

DNA News
Week of April 10 - 15, 2006
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DNA Evidence and Crime-Solving

"Suspect facing 20 more charges; Series of rapes, robberies" *The Seattle Times* April 15, 2006

Anthony Dias, 26, was charged Friday with multiple counts of first-degree rape, kidnapping, burglary and robbery in connection with six rape and burglary cases. Dias's DNA was found on one of the victim's bodies and on another's toothbrush and on cigarette butts found at the scene. Dias had ordered his victims to bathe after their assault in an attempt to wash off any DNA evidence. After reading a newspaper article stating that his DNA was found at the scene despite his efforts, Dias tried to hang himself with the bedsheets in his prison cell.

"Murder accused seen at river" *The New Zealand Herald* April 13, 2006

Michael Scott Wallace was charged with the murder of Birgit Brauer after he was seen at a river where later the murder weapon was found. Also found at the river were a number of Brauer's belongings including a cellphone battery that matched her cellphone and a pile of cigarette butts. Wallace's DNA was later matched to the saliva found on the cigarette butts, linking him to the victim's belongings and the weapon used in her murder.

"Woman held in death of newborn; Detectives say the mother of 3 has confessed to giving birth in racetrack restroom" *The Houston Chronicle* April 12, 2006

In October, Susan Chiniewicz allegedly stepped into the Texas Motor Speedway women's restroom and gave birth in a stall. Then, police say, she placed the newborn boy in the trash and walked out, rejoining her husband and children who were racing that day. DNA evidence was collected from the bathroom stall and, after several requests for DNA, Chiniewicz finally provided a DNA sample which matched the evidence collected at the scene. After being confronted with the evidence, Chiniewicz confessed to the crime. Because the victim was under the age of 6, Chiniewicz could face a charge of capital murder.

Expanding the DNA Databank

"More Britons have DNA held by police than rest of world" *The Independent* (London) April 14, 2006

Police in Britain hold vastly more DNA samples than any other country in the Western world, and many are from people who have never committed a crime. More than three million samples have been added to the national DNA database - more than 5 per cent of the population. With new figures showing just 1 per cent of Americans have their genetic

information on record, and an average of 0.3 per cent in other European Union countries, ministers were accused of attempting to build a national DNA database by stealth. In 2003, police were given the right to obtain and keep DNA samples from anyone arrested, regardless of whether they were eventually convicted. The Databank currently holds 3.1 million samples, and is expected to grow by another million by 2008.

DNA Evidence and Sentencing

"Jealous killer sentenced to prison" *The San Diego Union-Tribune* April 15, 2006

Bilji Varghese, 31, was sentenced to 26 years in prison for the murder of his ex-wife's boyfriend, Haval Ravin. Blood was found on a wall at the crime scene and a black shoe with DNA later matched to Varghese's was found as well. Varghese signed divorce papers nine days before the murder.

"Prostitute killer gets two life terms - Wife blames anti-depressants and trauma of ambulance work" *The Courier Mail* (Australia) April 12, 2006

In the Supreme Court in Brisbane, Francis Michael Fahey was sentenced to two life terms for the murders of Jasmin Crathern and Julie Louise McColl. He is unable to apply for parole until serving at least 25 years in prison. Fahey's wife believes that he was driven to the murders by his antidepressant medication and the stress of his work as an ambulance officer.

"Killer locked up for 17 years" *The New Zealand Herald* April 11, 2006

Jule Patrick Burns, 31, was convicted of the violent strangling of a prostitute he had picked up from Christchurch's red-light district last April. Burns appeared unrepentant in court and was sentenced to 17 years in prison, a sentence reserved for New Zealand's worst murderers.

"Rosslyn Chapel rapist given ten years in jail for attack on student" *The Scotsman* April 12, 2006

Robert Greens, 28, was sentenced to 10 years in prison for the assault and rape of a Dutch student spending a gap year in the UK. After serving his 10 year sentence, Greens will be subject to another seven years of supervision in the community. DNA evidence was found to match Greens, who then tried to blame his identical twin brother, who shares his same DNA.