Criminal Discovery, Scientific Evidence, and DNA

Paul C. Giannelli
I. INTRODUCTION ........................................................................................................... 792
II. PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS ....................................................................... 794
   A. Reliability of Scientific Proof .............................................................................. 795
   B. Admissibility and the Adversary Process ......................................................... 797
   C. Pretrial Discovery ............................................................................................... 798
III. Notice .................................................................................................................... 800
IV. SCIENTIFIC REPORTS ......................................................................................... 803
   A. Procedures Employed ....................................................................................... 804
   B. Conclusions Reached ......................................................................................... 804
   C. Qualifications .................................................................................................... 805
   D. Bases of Opinion and Number of Analysts ..................................................... 806
   E. Types of Reports ............................................................................................... 808
   F. Other Issues ....................................................................................................... 808
V. RELATED DOCUMENTS ......................................................................................... 809
   A. Bench Notes ....................................................................................................... 809
   B. Graphs ................................................................................................................ 811
   C. Statistical and Novel Evidence ......................................................................... 812
      1. Fiber Analysis ................................................................................................ 812
      2. Neutron Activation Analysis ......................................................................... 812
      3. DNA Evidence ............................................................................................... 814
VI. THE RIGHT TO TEST AND RETEST EVIDENCE .................................................. 816
VII. DUTY TO PRESERVE .......................................................................................... 819
VIII. CONCLUSION .................................................................................................... 821
     A. Proposed Amendments .................................................................................. 821
     B. Rationale ......................................................................................................... 823

* Albert J. Weatherhead III and Richard W. Weatherhead Professor of Law, Case Western Reserve University. J.D., University of Virginia, 1970; LL.M., University of Virginia, 1975; M.S. in Forensic Science, George Washington University, 1973. I want to thank Barry Scheck, whose questions and insights caused me to write this Article, and James Wooley for sharing an opposing viewpoint. I also want to thank David Magee and Katherine Friedell for their research and editorial assistance.
I. Introduction

"At bottom the case against Claus von Bülow was a scientific case. It would have to be refuted by scientific evidence,"^1 wrote Alan Dershowitz. The von Bülow case is not alone. Many recent notorious criminal trials involved scientific proof. For example, the prosecution offered hypnotically refreshed testimony and bite mark evidence in the Ted Bundy case.\^2 Fiber evidence proved critical in the trial of Wayne Williams for the murder of two of the thirty young black males killed in Atlanta in the late 1970s.\^3 Other illustrations include the pathology and serology testimony in the Jean Harris trial,\^4 the forensic analysis of physical evidence in the Jeffrey MacDonald "Green Beret Doctor" case,^5 and the ballistics, shoeprint, and fingerprint evidence in the "Night Stalker" serial murder prosecution.\^6 Indeed, reliance on scientific proof has become so common that its absence in a particular case is noteworthy. A news account of the "Central Park Jogger" case commented that "[a]mong the defense's strongest points in attacking the prosecution's case was the surprising absence of physical evidence—no

4. See People v. Harris, 84 A.D.2d 63, 445 N.Y.S.2d 520 (1981), aff'd, 57 N.Y.2d 335, 442 N.E.2d 1205, 456 N.Y.S.2d 694 (1982), cert. denied, 460 U.S. 1047 (1983). Eight pathologists testified and 20% of the trial was devoted to cutaneous histology. See Ackerman, The Physician As Expert Witness: Is Peer Review Needed?, 1 GENERICS 37, 52 (Dec. 1985) (stating that "[t]he role of cutaneous histology in the trial of Jean Harris and its implications for medicine and the law in America should be of concern to the community of physicians"); Beach, Mr. Wizard Comes to Court, TIME, Mar. 1, 1982, at 90 (reporting that "[t]he trial of Jean Harris last year [the expert] tried to persuade the jury—unsuccessfully—that blood marks jibed with Harris's claim that the shooting of Dr. Herman Tarnower occurred accidentally during a struggle"); see also S. ALEXANDER, VERY MUCH A LADY: THE UNTOLD STORY OF JEAN HARRIS AND DR. HERMAN TARNOWER (1983); J. DAVID, SCARSDALE MURDER (1981).
weapons, no blood stains, no strands of hair, no pieces of skin, no footprints link any of the teenagers to the crimes.”

Even the popular press has written on the subject. The New York Times relates that the importance of expert testimony “is growing as technological advances enable courts to dispose of cases by using scientific tools.” Time reports that “forensic science is growing so fast that even the most sophisticated researchers cannot keep up.”

This development raises a number of issues for the legal system. The standard for admitting novel scientific evidence, such as Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA), continues to vex the courts. The admissibility of laboratory reports in criminal prosecutions is unresolved. The contours of an indigent accused’s right to defense experts still is being explored. The expansion of the bases of expert testimony in Federal Rule of Evidence 703 (Rule 703) remains controversial.

