



Criminalist in Spector trial defends gathering of evidence

By Michael Muskal, Times Staff Writer
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A coroner's criminalist said today that she had done nothing wrong and had not compromised any evidence that she gathered in connection with the murder trial of Phil Spector.

Jaime Lintemoot, who works for the Los Angeles County Medical Examiner's Office, took the stand today and described how she gathered evidence the morning of Feb. 3, 2003, after the body of Lana Clarkson was discovered in the foyer of Spector's Alhambra mansion.

The main thrust of Spector's defense is that Clarkson, 40, accidentally shot herself. But the defense team has also argued that the forensic evidence was mishandled by officials, and it is expected to bring in its own experts to try to rebut the prosecution's scientific findings.

Linda Kenney Baden, one of Spector's lawyers, questioned Lintemoot about the procedures she used to gather evidence during an acetate tape lift on Clarkson's clothing.

Kenney Baden has implied that the bloodstains on Clarkson's dress may have been disturbed by the tape lift. The defense is expected to argue that the pattern and size of the bloodstains indicated that Spector was too far from Clarkson to have pulled the trigger.

Kenney Baden asked whether Lintemoot might have compromised any of the evidence.

"I do not believe I compromised evidence," the criminalist said.

This phase of the Spector trial is dealing with the prosecution's forensic findings and laboratory tests.

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Staff writers Peter Y. Hong and John Spano contributed to this report.