News (October 25, 2003), made several statements regarding Terri’s bone scan and injuries: Her injuries were not consistent with a heart attack; for there is no cardiac evidence to support it. It would be extremely rare for a woman her age and in good health to have a potassium imbalance. She had injuries consistent with severe trauma, possibly caused by a beating. The injuries, as noted in medical records, warrant an immediate investigation.

- Dr. William Hammesfahr, a neurologist who is a Nobel prize nominee, testified that Terri’s neck injuries are consistent with only one type of injury: an attempted strangulation at some earlier time.

- Michael has prevented Terri from undergoing a barium swallow test, a procedure necessary to ascertain the consistency of foods able to be taken by mouth.

- Michael Shiavo has stated that, after Terri has died, he will refuse to let her body receive an autopsy. He does not want her examined during life, nor after death. It might reveal too much.

- Michael has hired Dr. Stanton Tripodis as the physician to “care for Terri.” Tripodis has five malpractice suits (initiated between 1994 and 1998) against him.

- Michael is committing adultery by living with another woman who has already given birth to one child, with another on the way. This creates an obvious conflict of interest for Michael as Terri’s guardian.

- Michael has committed both perjury (2 counts) and insurance fraud by promising to provide care and therapy for his wife, in exchange for the 1993 court award of \$1.2 million. No care has ever been provided to Terri. By terms of the court award, made at that time, whatever money was left over after caring for Terri was to be handed over to Michael upon her death. He has consistently placed Terri in facilities which provide her with free, or near free, care.

- Michael’s attorney is George J. Felos. Felos is the director of the Florida Right to Die organization, which strongly advocates the death of the infirm and elderly. Felos has stated that he can ascertain a person’s desire to die by “looking into their eyes and letting their spirit speak directly to him.”

This report was prepared on March 23, 2005. Unless something unexpected occurs, by the time you read this, Terri will be dead. —*vf*

“Disability activists have called for a nationwide moratorium on the dehydration and starvation of people alleged to be in ‘persistent vegetative state.’ This would apply to individuals who do not have an advance directive or durable power of attorney.

“The call for a moratorium is a reaction to the newly published report indicating high levels of brain activity in people thought to be in ‘minimally conscious state (MCS).’ The study, published in the February issue of *Neurology*, discovered evidence that these individuals may hear and understand much of what is going on around them, but are unable to respond.

“The study drew a distinction between MCS and Persistent Vegetative State (PVS), but the distinction is not a reliable one. In a *New York Times* article, Dr. Joseph Fins mentioned research indicating a 30% misdiagnosis rate of PVS, indicating that nearly a third of persons diagnosed in PVS are actually in “minimally conscious state.” Fins is chief of the medical ethics

division of New York Presbyterian Hospital-Weill Cornell Medical Center.

“With the exception of oblique references to Terri Schiavo, current coverage of the study and its implications dance around the most important issues regarding this study. Namely, thousands of people around this country with labels of both MCS and PVS are being starved and dehydrated, often without an advance directive indicating their wishes, or a durable power of attorney appointing a substitute decision-maker they chose for themselves.

“ ‘Given the current research regarding brain activity and misdiagnosis, it’s a virtual certainty that countless people have been helpless to prevent their own deaths through starvation and dehydration,’ says Stephen Drake, research analyst for Not Dead Yet, a national disability rights group opposed to legalization of assisted suicide and euthanasia.”—*Article by Not Dead Yet, Inc., Forest Park, IL, Feb. 14, 2005.*