One issue that appears to be settled is the need for pretrial discovery of scientific evidence. Virtually all jurisdictions track Federal Criminal Rule 16 (Rule 16) and make reports of scientific tests discoverable.

7. Sherman, Technology, Emotion Key in Jogger Case, NAT’L L.J., Aug. 20, 1990, at 8; see also N.Y. Times, Aug. 20, 1990, at B4 (reporting that “[t]he youths claimed not to have penetrated the jogger, and there was no clear physical proof that they had”).


9. Beach, supra note 4, at 90; see also Cherry, Their Blood Cried out for Vengeance, Sci. DIG. 60 (May 1981) (stating that by “[u]sing a host of new techniques, forensic scientists are now able to crack cases once considered unsolvable”).


12. The United States Supreme Court first recognized an indigent’s right to defense experts in Ake v. Oklahoma, 470 U.S. 68 (1985). The exact dimensions of the right, however, have not been mapped out. See Volson v. Blackburn, 794 F.2d 173, 176 (5th Cir. 1986) (stating that the “Ake decision fails to establish a bright line test for determining when a defendant has demonstrated that sanity at the time of the offense will be a significant factor at the time of trial”); Note, Expert Services and the Indigent Criminal Defendant: The Constitutional Mandate of Ake v. Oklahoma, 84 MICH. L. REV. 1326 (1986).


14. FED. R. CRIM. P. 16(a)(1)(D) provides:

Upon request of a defendant the government shall permit the defendant to inspect and copy or photograph any results or reports of physical or mental examinations, and of scientific tests or experiments, or copies thereof, which are within the possession, custody, or control of the government, the existence of which is known, or by the exercise of due diligence may become known, to the attorney for the government, and which are material to the preparation of the defense or are intended for use by the government as evidence in chief at the trial. Id.; see also P. GIANNELLI & E. IMWINKELRIED, SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE 91 & n.23 (1986) (listing state jurisdictions).
The leading texts on criminal procedure give the subject scant attention, apparently assuming that the current discovery rules are adequate. Indeed, one commentator noted that the limited litigation over Rule 16 "no doubt reflects the general recognition of the necessity to afford the defense discovery of the results and reports of medical examinations and scientific tests and of the longstanding and widespread practice of many prosecutors of making such information available on request."

Recent cases, including those involving DNA evidence, however, demonstrate the gross inadequacy of the current discovery rules. Rule 16 does not even guarantee defendants the most fundamental form of discovery—notice that a prosecution expert is going to testify against them at trial. When discovery is provided in the form of scientific reports, it is insufficient for adequate trial preparation. In addition, some courts still refuse to recognize an accused’s right to test independently the state’s evidence. Moreover, instead of voluntary disclosure, vigorous opposition to discovery often has been the prosecutor’s response.

Part II of this Article explores more fully the need for pretrial discovery. Parts III through VII then examine the deficiencies of the current discovery rules in the areas of notice, scientific reports, related documents, and evidence testing. The Conclusion sets out proposals for reform.

II. Preliminary Considerations

Some background information on the use of scientific evidence in criminal cases is helpful to elucidate particular deficiencies in the current discovery rules. As noted above, resort to scientific methods of proof is increasing. In addition, the impact of this type of evidence is substantial. One researcher reported that approximately twenty-five percent of the jurors in trials involving scientific evidence stated that they would have delivered a verdict of not guilty instead of guilty if the evidence had not been introduced.
A. Reliability of Scientific Proof

Previous articles have discussed the reliability of scientific proof;19 therefore, it is necessary to highlight only a few points here. As illustrated by several fingerprint cases, even the most basic techniques are subject to error. In Imbler v. Craven,20 for example, the prosecution expert failed to observe an exculpatory fingerprint in a murder case in which the death penalty was imposed. In another murder case, State v. Caldwell,21 the court observed that the expert’s fingerprint testimony “was damning—and it was false.”22

These cases do not represent isolated mistakes. Proficiency test results of many common laboratory examinations are alarming. One of the authors of a major proficiency test acknowledged that “a disturbingly high percentage” of routine laboratory tests are not performed competently.23 Seventy-one percent of the crime laboratories tested provided unacceptable results in a blood test, 51.4% made errors in matching paint samples, 35.5% erred in a soil examination, and 28.2% made mistakes in firearms identifications.24 Similarly, a review of five handwriting comparison proficiency tests showed that the document examiners at best were correct 57% of the time and were incorrect 43% of the time.25 Moreover, a limited, but nevertheless revealing, survey of lawyers and scientists associated with the American Academy of Forensic Sciences identified competency as the most significant ethical problem in forensic science.26 Other problems considered significant include the failure of experts to express both the strengths and weaknesses of

DUIZEND, THE USE OF SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE IN LITIGATION 5-6 (1983) (relating that “[75 percent] of the respondents to a 1974 survey of 1,363 judges and lawyers . . . throughout the United States stated that they believed judges accord scientific evidence more credibility than other evidence, and 70 percent believed that juries also find scientific evidence more credible”).

