

Letters to the Editor—Continued

Addendum to “Automobile Cigarette Lighter Burns”

Sir:

A 20-year-old nude black female was found dead on the floor of a garage, wrists and ankles bound. The deceased had been beaten and strangled, and a wooden stick had been inserted in the vagina. On the buttocks were half a dozen circular and oval burns, each approximately 14 mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in.) in diameter (Fig. A).

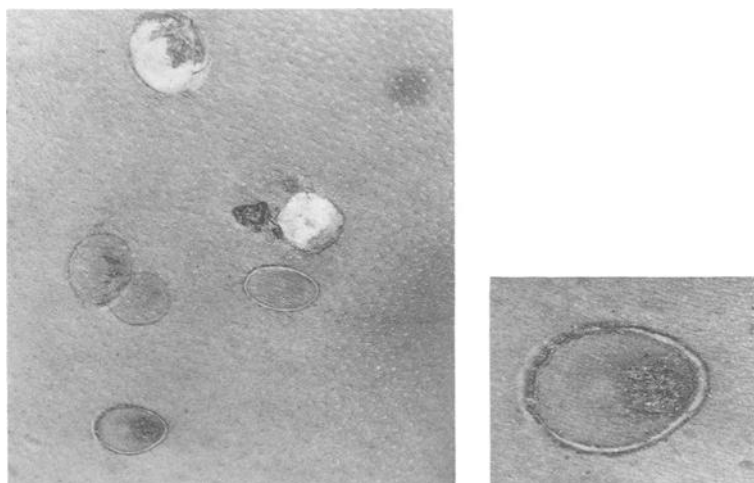


FIG. A—Multiple circular and oval burns on the buttocks of a 20-year-old homicide victim (magnification, right, 1:1). The burns are 14 mm ($\frac{1}{2}$ in.) in diameter, corresponding to the face of an automobile cigarette lighter. The oval burns are believed to be caused by some pull of the skin in an area of the body with abundant adipose tissue.

The peripheral margin of the burns was very distinct while the central zone varied from undamaged to complete loss of the epidermis. The adjacent skin was uninvolved, strongly suggesting that the burning occurred after death.

The pattern of the burn marks indicated that they had been made with an automobile cigarette lighter. The absence of the coil imprint in the center of any of the burns pointed to a lighter with a nonretractable shroud. This information would eliminate Ford, Chrysler, and American Motors automobiles while General Motors' products, such as Chevrolet and Buick, would have to be considered.

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