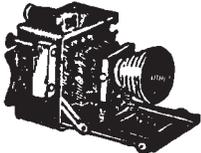




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Federal Judge Slams Fingerprint 'Science'

(This article is reprinted from the February 22, 2002 issue of "Insight in the News." Thanks to Mel Cavanaugh, LASD, for bringing it to my attention.)

By **TIMOTHY W. MAIER**

Busted, tried and convicted! That is the verdict police expect when forensic technicians match a fingerprint found at the scene of the crime to a suspect. Long considered an infallible means of personal identification, latent fingerprints lifted from a murder weapon used to mean one word to detectives: Gotcha!

But, perhaps, not anymore.

U.S. District Judge Louis H. Pollak of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania recently rocked forensic-evidence technicians with a landmark decision that could change forever how fingerprints are viewed in the courtroom. In an ongoing drug-related murder trial, U.S. v. Plaza, Pollak ruled in January that fingerprint experts no longer may tell juries that two prints are a match. His ruling is considered a major victory for defense attorneys, especially coming from a judge with the stature of Pollak – a former dean of both the Yale and University of Pennsylvania law schools – who routinely is invited to sit on the U.S. Court of Appeals.

"The ruling is great," says Douglas J. Wood, a Maryland defense attorney who recently won an acquittal for a 26-year-old Largo, Md., man charged with carjacking and attempted murder of a police officer by challenging the credibility of fingerprint evidence. "Prosecutors used to put a fingerprint examiner up on the stand and our job was to get him off as quickly as possible. When they said they had a match you knew you were [screwed]. Now I will never stipulate to fingerprint evidence again."

Wood called no defense witnesses to persuade the jury that Derrell Lamont Gilchrist was innocent. Instead, the defense attorney dumped much of the same technical attacks on the methodology of fingerprinting as presented to Pollak on the lap of a Maryland examiner – who seemed dumbfounded that a growing number of academics are charging that fingerprinting has little to do with science. "She was so unfamiliar with the literature that in one way she looked incompetent," Wood says. "She didn't come across well. That was critical to winning the case."

Since 1999 most of that literature has been reviewed by jurists in nearly two dozen lower-court cases and three appellate-court decisions. All those courts ruled in favor of fingerprint evidence, noting it has been widely accepted and deemed reliable since 1911. Pollak became the first influential jurist to issue a judicial notice that the so-called “science of fingerprint evidence” is insufficient to determine what constitutes a match.

Pollak noted that while fingerprints are indeed “unique” and “permanent,” they fail the “Daubert test,” the standard used to judge whether evidence was collected scientifically. The Daubert test grew out of the landmark 1993 U.S. Supreme Court case *Daubert v. Merrell Dow*, which involved allegations that the morning-sickness drug Bendectin causes birth defects. To pass the Daubert test, fingerprinting must have testability, error rates, peer review and standards. It doesn’t.

In his written opinion, Pollak stated that fingerprint science has not been tested in a scientific sense. “It makes sense to rely on scientific testing, rather than ‘adversarial’ courtroom testing, because to rely on the latter would be to vitiate the gatekeeping role of federal trial judges. If adversarial testing were the benchmark – that is, if the validity of a technique were submitted to the jury in each instance – then the preliminary role of the judge in determining the scientific validity of a technique would never come into play,” he wrote. “Thus, even 100 years of adversarial testing in court cannot substitute for scientific testing when the proposed expert testimony is presented as scientific in nature.”

Pollak said he was impressed with David Stoney, the director of the McCrone Research Institute in Chicago, who testified that a fingerprint examiner does not make “a scientific examination. It is a subjective determination standard. It is a subjective determination without objective standards to it.”

Wood agrees. “I always thought fingerprints were fallible. The science and the comparison is a very subjective process. If you have an examiner who is not qualified, they are like clerks or technicians at best. They are not scientists. They are not Ph.D.s. Sometimes they have only a high-school diploma.”

Meanwhile, prosecutors recently asked Pollak to reconsider his ruling. They note examiners employ a method known as ridgeology or ACE-V (an acronym for “analysis, comparison, evaluation and verification”), and the millions of print comparisons serve as a body of testing, as do numerous scientific articles written about the process. While the ACE-V process sounds impressive,

critics charge it still is too subjective to be classified as science and note examiners still claim it has a “zero-error” rate, which real scientists never do.

Some jurisdictions used to require examiners to find a minimum number of “Galton points” – matching characteristics on the fingerprint – before they could declare a match. But those similarities also are subjective and are inconsistent from state to state and country to country, says Simon Cole, author of *Suspect Identities: A History of Fingerprinting and Criminal Identification*.

Pollak noted that while fingerprints are indeed “unique” and “permanent,” they fail the “Daubert test”

For example, the United Kingdom requires a 16-point Galton minimum, while Australia mandates that 12 points be found in common. The FBI, considered by both prosecutors and defense lawyers to do the best fingerprint analysis, moved away from match requirements based on a minimum number of Galton points in the 1940s. The G-men say they have a 12-point quality-assurance system, but “no one knows exactly what that assurance is,” Cole says. In 1973 the International Association of Identification (IAI) decided that a print match should not be defined by a point system but by the opinion of a professional examiner. State labs then began to do away with point systems.