19. See generally Giannelli, supra note 10; Giannelli, supra note 11.
21. 322 N.W.2d 574 (Minn. 1982).
22. Id. at 586; see also Starrs, A Miscue in Fingerprint Identification: Causes and Concerns, 12 J. POLICE SCI. & ADMIN. 287 (1984).
23. Symposium on Science and the Rules of Legal Procedure, 101 F.R.D. 599, 645 (1984) (remarks of Professor Joseph Peterson) [hereinafter Symposium on Science]. For a more detailed discussion of proficiency testing, see Giannelli, supra note 11, at 688-92; Saks, Prevalence and Impact of Ethical Problems in Forensic Science, 34 J. FORENSIC SCI. 772, 775-78 (1989) (reviewing proficiency testing results and concluding that “[p]erhaps the major lessons to be drawn from this are that errors are indeed made and that there is a wide range of interlaboratory variation”).
their data, testimony that exceeds the limits of the data, and the failure
to remain objective in the evaluation of evidence and the delivery of
testimony.\textsuperscript{27}

More important, institutional and systemic problems exist. Certifi-
cation standards for analysts and quality assurance programs for crime
laboratories generally are not required.\textsuperscript{26} One scholar has commented,
"At present, forensic science is virtually unregulated—with the para-
doxical result that clinical laboratories must meet higher standards to
be allowed to diagnose strep throat than forensic labs must meet to put
a defendant on death row."\textsuperscript{29}

DNA evidence, the most recent weapon in the prosecutor's arsenal,
is no exception. Heralded as "foolproof,"\textsuperscript{30} "revolutionary,"\textsuperscript{31} and the
"single greatest advance in the 'search for truth'... since the advent of
cross-examination,"\textsuperscript{32} many courts have found DNA evidence reliable
and admissible.\textsuperscript{33} Despite this judicial acceptance and favorable public-
ity, however, problems have surfaced. Cellmark, one of the commercial
laboratories conducting DNA analysis, admittedly made a false iden-
tification in a proficiency test.\textsuperscript{34} In \textit{People v. Castro}\textsuperscript{35} the prosecution's

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{27} Id. at 752.
\item \textsuperscript{28} One commentator stated: "Crime laboratories are unique among publicly supported sci-
etific operations in that few participate in external quality assurance programs." Peterson, \textit{The Crime Lab}, in \textit{Thinking About Police} 184, 196 (C. Klockars ed. 1983). Voluntary proficiency test-
ing programs and voluntary crime laboratory accreditation programs are becoming more common. Peterson & Murdock, \textit{supra} note 26, at 752-53.
\item \textsuperscript{29} Lander, \textit{DNA Fingerprinting on Trial}, 339 \textit{Nature} 501, 505 (1989).
\item \textsuperscript{31} Toufexis, \textit{Convicted by Their Genes: A New Forensic Test Is Revolutionizing
\item \textsuperscript{32} \textit{People v. Wesley}, 140 Misc. 2d 306, 308, 533 N.Y.S.2d 643, 644 (Albany County Ct. 1988).
\item \textit{"First introduced into U.S. criminal proceedings in 1986, forensic DNA analysis has since been
admitted into evidence in at least 185 cases by 38 States and the U.S. military as of January 1,
(1990) [hereinafter OTA Genetic Witness]. \textit{But see United States v. Two Bulls}, 918 F.2d 56 (8th Cir. 1990) (case was remanded to determine whether FBI laboratory DNA procedures were con-
ducted properly).
\item \textsuperscript{34} \textit{State v. Schwartz}, 447 N.W.2d 422, 426 (Minn. 1989) (writing that "[w]e are troubled by
the fact that Cellmark admitted having 'falsely identified two samples as coming from the same
subject' during a proficiency test performed by the California Association of Crime Laboratory
Directors (CACLD)\] , and that\] [out of 44 total samples, Cellmark made one incorrect match,
which was considered too high an error rate by some experts")].
\end{itemize}
own experts conceded that the DNA tests performed by Lifecodes, another laboratory, were "not scientifically reliable enough to support the assertion that the samples . . . do or do not match."36 In another case, Cellmark and Lifecodes reached different conclusions after examining the same evidence.37 Even the recent, and generally favorable, DNA report by the Office of Technology Assessment recognizes that "[s]erious questions are raised . . . about how best to ensure that any particular test result is reliable."38

