**Icky Cutesy Research Review**

Research reports that are icky and/or cutesy

compiled by Alice Shirrell Kaswell, Improbable Research staff

**Cutesy: A Code in the Nose (1968)**


**Cutesy: A Code in the Nose (1998)**


**Cutesy: A Code in the Nose (2004)**


**Icky: Blowfly Access to Bodies in Suitcases**


The authors, at King’s College London, the Metropolitan Police Service, Evidence Recovery Unit, London, and the Natural History Museum, London, UK, report:

Criminals have been known to dispose of bodies in zipped suitcases in an attempt to conceal murder. In order to investigate the forensic implications of this mode of disposal on calculating time of death, it is necessary to study the accessibility of bodies in suitcases to blowflies (Diptera: Calliphoridae) and the possibility of oviposition and infestation under these circumstances. An experimental apparatus was designed that incorporated different zips (toothed and coil) of various gauges (4-6 mm) above a chicken liver bait. Gravid *Calliphora vomitoria* and *Calliphora vicina* females were attracted to and oviposited on and through these zips, both under laboratory and field conditions....

Coiled zips are the most common type of zip found on luggage and are also commonly found on body bags used at crime scenes. Infestation of bodies within body bags after recovery from crime scenes could potentially be a source of confusion, but the high likelihood of some degree of delay of flies locating an odour source once it is zipped into a bag and the usually swift transfer of bodies from scene to mortuary suggest that bodies in a body bag are unlikely to be infested by blowflies after recovery from standard crime scenes.

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**Factors affecting accessibility to blowflies of bodies disposed in suitcases**

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**ABSTRACT**

Criminals have been known to dispose of bodies in zipped suitcases in an attempt to conceal murder. In order to investigate the forensic implications of this mode of disposal on calculating time of death, it is necessary to study the accessibility of bodies in suitcases to blowflies (Diptera: Calliphoridae) and the possibility of oviposition and infestation under these circumstances. An experimental apparatus was designed that incorporated different zips (toothed and coil) of various gauges (4-6 mm) above a chicken liver bait. Gravid *Calliphora vomitoria* and *Calliphora vicina* females were attracted to and oviposited on and through these zips, both under laboratory and field conditions. Coiled zips were significantly more attractive to gravid females than were toothed zips. In the absence of body fluids, female blowflies could still be attracted to egg mass on zips, although the presence of body fluids caused egg mass to become inaccessible to the flies.

**Fig. 1.** (a) Egg mass on an interior toothed zip 17 days after oviposition. (b) Egg mass on an exterior coiled zip 17 days after oviposition. (c) Egg mass on an interior toothed zip 27 days after oviposition. (d) Egg mass on an exterior coiled zip 27 days after oviposition.

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**Detail from the study “Factors Affecting Accessibility to Blowflies of Bodies Disposed in Suitcases.”**