

## Dad says he ‘dropped’ infant son, didn’t intend to kill him

By The Associated Press

A Connecticut man charged with killing his 7-month-old baby by throwing him off a bridge testified Thursday that he dropped the boy and did not intend to harm him.

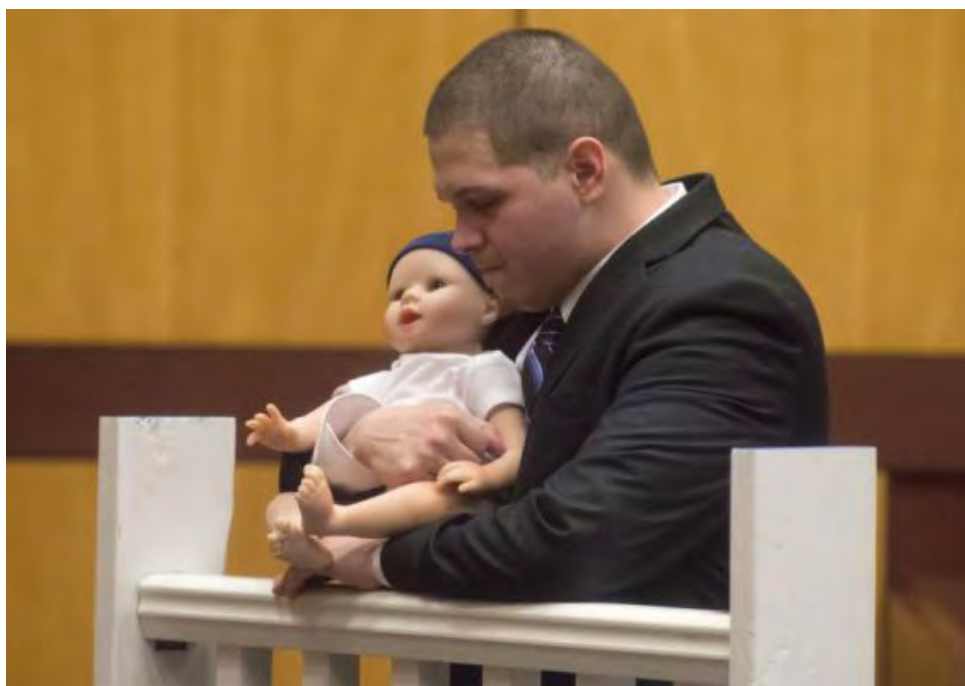
Tony Moreno cried before the jury as he demonstrated with a doll how he was holding his son, Aaden, before the baby plunged off the 90-foot-high Arrigoni Bridge over the Connecticut River in July 2015. Moreno then jumped from the bridge himself, but survived. Two days later, Aaden’s body was found downstream from the bridge that connects Middletown and Portland.

“I dropped him,” the 23-year-old Moreno said in Middletown Superior Court while being questioned by his lawyer.

Moreno testified that he wanted to hurt the boy’s mother and that he planned to kill himself. He said he has suffered from depression and suicidal thoughts for years.

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Tony Moreno demonstrates to the jury how he held his son Aaden on the railing of the Arrigoni Bridge in the final moments of Aaden’s life, during Moreno’s trial Thursday, Feb. 16, 2017, in Middletown, Ct. Moreno’s attorney Norman A. Pattis, left, questions Moreno who took the witness stand on Thursday morning in the fourth day of his murder trial at Middlesex Superior Court. Moreno is charged with murder and risk of injury to a child and is accused of throwing 7-month-old Aaden Moreno to his death from the Arrigoni Bridge on July 5, 2015. Moreno denies intentionally killing his son.

possibility that Aaden may have had a muscle disorder that caused sudden, jerking motions, possibly explaining how Moreno dropped the child.

Moreno has pleaded not guilty to murder and risk of injury to a minor.

The boy's mother, Adrienne Oyola, 20, testified Wednesday that her relationship with Moreno took a turn when she refused his marriage proposal in June 2015. The two worked out a custody agreement for Aaden, and it was Moreno's turn with his son the day Moreno had the child at the bridge.

Just days before, a judge denied a permanent restraining order against Moreno, after Oyola accused him of threatening and pushing her. A temporary restraining order had previously been in place.

Jurors also heard testimony Wednesday about Moreno's confession to police. Text messages between Oyola and Moreno on the night Aaden plunged off the bridge were read aloud in court

"Where are you!" Oyola texted shortly before midnight.  
"Where's Aaden?"

"He's dead," Moreno replied.  
"Soon I will be too."

"You couldn't kill your own son!" Oyola texted.

Her final texts included, "Please



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don't hurt Aaden!!!" and  
"Please!!!!!!!!!!!"

Moreno testified that Aaden was still alive when he was texting with Oyola. ■