“It’s all junk science,” says James Starrs, professor of law and forensic sciences at the George Washington University Law School. “They don’t know what they are doing. There’s too much speculation and too few standards and too much left to the discretion of the examiner. It does not meet any of the indicators of scientific study or standards. It’s not error rated. It’s not peer reviewed. It’s not tested or measured. It is only accepted as God’s word among those people who practice it.”

Starrs predicts that when technology is capable of lifting DNA from a fingerprint, it will mean the end of visual matching of fingerprints as evidence. Cole adds that until then, and unless more research and testing are ordered, “there is a threat that in the future the [fingerprint] evidence will be ruled inadmissible.”

In fact, prosecutors in 1999 feared fingerprint evidence might be disregarded by a jury deciding the fate of Bryon Mitchell, who was facing armed-robbery charges as the getaway driver in the heist of an armored vehicle. Cole’s expected testimony for the defense worried prosecutors so much that they ordered the FBI to send two sets of prints found at the scene of the crime to 50 state crime labs. The FBI requested immediate help for empirical verification that these prints were indeed Mitchell’s.

What they didn’t expect was that seven state labs would fail to match the first set of prints to Mitchell and five

labs would fail to match the second set. The FBI then enlarged the prints and sent them back to the labs that had failed to finger Mitchell. This time they obliged, finding all the enlarged prints to match the accused. And never mind that the standard among fingerprint examiners is that enlargements never should be used. Defendant Mitchell was convicted. Shortly after that trial the Justice Department's research arm, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), started accepting grant proposals for studies to come up with standardized, statistically tested procedures for comparing prints that produce results with acceptable error rates. Critics say the timing of the solicitation was suspect because the FBI asked that NIJ hold off its solicitation until after the Mitchell case. The NIJ then received four proposals – all of them rejected – and has yet to repeat the process.

Ed German, a fingerprint examiner for the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Laboratory, is one who has taken issue with suggestions by both Cole and Starrs that fingerprint matching is not a science. He was unavailable for an interview, but a coworker directed Insight to his Website, which attempts to rebut Cole and Starrs' argument. "Cole attempts to minimize the scientific reliability of the foundation for identifying fingerprints by linking it with folklore about the belief that no two snowflakes are alike," says German's Webpage. "The sky is not falling. The latent-print-examination community continues to prove the reliability of the science in spite of the existence of practitioner error. Math is not bad science despite practitioner error. And air travel should not be banned because of occasional crashes due to pilot error."

Other fingerprint examiners note that many of the most notorious criminal cases in history would have remained unsolved without their expertise. Perhaps even known-terrorist Ahmed Ressam, convicted of attempting to blow up the Los Angeles International Airport on New Year's Eve 2000, still would be walking the street. Ressam's defense team unsuccessfully attempted to persuade the court to throw out fingerprint evidence that linked him to the bomb plot. After losing the fingerprint argument, Ressam pleaded guilty and admitted his allegiance to Haydar Abu Doha, a London Islamist with close ties to Osama bin Laden.

"Fingerprint evidence can provide a valuable tool in solving crimes," Cole admits. "That's something we all want, but I think it's problematic if it is oversold."

Perhaps any such overselling should be blamed on Hollywood, which seems fond of the false perception that all one needs to do is throw a print into a computer and out comes the guilty party. "A computer cannot make an identification," Starrs explains. "Its sole function is to decrease the number of suspects the examiner must manually compare." The truth is that the computer database known as the Automated Fingerprint Identification

System can kick out as many similar prints as a detective requests. Perhaps 10, maybe 20 or even 100 similarities, leaving the fingerprint examiner to compare ridges and patterns to form a conclusion. Unlike DNA experts, who are required to establish the improbabilities of two or more individuals having the same DNA, there is no such standard among fingerprint examiners, Starrs says. They either say it is or is not a match, or they say they can't tell. Historically, juries have trusted the examiners but rarely understood how much weight should be given to words such as "matching" or "virtually excluded," because judges and lawyers alike often are taken in by dubious credentialing - a diploma as a fingerprint examiner can be had via the Internet from a variety of schools or credentialing academies that may charge a few hundred dollars without even giving a class.

The growing number of inexperienced fingerprint examiners employed at state facilities can be devastating for the wrongly accused. For example, Richard Jackson of Delaware County, Pa., was sentenced to life in prison in 1998 for murder after three experts testified his fingerprint was found at the crime scene. The defense's experts claimed it was too badly smudged for a match and convinced the FBI to take a hard look at it. Prosecutors finally conceded the defense was right when the FBI sided with defense attorneys and Jackson was freed after spending two years in prison. "The average Joe in America knows absolutely nothing about fingerprints," a frustrated Jackson said after his release. "All I know is that the fingerprints in question were not mine."

Does this mean the theory that no two fingerprints are alike could be wrong? Cole says it isn't whether fingerprints ever are exactly alike but whether they can be similar enough to fool a fingerprint examiner.

The answer? Consider these test scores: On a 1995 proficiency test of 156 examiners conducted with the approval of the IAI, which has certified about half of all the examiners who now testify, 22 percent of the experts made at least one false identification linking a mock crime-scene print to the wrong person. Subsequent testing showed improvement, with 3 percent of the experts making errors in 1996. But the rate went back up to 10 percent in 1997 and stayed the same in 1998. The latest test, in 2001, showed the credentialed experts making mistakes just .3 percent of the time, raising questions about the reliability of the methodology over the years.

