

G15 Several Key Concepts in Bitemark Analysis Are as Relevant Now as Ever

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Learning Overview: The goals of this presentation are to discuss the difference between evidence and investigative information with respect to bitemark analysis and to discuss several key concepts of bitemark evidence that can contribute valuable evidence and information to legal investigations.

Impact on the Forensic Science Community: There has been a great deal of controversy surrounding bitemark evidence. Some want to exclude any and all bitemark analysis from being used as evidence. This presentation will impact the forensic science community by offering aspects of bitemark analysis that are of value to the legal system as evidence and investigative information, despite the misuse and mistakes of the past.

This presentation involves the terms evidence and investigative information and the difference between the two. Yourdictionary.com defines *Evidence* as the available body of facts ... indicating whether a belief is true or valid. Dictionary.com defines *Investigate* as to carry out a systematic or formal inquiry ... so as to establish the truth.

Several bitemark cases will be presented that illustrate the value of bitemark analysis and the difference between investigative information and evidence. The importance of this analysis of bitemarks and possible profiling may provide valuable investigative information for the exclusion of suspects or a suspect. The cases highlight incidents involving exoneration of a suspect, scene photos versus bias, elimination of suspects, evidentiary value, inability to eliminate a suspect, and corroboration of statements by those involved in a case.

Attendees will learn the difference between bitemark analysis and bitemark comparison as described in a previously published paper.¹ The objective is to address the evolution of bitemark analysis and evidence rules and guidelines over time highlighting what should not be done and what should be kept as valuable input to the criminal justice system both as evidence and as investigative opinion.

Reference(s):

- ¹ R. Souviron, L. Haller. Bite Mark Evidence: Bitemark Analysis Is Not the Same as Bite Mark Comparison or Matching or Identification. *Journal of Law and the Biosciences*, 2017.

Bitemark, Evidence, Investigative Information