

The dean of UCLA Law explains the uncertain future of forensic science

Shows like Law and Order and CSI have taught a generation of Americans that blood spatters and handwriting analysis are crucial for catching criminals. The reality, says UCLA School of Law dean Jennifer Mnookin, is that many of these so-called pattern evidence techniques used in forensic science are faulty and not supported by evidence.

Virginia Department of Forensic Science's controlled substances intake facing backlog

The Virginia Department of Forensic Science's controlled substances intake is facing a four-month backlog. Between 2015 and 2017, the department received 21 percent more controlled substances submissions from law enforcement to be tested. During that same time period, the backlog grew nearly 170 percent. The increase in evidence submitted, the complicated makeup of drugs and a short supply of forensic examiners has led to the backlog.

Overcoming DNA Degradation in Forensic Science

The issues concerning the PCR of degraded DNA may be attributed to three problems: failure in amplification, preferential amplification, and miscoding lesions. To identify short tandem repeats (STRs) in DNA requires at least 1 ng of DNA and 28–30 amplification cycles.

Study brings us one step closer to solving 1994 thallium poisoning case

A new trace analysis of the victim's hair sheds fresh light on a famous unsolved cold case by establishing a timeline for the thallium poisoning of Chinese college student Zhu Ling in 1994. Published in October in the journal *Forensic Science International*, the work could one day lead to catching the culprit, and could help solve future heavy-metal poisonings.

She Was Exonerated of the Murder of Her Son. Her Life Is Still Shattered.

Prosecutors used a forensic discipline called bloodstain-pattern analysis to argue that an intruder never entered her home on the night of the crime and that Rea was, in fact, her son's killer. She was convicted of first-degree murder in 2002 largely on the strength of the testimony of two bloodstain-pattern analysts.

'Damaged' Drone Found Near Gatwick; Arrested Couple Are Freed Without Charge

A couple in Britain who were detained in connection with the illegal use of drones that sowed three days of chaos at Gatwick Airport were released on Sunday without charge, and the police said they had recovered a "damaged" drone near the airport that was being forensically examined.

Crime drama Silent Witness returning for new series

Talking about the secret of the show's continuing success, she said: "I have always thought that it was because you are getting a 'behind the scenes' look into the way crimes are solved – using pathology and forensic science to assist police work is fascinating."

UF's new CSI vet Adam Stern has solved 500+ animal crimes

Stern has gained a national reputation as a CSI vet, having helped solve more than 500 animal crime cases. He was hired at UF's Veterinary School in August, after spending eight years (2010-18) as an assistant director and clinical associate professor at the Veterinary School at the University of Illinois.

[Avery case investigator sues Netflix, 'Making a Murderer' filmmakers](#)

The lawsuit filed in Manitowoc County Court on Monday claims the way the series is edited "falsely led viewers to the inescapable conclusion that (Colborn) and others planted evidence to frame Avery for Halbach's murder."

["Making A Murderer" Lawyer Requests DNA Test On Human Bones](#)

The Making A Murderer saga continues today as Steven Avery's attorney, Kathleen Zellner, is promising to dig some skeletons, not out of the closet, but out of the Manitowoc gravel pit. She Tweeted that she was "hopeful" that she could get a doctor to do a DNA test on some bones:

[Is 'The Innocent Man' The New 'Making A Murderer?' True Crime Series Spotlights John Grisham And 'New Steven Avery'](#)

After Making A Murderer and The Staircase, Netflix's original true crime series are known to mesmerize audiences and create diehard activists. The streaming platform's latest release, The Innocent Man, may be the platform's next, classic who-done-it story. Though killers are behind bars for the two murders featured in the series, some viewers aren't so sure law enforcement got it right.

[Crime lab links gun to five shootings in Tyler](#)

The arrest warrant affidavit for 25-year-old Kristian Perdomo provides insight into the moments leading up to the shooting of Bradley Brockman and Perdomo's arrest. It also gives context to one of Tyler most high-profile defendants this year.

[Gifted mobile crime lab to Mesa aims at predators](#)

Equipped with computers and monitors, the mobile trailer will allow detectives to analyze cell phones and laptops much faster than previously, looking for digital evidence that could link a defendant to a variety of sex crimes.