This came as no surprise to the Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology. In 1993, it had warned that fingerprint labs were expanding faster than they could be staffed. "Laboratories are forced to train individuals with only a minimum of academic credentials [an undergraduate degree] to perform sophisticated analyses and operate complex instrumentation," the Journal stated.

But it's not all incompetence. Some of it is dirty cops, Starrs says. "The fingerprint examiners are not engaging in a scientific endeavor. It is a police function, and the police mentality destroys the objectivity," Starrs says.

For example, New York fingerprint expert David Harding lied in court by claiming to have matched suspects' fingerprints to a crime scene in at least 40 different cases. Harding bragged during a 1993 job interview with the CIA about planting fingerprint evidence at a sensational murder scene outside of Ithaca. After the CIA reported him to local authorities he was convicted and sent to prison.

A more recent corruption case occurred in Wisconsin when Jack R. Patterson, a former state crime-lab fingerprint analyst, decided dye/laser and immersion tests were a waste of time for basic fingerprint analysis. So he skipped them and then claimed in his reports that he had conducted the tests.

What did the 25-year veteran miss? A re-examination of 210 cases handled by Patterson during the last few years revealed 345 previously undiscovered fingerprints, 31 palm prints and 34 impressions. Moreover, 174 of the fingerprints and two of the palm prints have been identified and at least 29 suspects developed as a result. Patterson was charged last year with misconduct in office.

Judge Mulls Testimony of Fingerprints

(This article is reprinted from the February 28, 2002 issue of The Los Angeles Times. It was brought to the editor's attention by Jon Stimac. Jon provides a free electronic newsletter "FP Stuff." Contact Jon at Jon.Stimac@state.or.us and tell him you heard about "FP Stuff" in "The Print".)

By **JOANN LOVIGLIO**
Philadelphia

Government lawyers wound up a three-day hearing on the reliability of fingerprinting as evidence by urging a federal judge to let the data be presented, and challenged, during trials.

U.S. District Judge Louis H. Pollak said Wednesday he will decide within two weeks whether to reverse his ruling barring experts from testifying that fingerprints lifted from a crime scene match those of a particular defendant.

If the judge doesn't change his mind, the decision could change the way forensic evidence is gathered and presented in court. Though other judges are not required to follow the ruling, legal experts say it opens the door for other courts to address the issue.

In closing statements, Assistant U.S. Attorney Thomas R. Perricone said fingerprinting is "a reliable process with merit that may be helpful to a jury."

Any concerns about the accuracy of expert fingerprint testimony should be left as "grist for cross-examination," he said.

Prosecutors requested the hearing in an attempt to get Pollak to reconsider his Jan. 7 ruling, which stemmed from the death penalty case of three men accused of operating a multimillion-dollar drug ring and killing four people. Their trial is set to begin next month.

Pollak ruled that the use of fingerprints as evidence has not been scientifically tested, that its error rate has not been calculated and that there are no standards for what constitutes a match.

The government presented data on long-secret FBI fingerprint examiner proficiency tests in the hopes of

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addressing Pollak's concerns. But on Wednesday, lawyers for the defendants said the tests don't follow national or international standards and appear intended to guarantee the test-taker does well.

Instead of testing examiners to identify weaknesses or problems, the exams are structured "to ensure they'd have a proficiency test that (examiners) would be able to perform well on ... to demonstrate success," said Janine Arvizu, a New Mexico-based inspector of private and military labs for industry and government clients.

Similar concerns were expressed by Ralph Norman Haber, a defense witness and consultant in psychometrics, or mental testing, for government and private institutions.

"I could not conclude that these tests provide any information of the proficiency of any FBI examiner working in their lab or how an FBI examiner makes a fingerprint elimination or verification," he said.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert A. Zauzmer said the 1993 U.S. Supreme Court decision Pollak cited in barring the testimony was meant to "weed out junk science" – shaky research from questionable experts – not shut the door on tried-and-true forensic evidence.

Government witnesses testified earlier that FBI examiners almost never err when linking the tests' make-believe crime scene prints to the person who made the prints, and that the tests are rigorous and thorough.

(Editor—By the time you read this, an opinion from Judge Pollak should be available, and another chapter in the history of fingerprints will be in the books. Regardless of where these attacks take us, a need for ongoing training and preparedness is crucial.)

Marian Jones would like to thank everyone for the kind thoughts, flowers, cards, phone calls, and prayers during her recent ordeal. She is improving each day and expects a full recovery.

Illegal Criminal Aliens Targeted

(This article is reprinted from the November 16, 2001 issue of the San Gabriel Valley News. Thanks to Dale Falicon, LASD, for the contribution.)

By **TROY ANDERSON**
Times Staff Writer

Federal and Los Angeles County officials launched a program Thursday that uses state-of-the-art fingerprint and computer technologies to help them find and expel illegal criminal aliens who have re-entered the United States after being deported.

"We have a very serious problem in Los Angeles County with a quarter of the inmates in county jails here illegally after having committed crimes," Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich said at a news conference at Twin Towers Correctional Facility.

"After they are released, they are sent back to their home countries and return here to commit more crimes. They fall through the cracks and many of them are re-arrested five, six and even seven times."

By using computerized fingerprinting of all illegal criminal aliens, officials expect the High Intensity-Criminal Alien Apprehension and Prosecution Program, or HI-CAAP, to expand the statewide database on deported criminal aliens.

The program funded by a \$2.3 million federal grant will give local law enforcement officers the ability to positively identify criminal aliens at the time of arrest and refer the criminal alien to a federal duty officer to decide whether to prosecute or deport the individual.

