J12   Criminal Codes and Ciphers

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The goal of this presentation is to introduce attendees to cryptographic tradecraft common to criminals/inmates.

This presentation will impact the forensic science community by showing the value of criminal codes and ciphers to investigations.

Criminals have long employed manual cryptographic techniques to communicate with confederates or clandestinely maintain records of criminal enterprises. The Cryptanalyst Forensic Examiners of the FBI Laboratory's Cryptanalysis & Racketeering Records Unit (CRRU) decipher encrypted records and communications from street and prison gangs, organized criminals, drug traffickers, foreign and domestic terrorists, and violent criminals. Despite the prevalence of encoded and enciphered documents in criminal cases throughout the nation, the CRRU is the only laboratory unit in the country that has professionally trained law enforcement cryptanalysts.

The presentation will introduce attendees to common manual crypto- graphic methods used by criminals, and provide an overview of the unique examination services offered by the CRRU to federal, state and local law enforcement. The entertaining and informative presentation would also in- clude interesting studies of nationally known cases where cryptanalysis has played a major role including:

- The enciphered messages written by the infamous Zodiac serial killer from the 1960s and 70s (featured in the recent move "Zodiac"), including the message that remains unsolved to this day.
- The coded admission of Joseph Smith, the man convicted of the video taped abduction and murder of 12 year old Carlie Brucia in Sarasota Florida in 2004.
- The 1997 Aryan Brotherhood murder hit order that was encrypted using a cipher invented over 400 years ago by Sir Francis Bacon and resulted in multiple coordinated homicides and assaults across the nation.

Cryptanalysis, Codes, Ciphers