Despite these problems, scientific evidence offers a number of advantages over other types of proof, such as confessions and eyewitness identifications. Much of the expert evidence admitted at criminal trials is valid, and many crime laboratories, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) laboratory, are proficient. Scientific evidence, however, has not reached the stage at which it should be considered presumptively valid. As the Supreme Court has recognized, the role of the adversary system is to reveal and acknowledge the "shortcomings" of expert testimony.39

B. Admissibility and the Adversary Process

At the same time that reliance on scientific evidence increased, the barriers to the admissibility of expert testimony were lowered. Many jurisdictions, for example, abandoned the conservative "general accept-

The OTA Report provides further details:

With respect to blind trials of forensic DNA testing in the United States, CACLD organized trials using case-simulated samples in 1987 and 1988. The three major commercial facilities then performing forensic DNA analysis participated in each trial. In the first trial, out of 50 samples, 2 firms each declared 1 false match that could have resulted in the conviction of an innocent person. The errors apparently arose from sample handling problems. The third company declared no false matches. In the second trial, one company again reported an incorrect match.

OTA GENETIC WITNESS, supra note 33, at 79-80 (footnotes omitted).


36. Lander, supra note 29, at 504.

37. Starrs, The Fallibility of Forensic DNA Testing: Of Proficiency in Public and Private Laboratories (pt. 1), 14 SCI. SLEUTHING REV. 10 (Spring 1990) (reporting that "Cellmark shortly determined that Lifecodes had made a significant measurement mistake in sizing the bands on the autorads" (discussing People v. Irons, an Erie, Illinois murder case)); see also Starrs, The Fallibility of Forensic DNA Testing: Of Proficiency in Public and Private Laboratories (pt. 2), 14 SCI. SLEUTHING REV. 12 (Fall 1990) (discussing two cases in which FBI analysts mistranscribed population frequencies statistics in reporting DNA results).

38. OTA GENETIC WITNESS, supra note 33, at 83. The report goes on to identify several issues: "These questions focus on data interpretation, how to minimize realistic human error, and the appropriate level of monitoring to ensure quality. Such questions, which stem from actual court cases, underscore the need to develop both technical and operational standards now." Id.

"Pace" test espoused in *Frye v. United States* for determining the admissibility of novel scientific proof. Similarly, the Federal Rules of Evidence encourage the expanded use of expert testimony. Rule 703, in particular, permits an expert to base an opinion on data not admitted at trial if the data is of a type reasonably relied on by experts in the field. Both Rule 703 and the less restrictive relevancy approach that has been substituted for the *Frye* test depend on advance disclosure.

Once expert testimony is admitted at trial, the defense typically attacks the testimony through cross-examination and by the presentation of defense experts. Successful cross-examination of an expert, however, is a formidable undertaking. Attorneys rarely are as knowledgeable as the expert. The effectiveness of cross-examination depends, in large measure, on thorough preparation. Similarly, the presentation of defense experts requires advance planning—in short, adequate pretrial discovery.

C. Pretrial Discovery

There is little dispute that pretrial discovery is necessary when using expert and scientific evidence. In this context at least, the traditional arguments against criminal discovery lose whatever force they otherwise might have. Opponents have argued that criminal discovery...

40. 293 F. 1013 (D.C. Cir. 1923).
41. See, e.g., United States v. Downing, 753 F.2d 1224, 1241 (3d Cir. 1985); United States v. Williams, 583 F.2d 1194, 1198 (2d Cir. 1978), cert. denied, 439 U.S. 1117 (1979); United States v. Gipson, 24 M.J. 246, 251 (C.M.A. 1987); Santiago v. State, 510 A.2d 1194, 1198 (Del. 1987); State v. Wheeler, 496 A.2d 1382, 1388 (R.I. 1985); see also P. GIANNELLI & E. IMWINKELRIED, supra note 14, at 14 n.56 (listing cases rejecting *Frye*).
43. See Fed. R. Evid. 705 advisory committee note (emphasizing the importance of discovery); Giannelli, supra note 10, at 1245 (arguing that “[p]rovisions for notice, full discovery, the opportunity to re-examine evidence, and the appointment of defense experts are critical components of the relevancy approach").
45. The American Bar Association Standards comment that "[t]he need for full and fair disclosure is especially apparent with respect to scientific proof and the testimony of experts." ABA Standards Relating to Discovery and Procedure Before Trial 66 (Approved Draft 1970) [hereinafter ABA Standards].
will encourage perjury, will lead to the intimidation of witnesses, and because of the fifth amendment, will be a one-way exchange. The first argument fails because scientific and expert evidence is virtually impossible to distort or misuse even though it is disclosed in advance of the trial. Additionally, there is no proof that experts have been intimidated, probably because the expert's evidence could be retested or another expert could testify about the examination. Finally, the self-incrimination clause as currently interpreted by the Supreme Court presents little impediment to the prosecution's discovery of scientific proof.