[Police: Heroin seized in Shelton was laced with fentanyl](#)

After arresting an individual on suspicion of possession of heroin, the Police Department sent the heroin to the Washington State Patrol Crime Lab for testing. The lab confirmed the substance was heroin but also notified the police department that it was laced with fentanyl.

[Deputies make arrest in 20-year-old Frederick rape case](#)

Testing identified Gibbons' DNA in both samples, according to charging documents. Deputies, however, suspended the case after they were unable to contact Gibbons for a second interview.

[One suspect arrested, one on the run in connection to Weinland Park shooting](#)

"What we know is that Cornelius Allen had a gun at the park with his DNA on the trigger," said Columbus Police Detective Scott Polgar. "We know Keveante Smoot had a gun in his car when he went to the hospital with his DNA on the trigger. We're awaiting lab results from our crime lab to determine if the shell casings found at the scene match the guns we have collected."

[Texas drivers stepped up to end the rape kit backlog, but now the state can't get agencies to take the money](#)

Last year, freshman state Rep. Victoria Neave, a Dallas Democrat, made a splash with her bipartisan legislation allowing people to donate a dollar or more to the cause when they applied for or renewed their driver's licenses and vehicle registrations.

[FBI says partial government shutdown not impacting investigation into Blackfeet remains](#)

"FBI operations are directed towards national security and violations of federal law, and must be able to continue during a lapse in appropriations. As such, all FBI agents and support personnel in field offices are considered excepted from furlough.

[Iron Mountain man faces more child pornography charges](#)

Police say there are multiple victims. Grubb's telephones, cell phone, and computers were seized and sent to the Michigan State Police Crime Lab to be investigated. Internet accounts, including Amazon and social media accounts were also being looked at as evidence.

[Aurora police get new equipment to 'fingerprint' shell casings at crime scenes](#)

The department was one of 22 law enforcement agencies in the U.S. to be awarded ballistic imaging equipment that will capture data and document shell casings left behind at gun-related crime scenes.

[Man charged with 2 counts of sexual assault](#)

The victim stated she believed Barreto didn't penetrate her vagina with his penis, but a Texas Department of Public Safety crime lab report indicated semen was detected on a vaginal swab that was taken at the time a SANE exam was administrated, the affidavit detailed.

[6 Crimes That Were Solved With the Help of Pizza](#)

They got their DNA when Franklin stopped for a slice at a pizza place in Orange County. After the suspect ate some pizza, an undercover detective grabbed Franklin's crust, plates, and napkins to "throw away"—but they were actually collected for testing.

[Cop killer gets life in prison, no chance for parole; Sarah Glaze: 'Words cannot express the pain and anguish we have endured'](#)

A total of six shots from Nitek's high caliber rifle pierced the deputy's squad. The state crime lab reported an analysis of Nitek's rifle tested positive for a mixture of DNA with Nitek as the major contributor.

[She was raped in 2017, assaulted in 2018, and left without justice, Springfield woman says](#)

"It still has me speechless," Edwards said. "How is it OK to put someone in a hospital for four hours doing forensics ... and half of it wasn't even (tested)?"

[Investigation into Helena murder-suicide continues](#)

Police say a woman was shot by her estranged husband, who then shot himself. The disturbance began Tuesday evening, at the woman's home in the 1100 block of Hauser Boulevard.

'One-pot' meth lab discovered in Kent County oven; 2 charged

State police said drug task force members found meth in the kitchen and bedroom, and in the oven, they found a one-pot meth lab, a dangerous, low-tech way to brew the drug.

She swiped her co-worker's Coke can. Police say it cracked a 28-year-old murder case.

The co-worker watched Bass toss out a plastic cup and a Coke can. She secretly grabbed both, put them in a Franz Bakery bag and handed them over to police. When the results came back from the state crime lab, Bass's DNA from the soda and cup were a 1 in 11 quadrillion match to DNA recovered from the dead young woman, prosecutors say. On Dec. 12, 2017, Bass was arrested and charged with first-degree murder.