In the past, local law enforcement agencies have had difficulty quickly identifying illegal criminal aliens at the time of arrest. Due to communication barriers and incompatible computer systems, local and federal officials were unable to effectively target habitual criminal aliens for federal felony prosecutions for illegal re-entry after deportation.

Recent studies show the percentage of illegal aliens in Los Angeles County jails has doubled from 11 percent in 1990 to 25 percent this year, and the annual cost to incarcerate them has grown from \$75 million in 1990 to \$150 million in 2000.

At any time, more than 4,000 county jail inmates are illegal criminal aliens, Sheriff Lee Baca said, noting that 60 percent to 70 percent of those inmates have been re-arrested in the last four to five years.

Of the county's 150,000 gang members, 27,000 are illegal criminal aliens, officials estimate.

In the last four months, U.S. Attorney John Gordon said his office has tripled the number of cases filed against criminal aliens and he expects that number to grow.

A sheriff's report last year noted federal prosecutors in Los Angeles had only prosecuted 350 such cases in 1998 compared to 2,400 in San Diego and 3,000 in Phoenix.

Troy Anderson can be reached at (818) 713-3000.

Innovative Wireless IP Video Surveillance

City of Seal Beach Police Department

(This article was downloaded from www.cisco.com March 6, 2002)

An Innovative Wireless IP Video Surveillance solution is enabling police officers to view live video from a crime scene, improving response time and enhancing public safety.

Police officers responding to a bank robbery often have no way of knowing what's actually transpiring at the crime scene, putting them at a major disadvantage. Now, thanks to a powerful wireless IP Video Surveillance solution developed by Cisco and Loronix, officers of the Seal Beach Police Department will be able to use laptops and personal digital assistants (PDAs) to access real-time video of a crime in progress as soon as an alarm is triggered. The solution promises to revolutionize law enforcement's response to crimes and other emergencies.

The Challenge – Combining Streaming Video with Broadband Wireless over a Robust, Secure Network Infrastructure

Sergeant Dean Zanone, in charge of support services for the City of Seal Beach Police Department, was looking for a way to combine streaming video with broadband wireless as a dynamic response aid for officers responding to "hot" calls. "I knew you could do this on a local area network, but for it to really sing, you need the Internet," says Zanone. "It seemed to me all the technologies were in place, but I couldn't believe no one was doing it."

At this point, Cisco and Loronix Information Systems, Inc., a Comverse Technology company that designs, manufactures and distributes networked digital video management systems, got involved and offered to help turn the idea into reality. "They basically came out and offered to help us develop the network," says Zanone. "Within moments, they realized the potential for the marriage of the application with networking and realized how it could save lives. Cisco also gave us a secure infrastructure, which is very, very important. Remember, this is law enforcement."

The Solution – The World's First Wireless IP Video Surveillance System

Cisco, working in concert with Loronix, turned Sergeant Zanone's idea into reality by building a wireless IP Video Surveillance solution with Aironet 350 wireless access points and Aironet LAN to LAN bridges. Initially, bank branches in the Seal Beach area are being connected, with Washington Mutual Bank serving as the pilot. Eventually, the solution will be rolled out to retail establishments, hospitals and schools.

Sergeant Zanone stresses that the solution is not intrusive nor is it an invasion of privacy. "It's not like big brother. We can't see the video feed unless the business sends us the information by triggering an alarm," he says. "So, it's really a video call for help."

With the Cisco wireless IP Video solution, Seal Beach police officers can begin viewing real-time video of the crime scene in their patrol cars on touch-screen laptops as soon as an alarm is triggered, responding according to what they see occurring. Video feeds will also be accessible on specially equipped PDAs, providing even greater functionality. "By using the PDA system, officers will be able to take a position of concealment away from our vehicles and still allow us to see what is happening in the bank," says Zanone. "Plain clothes detectives could also maintain their concealment and perhaps get even closer. It will also make building searches, which are very tricky, much easier."

Faster, More Intelligent Response Saves Lives and Resources

Michael Sellers, Chief of Police for the City of Seal Beach, sees enormous benefits from the solution. "It's like giving our officers remote, real-time x-ray vision. Instead of waiting until after the crime takes place and after there are victims, we can see video of the crime actually taking place, allowing us to make better, safer decisions."

With the Cisco wireless IP Video Surveillance solution, officers can better "scale" their response to emergency situations, an important benefit for police departments like Seal Beach's, which employs about 100 officers. "Before, when we got an alarm call from a bank, we would respond with all the officers we could possibly deploy," says Sergeant Zanone. "We didn't know whether it was a false alarm or multiple, heavily armed suspects inside who had taken the entire bank over." Law enforcement personnel will also be able to begin identifying suspects while officers are in the process of responding, reducing the need for eyewitnesses and increasing the likelihood of apprehending criminals.

Sergeant Zanone also sees many other applications for the Cisco wireless IP Video Surveillance solution, including emergencies and schools. "Realize that fire, police, emergency medical services all respond to 911 calls," says Zanone. "Fire personnel could assess a scene before they're there to make sure they get the appropriate number of resources rolling. I think it's absolutely essential to be implemented in schools," he adds. "School violent situations are very similar to workplace violent situations. There are multiple suspects, multiple victims. That you'd be able to have an idea of who your suspect is and what weapons he might have is going to give you a huge tactical advantage."