Extensive defense discovery of scientific evidence also eliminates due process concerns. As the Supreme Court has noted, due process "speak[s] to the balance of forces between the accused and his accuser." Over three hundred crime laboratories operate in this country, eighty percent of which are under the control of the police, and most laboratories examine only evidence submitted by law enforcement agencies. In contrast, criminal defendants, who typically are indigent, do

---

46. See 2 C. Wright, supra note 15, § 252, at 36-37.
47. See ABA Standards, supra note 45, at 67.
48. See 2 W. LaFave & J. Israel, supra note 15, § 19.3, at 732 (taking the position that "[o]nce the report is prepared, the scientific expert's position is not readily influenced, and therefore disclosure presents little danger of prompting perjury or intimidation").
49. For a discussion of the fifth amendment issues concerning prosecutorial discovery, see infra note 205 and accompanying text.

In Pennsylvania v. Ritchie, 480 U.S. 39 (1987), a plurality of the Court reaffirmed this position. In a concurring opinion, Justice Blackmun, who cast the deciding vote, indicated that the confrontation clause as well as due process applied to criminal discovery. Justice Blackmun stated: "In my view, there might well be a confrontation violation if, as here, a defendant is denied pretrial access to information that would make possible effective cross-examination of a crucial prosecution witness." Id. at 61-62 (Blackmun, J., concurring). Justices Brennan and Marshall agreed with this analysis, while Justices Stevens and Scalia dissented on procedural grounds.

51. Wardius v. Oregon, 412 U.S. 470, 474 (1973); see also Lassiter v. Department of Social Servs., 452 U.S. 18, 28 (1981) (stating that the "adversary system presupposes [that] accurate and just results are most likely to be obtained through the equal contest of opposed interests"); Ross v. Moffitt, 417 U.S. 600, 609 (1974) (explaining that "[d]ue process' emphasizes fairness between the State and the individual dealing with the State").

52. Peterson, Mihajlovic & Bedrosian, The Capabilities, Uses, and Effects of the Nation's Criminalistics Laboratories, 30 J. Forensic Sci. 10, 11 (1985) (stating that "[s]eventy-nine percent of all [257 out of 319] laboratories responding to our survey are located within law enforcement/public safety agencies").

53. Id. at 13 (explaining that "[f]ifty-seven percent . . . would only examine evidence submitted by law enforcement officials"); see also Federal Bureau of Investigation, Handbook of Forensic Science 7 (rev. ed. 1984) (stating that FBI lab services are available only to duly constituted state, county, and municipal law enforcement agencies).
not have access to such resources. Thus, it is unsurprising that a commentator predicted that the disparity of investigative resources between the defense and the prosecution "is likely to have its maximum impact in the presentation of evidence which must be analyzed and developed in the laboratory or hospital." 54

In summary, while a substantial number of errors continue to be made in forensic examinations, resort to scientific proof has increased. The evidentiary rules on expert testimony also have been relaxed. Thus, the argument for pretrial discovery in this context is powerful, and the arguments against discovery are virtually nonexistent.

III. Notice

The most basic discovery need concerning scientific evidence is advance knowledge that an expert will testify at trial. Many jurisdictions, including the federal courts, do not require the prosecution to provide a list of witnesses that it intends to call at trial; 55 nor are discovery depositions generally permitted in criminal cases. 56 Nevertheless, statutes and rules typically allow discovery of scientific reports, and the existence of such a report provides notice that an expert may be called to testify. The problem, however, is that the absence of a report does not necessarily mean that a prosecution expert will not testify. A rather simple reason explains this result: nothing in Rule 16 requires that a report be made, or if one is made, that it be written, even if a scientific test is performed. 57

54. Rezneck, supra note 44, at 1278; see also State v. Cook, 43 N.J. 560, 567, 206 A.2d 359, 363 (1965) (arguing that pretrial discovery "lessen[s] the imbalance which may result from the State's early and complete investigation in contrast to [the defendant's] ... late and limited investigation").


56. Most jurisdictions allow depositions only to preserve the testimony of witnesses who may be unavailable for trial. See, e.g., Fed. R. Crim. P. 15(a); COLO. R. CRIM. P. 15(a); IDAHO CODE § 19-3102 (1987); KY. R. CRIM. P. 7.10. A few jurisdictions, however, do permit discovery depositions. See, e.g., ALASKA R. CRIM. P. 15(a); FLA. R. CRIM. P. 3.220(d); IND. CODE ANN. § 35-37-4-3 (West 1986); VT. R. CRIM. P. 15(a).

