



### **D69 Forensic Ethics: Getting Scientists and Lawyers on the Same Page**

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After attending this presentation, attendees will understand some of the danger areas for scientists and lawyers to be aware of in cases, and ways to prevent ethical problems at trial.

Often, lawyers and scientists approach cases from different perspectives. They also each have their own independent scope of knowledge. Scientists can be caught between the prosecution and the defense, between the science and the law. This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by making scientists aware of their ethical duties and will examine how the lawyers can, and must, help the scientist carry out their ethical duties.

From 2002 through 2004, Sheri Mecklenburg was lead defense counsel on a series of cases involving reversed convictions, which alleged crime lab fraud in the old Chicago Police Crime Laboratory. Those cases generated headlines throughout the country and sent a shudder of concern throughout the legal and forensic communities. The lessons learned led to an examination of the practices of Crime Labs across the country and to recommendations for improvements. But through the anatomy of the Crime lab cases, Ms. Mecklenburg was able to view the ethics of the prosecutors, defense counsel, and crime lab scientist. Ms. Mecklenburg had the rare experience of viewing the cases with 20/20 hindsight, of picking them apart to determine what went wrong, and of spending hours upon hours in depositions asking each of the players what they did and why they did it. Ms. Mecklenburg, who has previously conducted seminars on Crime Lab Ethics, will discuss the lessons learned and how the three key players in forensic evidence can and must "get on the same page."

#### **Ethics, Lawyers, Scientists**