The Cisco Advantage

Because it operates over local area networks (LANs) instead of an expensive wide area network (WAN) and can be easily integrated with existing video cameras, the Cisco wireless IP Video Surveillance solution is remarkably simple and cost-effective to implement. Sergeant Zanone is also very enthusiastic about the support he's received. "Cisco brought more than just hardware and expertise. They brought enthusiasm. And, they quickly recognized how what we wanted to do could save lives," he says. "They even did drive-alongs to understand how our line officers would use the technology. They've done an absolutely fabulous job in bringing all the pieces together. We're talking middle of the night, first thing in the morning, 7/24, they're out here whenever we need them. I present problems to them. They present solutions. It's that good."

“CSI” almost immediately proved the bigger draw. “The Fugitive” was soon canceled, and “CSI” moved to Thursdays to challenge NBC’s “Will & Grace.”

The “CSI” set is built on Stage 8, a hangar-sized cavern of a building at the Santa Clarita Studios, squatting on an arid hilltop about 50 miles north of Los Angeles. To the east, looms a broad, breathtaking view of the brown, parched San Gabriel Mountains. To the west, across Interstate 5, stand the dozen-odd roller coasters of the Six Flags Magic Mountain amusement park.

At first glance, every instrument looks utterly authentic, but on closer examination the computers have no hard drives, every card in Grissom’s Rolodex is blank, the boxes of bullets in the ballistics lab are empty and the copy of *Guns and Ammo* lying on a desk dates from September 1987.

At last, with the scene finished and the cameras and crew moving to the morgue set next door in Stage 7, Petersen can take a break. He introduces himself — “Hi, I’m Billy Petersen” and leads the way to his dressing trailer. Still wearing Gil Grissom’s black jacket and name tag, he settles into an easy chair and readily acknowledges that yes, he’s just spent about three hours shooting what looks to be about 30 seconds of film.

“That’s good, if we get 30 seconds out of several hours,” says the actor. “We have a difficult show, compared to most TV dramas. The episode we’re shooting right now has 140 scenes in it. Most one-hour dramas are in the area of 70 to 80 scenes. In the same amount of time, we’re having to do quite a bit more work.”

All of that intricate detail, the graphic, glowing special effects, the use of saturated colors, the glitzy Las Vegas exterior shots, give “CSI” its unique look and appeal. Notwithstanding all the flash, however, “CSI” works that most ancient and fertile of dramatic mines, the whodunit.

Prime-time mysteries were rare in September 2000, which may explain why the public was so ready for a fresh one. Their appeal is eternal, and they’ve almost always had a place somewhere on the schedule, from the days of “Peter Gunn” and “Dragnet” to “Mannix,” to “Mystery!” and “Murder, She Wrote.”

It’s not hard to imagine that Grissom and his crew, peering into their microscopes, tapping their computer keyboards, are re-enacting scenes first played with magnifying glasses and Bunsen burners by that original scientific detective, Sherlock Holmes.

But, as portrayed by the unassuming, curly-headed, chipmunk-cheeked, dimple-chinned, all-American Petersen, 48, Grissom hardly resembles the aristocratic, imperious Holmes. He works in the same meticulous method, he constantly repeats

Grissom Makes The ‘Scene’

(This article is reprinted from the January 28, 2002 issue of the San Diego Union-Tribune. Thanks to Janet Lawson for the contribution.)

By **ROBERT P. LAURENCE**

Television Critic

SANTA CLARITA — It’s about 12:30 in the afternoon, and William Petersen and Jorja Fox are walking slowly along a corridor of the “CSI: Crime Scene Investigation” set, reading lines from small scraps of paper.

They’re rehearsing a “walk ‘n’ talk” — a scene where actors exchange lines as they stride purposefully from hither to yon.

About a dozen crew members walk with them, past the meeting room set, past the locker room set, past the lab set, to the door of the office of Gil Grissom, the Las Vegas forensics investigator played by Petersen. They stop, he recites: “A severed finger, a million bucks, and Catherine’s not allowed to speak to anyone.”

Over the next three hours, lights will be rearranged, furniture moved here and there, the walk taken over and over at increasing speed, and Petersen will repeat his line

“A severed finger, a million bucks...,” “A severed finger...” another five or six times through rehearsals and multiple filmings before director Richard Lewis is satisfied.

One take will be scrapped when, just as the scene is winding up and everyone is standing in quiet suspense, a male voice from somewhere on the set booms heedlessly through the silence: “Brad! Where are you, bro?” Lewis stares stupefied at his video screen, obviously thinking that this line is not in the script.

Little was expected when “CSI” debuted in September 2000. It was scheduled at 9 p.m. Fridays, usually a marginal night, just after a remake of “The Fugitive,” for which CBS had high hopes. If “CSI” could just hold onto the audience of “The Fugitive,” that would be sufficient.

his “the evidence never lies” philosophy, but he’s very much a regular, everyday, American working guy.

Anthony Zuiker, creator and executive producer of “CSI,” who grew up in Las Vegas, described Grissom as “enigmatic, intellectual, cold and distant.” Viewers, he says, “like his abilities, and the mystique of who he is. Not knowing too much about him is what makes him intriguing to America, I believe.”

Petersen explained that “Anthony’s original idea of Grissom was as a nerdish, nebbishy science guy, who was really quirky, somebody Woody Allen would play, maybe.

