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## Anticipating an advance in forensic DNA

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How many Cold Cases will go unsolved because the necessary evidence was never collected and stored? In the past we have been fortunate that in cases of sexual assaults and homicides the protocols for crime scene processing, evidence collection, SANE examinations, and autopsies were adequate to permit the examination of collected and saved evidence even as new, more selective methodology evolved. Did we anticipate the advance in blood stain typing from ABO to enzyme systems? No. Enzyme systems to the advent of DNA and Alec Jefferies' RFLP? No. Discovery of the PCR reaction? No. Low copy number (touch) DNA? No. It's only through dumb luck those in the Innocence Project have jobs! This presentation will alert you to a type of evidence that in the future (not now), will identify the assailant (or exclude someone falsely charged) in cases of sexual assault/homicide where there has been intimate contact between the assailant and victim. Its collection would be quick and easy, and not require new technology. Why is it not being collected now? At this time it is of no value. How long will it take for the necessary technology to advance? Do you recall how long these same "experts" said it would take to sequence the entire human genome? We don't want to look back and say: "would have, could have, should have." We must be proactive and insist on its collection NOW!

### Biography

Robert D Blackledge received a BS (Chem.) from The Citadel, Charleston, South Carolina, in 1960 and MS (Chem.) from the University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, in 1962. Starting with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Tallahassee Crime Lab in 1971, he worked in forensic science for over thirty years. Breaks included eleven years with the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory-Europe, and with "Aby's" NCIS Lab from 1989 to 2006. The author or co-author of over fifty journal articles and book chapters, he is the Editor of, "*Forensic Analysis on the Cutting Edge: New Methods for Trace Evidence Analysis*", Wiley-Interscience, 2007.

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