57. As a matter of practice most crime laboratories prepare reports. One commentator has written:

An additional practice of some laboratories merits discussion. This practice is that of examiners not writing results in official report form unless they are informed by the prosecutor that the case is going to trial. The principal justification for this procedure is the high volume of cases to be analyzed and the time required to prepare written case reports. The argument is made, "What is the point in taking the time to prepare an official report if the case may be dismissed or may result in a guilty plea?" To allow the prosecutor discretion over what laboratory examinations appear in report form puts the defendant at a distinct
Oral reports are not discoverable under Rule 16. As a result, the defendant in United States v. Shue was not entitled to the verbal report of an FBI photographic expert who compared pictures of Shue with those of a bank robber. Unbeknown to the defense, the expert made the comparison the night before he testified. Similarly, a police officer in United States v. Johnson testified as an emergency medical technician without notice to the defense. Although the defense argued that the testimony was highly prejudicial because it contradicted an important aspect of the defense case, the Eleventh Circuit merely noted that there is no right to a witness list and that Rule 16 was not implicated because “no . . . reports were made in the case.”

The Wayne Williams prosecution provides another illustration. The trial turned on fiber evidence, which constituted an “essential part” of the case according to the FBI expert who testified for the prosecution. This evidence was critical for two reasons: It connected Williams with the crime scenes of the two homicides for which he was charged; and perhaps more important, it connected him with ten other murders, evidence of which was introduced as “other acts” evidence. One of the prosecution’s three fiber experts was Barry Gaudette, who worked for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. He examined fiber and hair samples for eleven days and then testified from personal notes. Gaudette, however, had not prepared a written report. Thus, the Georgia Supreme Court ruled that the defense was not entitled to discovery. The dissent replied:

By allowing an expert to forgo delivery of a full written report and to later testify orally where, as here, he had ample time to prepare such a written report and conducted tests too complex to remember unaided, we permit ever more egregious injustice and violation of the intent [of the discovery statute], which is to put into the defendant’s hands these reports with sufficient time before trial to enable him to check and challenge their content.
Significantly, another major issue on appeal was an ineffective assistance of counsel claim for failure to challenge more vigorously the reliability of the fiber analysis. This allegation is not surprising. Scientific evidence generally, and the fiber evidence in Williams especially, present enormously difficult problems for defense counsel. While not a panacea, extensive discovery would reduce significantly these difficulties by giving defense counsel the information needed for adequate preparation.

When Rule 16(a)(1)(D) was drafted in 1966, most scientific evidence consisted of autopsy reports and crime laboratory reports for the examination of drugs, fingerprints, firearms identifications, and handwriting. Today experts have developed many new categories of scientific evidence. Examples include expert testimony on rape trauma syndrome, child sexual abuse accommodation syndrome, battered woman syndrome, and bite mark comparisons. Neither custom nor regulation requires these experts to write reports. Indeed, as the above

It is an insult to intelligent people to say that a scientific test was conducted from which absolutely no notes or records survive. Unless of course the omission was deliberate.

A basic principle of scientific testing is that careful records of test procedure and results are to be scrupulously maintained. A scientific test without an accompanying report of the testing environment, number of trials, raw results and analyzed data is in reality no test at all.

Law, 251 Ga. at 530, 307 S.E.2d at 908 (Smith, J., dissenting).

65. The dissent in Williams wrote:

Related to the above ineffectiveness of defense counsel was their failure to challenge the scientific reliability of the principles and techniques used by the state's experts in conducting their fiber comparisons. . . . This challenge was crucial to an adequate defense to the fiber evidence, and its omission demonstrates inadequate preparation . . . .

Williams, 251 Ga. at 829, 312 S.E.2d at 101 (Smith, J., dissenting).

66. See Rezneck, supra note 44, at 1278.


cases illustrate, the prosecution loses the element of surprise by preparing a report. 71

Requiring the production of witness lists does not guarantee adequate notice of prospective expert witnesses. In State v. Caulder, 72 a child sexual abuse case, the prosecution produced a witness list as required by a discovery rule. 73 The name of a social worker was on the list. The list did not reveal, however, that this witness would testify as an expert on child sexual abuse. At trial the defense counsel objected and moved for a continuance because he was not prepared to cross-examine an expert and needed time to find his own expert. On appeal, the court rejected his argument and observed that the district attorney needs only to provide the information required by statute. The court stated that because the statute does not mandate disclosure of the capacity in which a witness intends to testify or the content of the witness’s testimony, defense counsel must investigate these matters independently. 74 This incomplete approach destroys, to a large extent, the underlying purpose of rules mandating discovery of witness lists.