“I would normally not get cast as the insular scientist. It’s much more of a character part. That’s why I was attracted in the first place, because it gives me a chance to play something I don’t normally get to play. Normally, I’m a more aggressive kind of individual.”

Most often, he has played more familiar American types, as he did in “Long Gone,” a 1987 made-for-cable production that remains the favorite baseball movie of the few who have seen it. In a lengthy string of stage productions and movies for the big and little screen, he’s been killers and fishermen, cowboys and politicians. He has portrayed both President John F. Kennedy and his father, Joe. In the 2000 film “The Contender,” he had a memorable role as a rejected vice-presidential contender.

For 16 years, Petersen and several friends ran their own company in Chicago, the Remains Theater.

He is part of a long tradition of Chicago theater, a parade of performers that in the past couple of decades has given us Joe Mantegna, Dennis Franz, John Malkovich, Gary Sinise, Laurie Metcalf, Elizabeth Perkins, John Mahoney, Aidan Quinn and John Cusack, among others. “We were all friends,” he remembered. “We all grew up together.”

The theater, he said, “saved my life.”

Growing up in Evanston, Ill., near Chicago, he was “shiftless, rudderless. I didn’t care about school, I dropped out of high school at one point. I didn’t care about work. I cared about love-ins and rock festivals.”

Petersen followed a girlfriend to Idaho State University in Pocatello, where he thought he’d play football. “But my grade-point average was very bad, so they put me in theater classes to get my grade-point up. Not acting, but physical theater lighting design, stagecraft.

“And I fell in love with the people there. I fell in love with the fact that they were telling stories. It was like a baseball team or a football team, a bunch of people getting together to try and accomplish what I decided at that point was a greater goal than scoring a touchdown. It was a story that unfolded in front of

an audience that might make their life a little different for the two hours they were there.”

As an outsider wandering into the theater, he said, “I found a home. I found a home with the Gypsies of the theater. It saved my life in that it was exactly what I was supposed to do. I don’t know how often we find that.

“It certainly is how I learned about the world, how I learned about myself. How I learned about life and love was all in the theater.”

This is the first time that Petersen has taken a job in a weekly TV series.

“I didn’t want to play a lawyer, or a doctor or a policeman,” he explained. “My biggest concern always was whether I could continue to care about the character for a long period of time. You don’t want to get bored with someone, because you have to play the role every day for years.

“Grissom has remained fascinating for me, because we don’t know a lot about him.”

Work on “CSI,” he said, is “long, hard, arduous, taxing, tedious. There are only so many ways you can pick up a hair fiber.”

Robert P. Laurence can be reached by phone, (619) 293-1892; fax, (619) 293-2432; email (bob.laurence@uniontrib.com); or at the Union- Tribune, P.O. Box 120191, San Diego, CA 92112-0191.



**Upcoming
SCAFO Meeting**
April 27, 2002
Past Presidents' Night

Location: Knott's Berry Farm
Program: To be announced

For more information contact:
Bob Goss at (909) 388-4904
goss@scafo.org

Experts Have A Bone To Pick With ‘CSI’

(This companion article is reprinted from the January 28, 2002 issue of the San Diego Union-Tribune. Thanks to Janet Lawson for the contribution.)

By **ROBERT P. LAURENCE**
Television Critic

This may not come as shocking news, but all that scientific crime detection stuff on “CSI” isn’t exactly the way it really happens.

In the real world of the San Diego County Sheriff’s Crime Lab, the work is much slower, more tedious, and far less glamorous, said real-life criminalist Gene Lawrence.

“CSI,” he said, is “entertaining, but as far as technical content, they go way overboard. They do things that just aren’t possible. We don’t have the types of instruments they have, where they put anything they want in there and get the answers in a few seconds. They don’t show the tediousness of the work.”

Lawrence at the moment was examining a pair of gym trousers that had been worn by a hit-run victim, searching with a magnifying glass, then a microscope, for bits of glass or paint that might have been left by the car involved in the incident. He expected to spend 12 to 16 hours peering at the trousers.

He knew the victim was female, but he didn’t know if she was alive or dead. Real criminalists, he pointed out, don’t meet the crime victims.

Lawrence’s remarks were underlined by Ron Barry, manager of the 60-employee facility in the building once occupied by Clairemont Hospital.

“I’ve actually seen it twice,” Barry said of the show. “That was about as much as I could handle, frankly.”

On the one hand, Barry is glad the hit CBS crime show has focused so much public attention on the work done by departments like his. On the other, he notes, “CSI” has given labs an unrealistically positive image.

“They are bringing the public’s attention to what forensic

labs can do and making it very interesting,” said Barry. But, he added, “In a way, it’s almost damaging, because the public sees this and they have high expectations that the lab is going to turn things around very quickly. The reality is it takes a very, very long time to do a lot of those analyses.”

Since the show made its debut in the fall of 2000, he added, the Sheriff’s Department Website has “been inundated with inquiries, most of them from ‘wannabes,’ so to speak. I get inquiries almost daily from throughout the country. People indicate they’re interested in this (work), and I read between the lines or communicate with them, and it’s because they’ve been watching ‘CSI.’ ”

Barry makes two chief criticisms: The fictional scientists of “CSI” get their work done with unrealistic speed, and they range farther afield than real forensic specialists.

Making DNA matches, he said, “they show some samples being injected, and out pops the answer on a sheet of paper and they go out and arrest their guy. That’s really preposterous. There are so many checks and balances and quality-control issues, it takes, at best, days to weeks to complete a case.”

