

DNA Current Events Week of September 7-12, 2005

Compiled by Rebecca Mitcheson

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DNA Evidence and Crime-Solving

“New York: Queens: DNA Match Leads To Rape Charge,” *New York Times* September 13, 2005.

Gregory Stovall, 38, of Long Island, has been charged with the 1997 rape of a Queens Village woman, based on a match between the man's DNA and evidence from the crime scene Mr. Stovall's DNA was entered into the National DNA Databank after he was charged with a burglary in Virginia, prosecutors said.

“Rape suspect allegedly tied to 4th attack,” *Chicago Tribune* September 12, 2005.

DNA evidence has allegedly linked Paul Cruikshank, a Chicago man, to a fourth sexual attack; he is already awaiting trial in three other incidents in the city and suburbs. Cruikshank was linked through DNA to a July 2004 rape.

“Police chief still suspects Johnson in triple slaying,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)* September 9, 2005.

Investigators announced that they have be unable to link Samuel Lamont Johnson, 39, to DNA evidence from the murders of a salon owner and two customers, who were stabbed to death in 2004. Johnson was found guilty of trying to break into the salon in 2003.

“Complex serial rape case still far from going to trial,” *Omaha World-Herald (Nebraska)* September 11, 2005.

Shawn T. Bynum, 25, has been charged with five rapes in Omaha and Iowa from last summer. Bynum was linked to the rapes through DNA analysis.

“Intruder may be tied to sex attacks,” *The Denver Post* September 11, 2005.

Police are investigating an attempted robbery that may have been committed by a man police suspect in a string of sexual attacks that have been linked through DNA analysis.

DNA Database Funding and Backlog

“Moving into 21st century,” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch (Missouri)*, September 7, 2005.

The Mayor of St. Louis, Francis Slay, has opened an investigation into allegations that rapes that occurred in the St. Louis police department's jurisdiction were mishandled under the heading of Chief Joe Mokwa. There are allegations from rape victims that DNA evidence from rape kits were not processed for years and in many cases there was little or no follow up with the victims. Chief Mokwa said last week that DNA evidence from 300 crimes had not yet been analyzed.

Expanding the DNA Databank

“Genetic data under fire,” *The Australian* September 13, 2005.

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In Western Australia, researchers have created a population database that contains 17.5 million records of personal information. They are planning to build a BioBank next with the DNA from every consenting adult in the state.

DNA Evidence and Sentencing

“Shanks suspect cleared,” *The Sunday Mail* (Queensland, Australia) September 11, 2005.

One of the original suspects in the September 19, 1952 murder of 23 year-old Betty Shanks has been cleared using DNA testing. Cold-case investigators from the state's homicide squad took samples from two relatives of the man, who had died soon after Miss Shanks was murdered. The samples were compared to crime scene evidence by the John Tonge Centre in a bid to close the dead man's case file. Police were also awaiting the results of DNA tests on a man, 82, who made a deathbed confession to the crime to staff at a Brisbane nursing home. At least seven other people falsely confessed to the crime. The murder is the oldest under active investigation in the state.