IV. Scientific Reports

Mere notice that an expert will testify, while critical to trial preparation, is insufficient. The opposing party needs to know both the substance of the expected testimony and the qualifications of the proposed expert. The current discovery rules on scientific reports provide for neither of these necessities. The typical laboratory report contains only a bare conclusion. It is not unusual for the report merely to “summarize[] the results of an unidentified test conducted by an anonymous technician.” 75

71. A few discovery rules address these problems. See, e.g., Me. R. CRIM. P. 16(c)(4); Md. R. CRIM. P. CODE ANN. § 4-263(b)(4) (1990) (requiring the production of the “substance of any such oral [expert] report and conclusion”). The Maine rule provides:

If the expert witness whom the state intends to call in any proceeding has not prepared a report of examination or tests, the court may order that the expert prepare and the attorney for the state serve a report stating the subject matter on which the expert is expected to testify, the substance of the facts to which the expert is expected to testify and a summary of the expert’s opinions and the grounds for each opinion.

Me. R. CRIM. P. 16(c)(4).


74. Caulder, 75 Or. App. at 460, 706 P.2d at 1009; see also Knoedler v. State, 69 Md. App. 764, 768, 519 A.2d 811, 812 (1987) (holding that “[n]othing in these sections (or any other sections) of the [discovery] Rule requires the State to categorize its proposed witnesses as expert or non-expert”).

75. United States v. Bentley, 875 F.2d 1114, 1123 (5th Cir. 1989) (Williams, C.J., dissenting) (concerning a hospital report on a urine test that revealed the presence of cannabinoids); see also United States v. Davis, 14 M.J. 847, 848 n.3 (A.C.M.R. 1982) (explaining that “most laboratory reports only state general conclusions”).
A. Procedures Employed

Scientific reports rarely indicate the procedure used in the analysis. A laboratory report stating that a seized substance is "Heroin HCl" is not very informative. Some types of evidence offer the analyst a choice among a variety of testing techniques. Drug tests range from preliminary screening examinations, such as color change and microcrystal tests, to extremely specific and sophisticated analysis, such as infrared spectrophotometry. Different laboratories use different protocols, and some experts make positive identifications based only on preliminary screening tests.

DNA testing presents the same problems. Many laboratories performing DNA analysis use different procedures. The FBI, Cellmark, and Lifecodes use RFLP analysis (restriction fragment length polymorphism), whereas Forensic Science Associates uses PCR (polymerase chain reaction), a markedly different test. Moreover, the laboratories using RFLP use different restriction enzymes, different probes, different matching criteria, and different statistical data bases. Without this information, counsel cannot prepare adequately for trial. Not only is most of this information not discoverable under the present rules, these rules encourage the expert to provide as little information as possible.

B. Conclusions Reached

In addition to specifying the procedure used in the analysis, the report should set forth the expert's ultimate conclusions as well as specific test findings. With a scientific technique, such as drug testing, in which the test findings and ultimate conclusion are the same, a problem

77. See P. Gianelli & E. Imwinkelried, supra note 14, ch. 23 (drug identification); Stein, Laessig & Indriksons, An Evaluation of Drug Testing Procedures Used by Forensic Laboratories and the Qualifications of Their Analysts, 1973 Wis. L. Rev. 727, 728.
78. One source reports: "On the basis of a test that shows only that the compound in question is a member of a sizable class, some forensic chemists are prepared to take the stand and state their opinion that the substance is methamphetamine (or THC, or cocaine, or whatever)." M. Saks & R. Van Duizend, supra note 18, at 7-8.
80. Id.
81. Id.
82. In the words of one authority: "Many criminal defense attorneys suspect that the unusual brevity of reports by FBI fingerprint or handwriting experts (e.g., often one or two short sentences) may be partially explained by the fact that defense counsel is entitled to copies of them prior to trial." Allis, Limitations on Prosecutorial Discovery of the Defense Case in Federal Courts: The Shield of Confidentiality, 50 S. Cal. L. Rev. 461, 475 n.51 (1977).
does not arise. In other procedures, however, the expert must extrapolate from the findings. In *Pierce v. State*,\(^8^3\) for example, the prosecution expert conducted serological tests on body fluids in a rape case. Her report, which was turned over to the defense, contained specific test results but not her conclusion—that the rapist was a nonsecretor. On appeal, the court ruled that the report was sufficient. The court explained that “[a]n expert's opinion of the conclusions which can be drawn from test results in a particular case in no way alters the actual facts of the case. Accordingly, the ultimate opinion of the expert is not necessary for either the preparation or the presentation of the defense.”\(^8^4\)

This statement represents both bad science and bad law. Between twenty and twenty-five percent of the population are nonsecretors;\(^8^5\) therefore, determining that the rapist and the defendant both fell into this category was relevant to prove identity.\(^8^6\) The defense attorney needed to know both the specific test results and the conclusions drawn from them to represent the accused effectively.