And, Barry added, the fictional Las Vegas forensics chief Gil Grissom (William Petersen) and his crew “get involved in a lot of aspects of investigations that detectives normally do. For the most part, crime lab people aren’t really making contact with the public, or with victims and suspects, or doing the follow-up you see in the TV show.

“Most of (their work) is analytical in nature. When we do go out to scenes, it’s working with other detectives and we’re there for support.”

Still interested in the job?

To be a criminalist, Barry said, you’ll need “at least a bachelor’s degree in science chemistry, molecular biology, one of the heavy sciences. We’re doing complex chemical analysis here. That’s a primary requirement you have to have.”

To be a forensic evidence technician, you’ll need “a two-year degree in evidence technology, fingerprinting and photography. But they’re not doing the heavy-duty technology.”

But don’t get your hopes up too soon: “For the first time in our history, we have all our positions filled at the moment.”

President's Message

In early January, the SCAFO board met to discuss the agenda for the upcoming year and plans for this year's Seminar, which will be held at "Kellogg West" on the Cal Poly Pomona Campus. Also discussed was a possible change to the membership policies for students, which we will be bringing to our members soon.

We had a very good turnout for the February meeting at the Seasons Restaurant in Diamond Bar. Our speakers, Pete Williams and Debra Gray, gave a very informative talk on the role of DMORT's response in the recovery effort necessitated by the September 11th attack on the World Trade Center. My thanks to Alan McRoberts and Bill Leo for putting the meeting together and getting the speakers.

Well, it seems that the Science of Fingerprints is under attack as we start the new year. I'm sure most, if not all, of you are aware of the recent court decision: United States vs Carlos Plaza, Criminal Case No. 98-362. The case involves the exclusion of vital expert testimony regarding fingerprint identification. On January 7, 2002, U.S. District Judge Louis H. Pollak (Federal Court in the State of Pennsylvania) ruled that a witness giving fingerprint testimony "...will not be permitted to present testimony expressing an opinion of an expert witness that a particular latent print matches, or does not match, the rolled print of a particular person..."

If you are not aware of the case, please go to Ed German's website at www.onin.com or take a look at Kasey Wertheim's site at www.clpex.com for the latest updates on the case. I would highly recommend that all of you subscribe to "The Weekly Detail" at Kasey's website. We need to keep up to date with recent court decisions and information regarding our science.

The Boy Scout motto "Be Prepared" could not hold more true in our profession.

Hope to see you all at the April meeting, which will be "Past Presidents' Night".

Fraternally,

Steven Tillmann

Mailing fees for 2002 were due November 1, 2001. As of January 1, 2002, unpaid fees are delinquent. Delinquent members shall be dropped from the mailing list. This will be the last issue of *The Print* for the following members, until the fees and reinstatement fee (\$5.00) is paid.

*Abell, Rena	Lerma, Myrna
*Harp, Michael	Lewis, Nathaniel
*Jewett, Donna	Limon, Rebecca
*Rogde, Cathleen	Ljosdal, Rachele
Aboytes, Lourdes	Lopez, Jim
Abrams, Sandy	Lotts, Sean
Aguilar, Denise	Lowe, Chris
Alvarez, Pauline	Luna, Lorraine
Aragonez, Ana	Martinez, Aurelio
Arredondo, Jaqueline	McDonnell, John
Baez, Jess	Miranda, David
Baker, Susannah	Morales, Brenda
Barajas, Peter	Murillo, April
Behneke, Donald	Musulin, Marleen
Black, Maggie	O'Connell, Anne
Brooks, Brandy	Peterson, Mary Lou
Brown, Kelli	Phillips, Barbara
Cabrera, Susie	Regele, Robin
Chavez, Maria	Reis, George
Cheeseman, Rob	Reyes, Yolanda
Collins, Lynn	Rivera, Miguel
Comito, Teresa	Rogers, Richard
Cortez, Mario	Ross, Sally
Dillon, Andrea	Savage, Dorie
Do, Diane	Schambra, Debra
Donnelly, Diane	Scholz, Rosanna
Eklund, Teri	Shadley, Peggy
Escalante, Esper	Snell, Judy
Ferma, Elena	Taul, Stephanie
Finkle, Robert	Tsai, Rosa
Funo, Leslie	Tuazon, Evangeline
Garcia, Stephanie	Val Verde, Peter
Gilbert, Derek	Vanderschaaf, John
Griffith, Tina	Vazquez, Jose
Gunao, Alejandro	Veneri, Stefania
Gutierrez, Diana	Waldo, Mark
Hammons, George	Watson, Sarah
Hodgetts, Jennifer	Wertheim, Pat
Hogue, Leah	Whitmer, Tracy
Inlow, Vicki	Wigington, Heather
Jacobs, Jo Anne	Williams, Peter
Johnson, Craig	Wright, Linda
Johnson, Ronald	Wright, Stacey
Kergil, Peter	Wright-Wilson, Maria
Kraft, Christopher	
Krueck, Deborah	
Kuhn, Kurt	
Lazzaro, Gabriela	
Lekowski, Carol	
Leo, Rachel	

MINUTES OF MEETING

DATE: Saturday, February 23, 2002
LOCATION: Seasons' Restaurant, Diamond Bar, Ca.
HOST: Bill Leo and Alan McRoberts
SECRETARY: Dennis Uyeda
SPEAKER: Pete Williams and Debra Gray
PROGRAM: A Team Response To The World Trade Center Diaster

Call to Order: 2050 hours by President Steve Tillmann

ATTENDANCE:

Past Presidents - Joseph Mann 1985, Dell Freeman 1973, Alan McRoberts 1991, James Lawson 1995, Clinton Fullen 1998, William Leo 1996, Robert Goss 2001.

