

The Psychological and Familial Impact of Abuse on Luke Elliott Sommer

Compiled from Public Federal Court Records
U.S. District Court, Western District of Washington
Case No. 2:09-cr-00436-JLR

This report draws upon publicly accessible filings in United States v. Luke Elliott Sommer, incorporating direct testimony, expert evaluation, and corroborating letters to document the relationship between verified abuse and subsequent trauma-related diagnoses.

3. Family Testimony Describing Abuse and Its Effects

Family and community witnesses described patterns of manipulation and intimidation by Luke Sommer Sr., which shaped Elliott's development and emotional resilience.

3A. Detailed Account of Abuse by Luke Sommer Sr.

From the Mother, Christel Davidsen:

"His father was controlling and manipulative and verbally and physically abusive."

"His father would drive down a road with several hairpin turns and pretend to not make the turn until the last second, or stop erratically while trying to yank my phone out of my hand because I was calling for help."

"When Elliott got older and tried to stand up to his father's abuse things escalated to the point that he had to threaten his dad with a restraining order."

"He grew up being told by his father 'death before divorce,' so when I left his father for the sake of the children's safety, it threw his world into total chaos, and we all felt there was a real threat to our lives."

Context: Exhibit 4 – Letter from Christel Davidsen (Mother), pp. 15–16

From Civil Air Patrol Cadet Leader, Teresa Low:

"Sommer's father had an obvious, strong control over the family."

"There were abuse problems at home—verbal, mental, and emotional, but also some physical abuse directed at the children."

"I told Christel she needed to leave Luke Sommer Sr. with the children or I was obligated to contact social services. She left at great peril to her life."

"Elliott had heard all his life 'death before divorce' from his father, so when they separated it triggered him. He began to drink heavily and act erratically."

Context: Letter from Teresa Low, Civil Air Patrol Squadron Commander, pp. 85–87

From Maternal Grandfather:

"Right from Elliott's birth, his father had very unreasonable expectations... Christel wasn't allowed to let the baby cry and had to hold him for hours so Luke wouldn't hear him cry."

"He forbid Christel or the kids to see me for over ten years. I would send the kids gifts, and he would make Christel return them."

"After a while, the level of abuse to the grandkids and my daughter became apparent. His control and abuse had deeply wounded the kids, especially the three oldest."

Context: Letter from Maternal Grandfather, pp. 88–89

From Luke's Uncle:

"Conflict with a domineering father, abuse by neighbors, struggles with alcohol to ease the pain... I took Luke in after his father ejected him from the family home, a crushed and broken young man."

Context: Letter from Family Member, pp. 82–83

Taken together, these firsthand accounts reveal a sustained pattern of coercive control, intimidation, and emotional abuse perpetrated by Luke Sommer Sr. against both his spouse and children. The consistency

of testimony across unrelated witnesses—the mother, a cadet commander, the grandfather, and an uncle—supports the conclusion that the abuse was chronic and formative, producing fear, hyper■vigilance, and emotional suppression that continued into Luke Elliott Sommer’s adulthood.

Public Record Statement — All quotations, evaluations, and excerpts in this document are drawn from publicly filed materials in United States v. Luke Elliott Sommer, U.S. District Court for the Western District of Washington, Case No. 2:09-cr-00436-JLR (filed June 21, 2022, and related docket entries). These are public records accessible via PACER and federal archives. No sealed or confidential information has been included.