

As the public speculated about her motives, Overbye struggled to explain coherently, denying that financial gain was a factor. She later claimed that her actions were intended to serve societal interests, arguing that the infants, labeled as illegitimate, faced ostracism, and their mothers endured even harsher societal condemnation, especially during an era when abortion was illegal and unsafe procedures were prevalent. While only nine murders could be confirmed, Overbye confessed to an additional sixteen. In 1921, she was sentenced to death, marking the first such sentence in Denmark in thirty years. However, a month later, this sentence was commuted to life imprisonment. Overbye died in 1929 at the age of 42 while incarcerated in Vestre prison.

Personal Afterthoughts

Infanticide refers to the deliberate act of ending the life of a child or infant. Historically, this practice was prevalent across various cultures, often justified as a means to conserve resources, particularly in cases involving children with disabilities or those deemed unwanted. It was viewed as a rudimentary form of population control. In certain societies, the death of an infant was sanctioned if the father lacked the financial means to support the child. Other cultures permitted such actions in instances of incest, abnormal births, or births outside of marriage. In more advanced civilizations, there were beliefs that killing infants could promote health, prosperity, and overall fertility. Additionally, throughout history, infants have been offered as sacrifices in religious rituals. In contemporary society, the advent of contraceptive methods and the option of abortion has significantly diminished the occurrence of infanticide.

Concerning Overbye, she ultimately provides the rationale that the children were perceived as unwanted, and her actions were for the benefit of society. A thorough investigation into her background reveals a persistent cycle of unstable relationships and the occurrence of unanticipated pregnancies, frequently resulting in the men in her life leaving her. The last

individual she appeared to truly care for departed, which may have represented a crucial juncture in her life, prompting her to attempt suicide. The fact that she abandoned their newborn, who might have died, along with her pre-existing mental health challenges and the recent breakup, seems to have further aggravated her psychological distress. These circumstances likely contributed to her heartbreaking actions of infanticide.

One must question whether she was experiencing postpartum depression and to what extent societal perceptions influenced her actions. It is troubling to consider how an individual could commit such heinous acts against innocent lives, seemingly devoid of empathy. The blatant disregard for life in this case is profoundly disturbing, irrespective of any underlying mental health challenges she may have faced. It is imperative that society acknowledges its role in this tragedy and takes proactive measures to prevent the recurrence of such events for the sake of future generations.