Executive Board: all present except George Durgin (on-active duty) and Gina Russell-Durgin (vacationing in Washington, DC to visit George).

Members and guests present - 81

GIFTS: Provided by Dick Rogers, Alan and Debbie McRoberts, Tony and Karen Clark-Stewart.

OLD BUSINESS:

Second Reading:

Shawn Stalker, San Diego Sheriff's Dept.
Valeri Dedich (Associate)
Motion to Accept: Amy Adams
Second: Ed Palma

Swear-Ins: by Past President Jim Lawson
Lorna Gampon (Associate)

NEW BUSINESS:

First Readings for Active Membership:

Robert Lio, Los Angeles Sheriff's Dept.
Recommended by Susan Garcia, L.A.S.D.
Crystal Long, Corcoran Police Dept.
Recommended by Latoshia Jackson of L.A.D.A.
Tammy Appleton, Los Angeles Sheriff's Dept.
Recommended by Diana Castro, L.A.P.D.

First Readings for Associate Membership:

Nicole Osborn, Heidy Mroczek, Christina Hoogs, Carmen Fabian, Aloma DeVaux, Christine Deltufo, and Jeanette Archuteta
Recommended by Diana Castro, L.A.S.D.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Glenna Prouty, wife of Bob Prouty (Past President of CSDIAI and IAI), passed away.

Marian Jones, wife of Tom Jones, is recovering from a stroke.

Attendance Drawing: Won by Richard "Dick" Rogers \$50. Dick (of EVI-PAQ), one of our biggest supporters, donated the \$50 back to SCAFO.

Door Prizes won by many in attendance.

Motion to Adjourn: Amy Adams, Second: Elaine Sena-Brown

Meeting Adjourned: 2135 hours

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date: January 12, 2002

Location: Marie Callenders, West Covina

Call to Order: 0925 by Chairman Bob Goss
Present: Bob Goss, Steve Tillman, Ed Palma, Tony Clark-Stewart, Susan Garcia, Elaine Sena-Brown, Gina Russell-Durgin, William Leo, James Lawson, Alan McRoberts and Dennis Uyeda.

Editor's Report: Established advertising rate in the PRINT. \$150 a year for four issues.

Motion: Leo, Second: Tillman PASSED
Insert advertisements will be the cost of the insert plus postage.
Motion: McRoberts, Second: Sena-Brown. PASSED.

Financial Report 2001: by Lawson, ACCEPTED

Goss will take all sales items and have a sales table at the meetings. Directors will assist the Secretary with the sign-ins at meetings.

Meeting schedule was set for 2002.

Bob Spinner of Santa Barbara would like to host a meeting in his area in the Fall. Motion- McRoberts, Second- Leo PASSED.

Bill Leo will offer Training Classes this year.

Bob Goss will draft a Bylaws revision simplifying the associate membership process.

Steve Tillman and Bill Leo will co-chair the 2002 SCAFO Annual Training Seminar.

Motion to Adjourn: Ed Palma, Second: Steve Tillman

Meeting Adjourned: 1235.

"Every man owes a part of his time and money to the business or industry in which he is engaged. No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere."

- President Theodore Roosevelt, 1908

For subscription or membership information, or address corrections contact:

S.C.A.F.O. Dennis Uyeda, Secretary
P.O. Box 1594
Fair Oaks, CA 95628
(916) 227-3314
\$20.00 yearly subscription (attendance required for membership)
\$30.00 yearly for International Subscriptions

C.S.D.I.A.I. Ricardo Tomboc, Treasurer
710 North "D" Street
San Bernardino, CA 92401
(909) 384-5701
\$25.00 yearly membership

I.A.I. Joe Polski, Chief Operations Officer
2535 Pilot Knob Road, Suite 117
Mendota Heights, MN 55120-1120
(651) 681-8566 iaisecty@theiai.org
\$60.00 yearly membership



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SCAFO Members
get "yourname@scafo.org"
See instructions on the
website's email page.

-- Upcoming Events/Schools/Seminars--

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| April 7 - 11, 2002 | C.S.D.I.A.I.
Monterey, CA
Host Tony Clark-Stewart |
| April 27, 2002 | S.C.A.F.O. Meeting
Bob Goss
San Bernardino Police Department |
| June 1, 2002 | S.C.A.F.O. Meeting
Dennis Uyeda
CAL-DOJ |
| August 3, 2002 | S.C.A.F.O. Meeting
Ed Palma/ Tom Washington |
| August 4 - 10, 2002 | International Association for Identification
Las Vegas, Nevada |
| October 4-5, 2002 | S.C.A.F.O. Seminar
Cal-Poly Pomona |
| December 7, 2002 | S.C.A.F.O. Meeting
George Durgin
Orange County Sheriff's Department |
| February 1, 2002 | S.C.A.F.O. Meeting
Elaine Sena-Brown
Santa Monica Police Department |

Southern California Association of Fingerprint Officers
An Association for Scientific Investigation and Identification Since 1937