

Couple On Trial For Murder Of 8 Year Old Called Him Gay, Tortured Him 'More Severely Than Many POWs'



by **DAVID BADASH**

August 20, 2014 1:37 PM

A mother and her boyfriend are on trial for murdering her 8-year old son. They allegedly called him gay, and abused, beat and tortured him "more severely than many prisoners of war."

Change the conversation, change the world

SHARE THIS

Pearl Fernandez, 30, and her boyfriend Isauro Aguirre, 34, are on trial in Los Angeles for the murder of her 8-year old son, Gabriel Hernandez. The details of the case are horrific, as are the accusations that young Gabriel "fell through the cracks" after case workers ignored clear warning signs, including a suicide note he had penned.

"For eight straight months," Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Hatami told a grand jury this week, Gabriel "was abused, beaten and tortured more severely than many prisoners of war."



Some of the alleged attacks on young Gabriel included calling him "gay,"

punishing him "when he played with dolls" and forcing him to "wear girls' clothes to school," according to his remaining siblings, the LA Times [reports](#) in an extensive article.

Before 8-year-old Gabriel Fernandez was allegedly beaten to death by his mother and her boyfriend, they doused him with pepper spray, forced him to eat his own vomit and locked him in a cabinet with a sock stuffed in his mouth to muffle his screams, according to court records made public Monday.

Gabriel's mother, Pearl Fernandez, called 911 on May 22, 2013, to report that her son was not breathing. She told sheriff's deputies who arrived at the apartment that Gabriel had fallen and hit his head on a dresser, according to testimony. When paramedics arrived, they found Gabriel naked in a bedroom, not breathing, with a cracked skull, three broken ribs and BB pellets embedded in his lung and groin. He died two days later.

"It was just like every inch of this child had been abused," testified James Cermak, a Los Angeles County Fire Department paramedic.

Fernandez and Aguirre deliberately tortured the boy to death, hiding their tracks with forged doctor's notes and lies to authorities, Deputy Dist. Atty. Jonathan Hatami told the grand jury.

The abuse worsened in the months leading up to Gabriel's death, according to testimony from two of his siblings, both of whom are minors. They said Gabriel was forced to eat cat feces, rotten spinach and his own vomit. He slept in a locked cabinet and wasn't let out to go to the bathroom.

Fernandez and Aguirre hit Gabriel with a belt buckle, a metal hanger, a small bat and a wooden club, Gabriel's brother said. Their mother once jabbed Gabriel in the mouth with a bat and knocked out several teeth, according to testimony.

The NY Daily News [adds](#), "In addition to the physical and emotional abuse, Gabriel reportedly was sexually abused as well."

Teachers, too, saw signs of abuse and reported it. Gabriel had in the past written about contemplating suicide, and teachers saw bruises on his face from being shot by a BB gun.

Gabriel reported being forced to perform oral sex on a relative as well.

"It's not like 'oh, he had a bruise here.' No every day, every week," a classmate's mother told KNBC-TV.

Gabriel died on May 24, 2013 of blunt force trauma.

Pearl Fernandez and Isauro Aguirre have pleaded not guilty.

KTLA [reports](#) prosecutors have not yet decided to ask for the death penalty of life without parole.



Images via Gabriel's Justice on Facebook