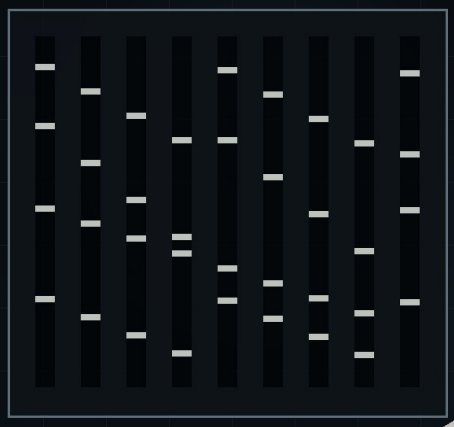
THE TRUE CRIME FILES

BOOK 12

SOLVED BY DNA

HOW FORENSIC GENETICS CRACKED COLD CASES, EXPOSED KILLERS AND FREED THE INNOCENT

FORENSIC SCIENCE • COLD CASES • GENETIC GENEALOGY



EVIDENCE

DNA SAMPLE

CHAIN OF CUSTODY

THE TRUE CRIME FILES

SOLVED BY DNA

How Forensic Genetics Cracked Cold Cases, Exposed Killers and Freed the Innocent

BOOK 12

Alden M. Corvale

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This book is a work of true-crime history, forensic-science education, and criminal-justice analysis. It is not laboratory, legal, or medical advice.

Case histories are summarized from public records and established secondary sources. Where a technique generated an investigative lead rather than direct proof, the text distinguishes those roles.

Forensic science, database rules, privacy policies, and laws continue to evolve. Readers seeking current practice should consult the relevant laboratory, law-enforcement agency, court, or jurisdiction.

Introduction - When Biology Challenges the Story

DNA did not enter criminal justice as a magical truth machine. It entered as a new way to compare biological material, first through labor-intensive profiling and later through highly sensitive short tandem repeat analysis, national databases, mitochondrial DNA, Y-chromosome testing, and, more recently, investigative genetic genealogy. Each advance expanded what old evidence could reveal. Each also created new questions about contamination, privacy, statistics, laboratory quality, and how strongly a genetic association can support a legal conclusion.

The phrase 'solved by DNA' therefore needs care. DNA can identify a biological source with extraordinary power when the evidence is suitable and the interpretation is sound. It can also exclude an innocent person. But a profile does not automatically explain when material was deposited, why it was present, whether a person committed a crime, or whether investigators handled the sample correctly. The strongest cases combine genetics with timelines, corroborating evidence, witness information, records, and confirmatory testing.

This book follows the technology from Alec Jeffreys' pioneering DNA fingerprinting work in the 1980s to CODIS and the era of investigative genetic genealogy. Along the way, it examines famous convictions, historic exonerations, cold cases reopened after decades, and the scientific safeguards that separate a useful lead from courtroom proof.

The central lesson is simple: DNA is powerful because it can challenge stories. It can expose a killer who escaped ordinary suspicion. It can link crimes committed years apart. And it can prove that a person convicted by eyewitnesses, confessions, or older forensic methods was not the source of the biological evidence at all.

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