C. Qualifications

Background information about the expert also should be included in the report. One court has determined that “[c]ertainly, the identity of a particular expert witness would not be of significance.”\(^8^7\) To the contrary, the credentials of the expert should be provided for two reasons. First, knowledge of the expert's qualifications will help attorneys to prepare for cross-examination, to decide whether to retain their own expert, and to determine whether independent testing is desirable. Second, a surprising number of expert witnesses have lied about their credentials.\(^8^8\) In one case an FBI serologist testified that he had a master's

---


\(^8^4\) Id. at 1263; see also United States v. Cole, 707 F. Supp. 999, 1004 (N.D. Ill. 1989) (ruling that Rule 16 entitles the accused to the lab report but not to a “comprehensive preview of the government's [expert] opinion testimony”).

\(^8^5\) See P. Gianelli & E. Imwinkelried, supra note 14, § 17-8 at 578 (stating that a secretor is a person whose genetic markers are secreted into body fluids other than blood—for example, saliva and semen).

\(^8^6\) *Pierce*, 786 P.2d at 1258. The court stated that the expert "was able to determine that the rapist was either a blood type 0 or a non-secretor. She testified that Appellant was classified as a non-secretor." *Id.*


\(^8^8\) E.g., Maddox v. Lord, 818 F.2d 1058, 1062 (2d Cir. 1987) (a serologist testified falsely about academic credentials); Kline v. State, 444 So. 2d 1102 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1984) (a psychologist testifying in the Ted Bundy trial was convicted of perjury for claiming he had a doctorate); People v. Alfano, 95 Ill. App. 3d 1026, 1028-29, 420 N.E.2d 1114, 1116 (1983) (an arson expert testified falsely about his academic credentials); State v. Elder, 199 Kan. 607, 433 P.2d 462 (1967)
degree in science when, in fact, he never had received a graduate degree. In another case a court vacated the death penalty after discovering that a prosecution expert, who had testified in many previous cases, had lied about her professional qualifications. The expert had failed to complete the necessary educational requirements to become a laboratory technician. Perhaps the most striking illustration is provided by a firearms expert who took some of the credit for "the development of penicillin, the 'Pap' smear, and to top it all off, the atomic bomb." Professor James Starrs, who has explored this issue in detail, has proposed discovery as the remedy for this type of fraud.

Outright misrepresentation is not the only problem. Misleading statements probably are more common. In the Cincinnati obscenity trial of the Contemporary Arts Center and its director, Dennis Barrie, for displaying some of Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs, the prosecution's only expert witness testified that she had been employed by the Cleveland Museum of Art from 1976 through 1978, working on "great works of art for young people." The Cleveland Museum of Art is a world-renowned institution, a fact that an Ohio jury might know. Accordingly, a degree of prestige accompanies this type of employment experience. When questioned after the verdict, however, a Cleveland Museum spokesman painted a somewhat different picture. He stated:

We virtually went back through all the payroll records we have... There is no record of her being an employee. We do know she helped in the production of a slide tape video for a musical presentation she helped co-produce here for a few children's classes in the early 1970s.

D. Bases of Opinion and Number of Analysts

The expert's report also should identify all the analysts and technicians involved in the testing. At one trial an expert testified that he had (a lab technician was convicted of perjury for misrepresenting his educational background); State v. DeFronzo, 59 Ohio Misc. 113, 116, 394 N.E.2d 1027, 1030 (C.P. Lucas County 1978) (a lab analyst pleaded guilty to eight counts of falsification for misstating his academic credentials); see also Saks, supra note 23, at 772 (listing other cases); Annotation, Perjury or Willfully False Testimony of Expert Witness As Basis for New Trial on Ground of Newly Discovered Evidence, 38 A.L.R. 3d 812 (1971).

92. Id. at 31.
95. Id.
performed all the electrophoresis testing in the case without any assistance.96 Posttrial disclosure of additional documents revealed the participation of other analysts and a discrepancy in results.97 Similarly, in Reardon v. Manson98 a toxicologist testified based on tests performed by a chemist. He worked at a laboratory staffed by three doctorate-level toxicologists and twenty-four chemists with lower credentials. With an annual volume of twenty thousand tests, the toxicologists had an average of "only a few minutes per day to attend to any given test."99 Can this limited involvement support testimony about the findings? Maybe not, but the evidence rules permit it.

Rule 703 allows an expert to base his opinion on data that has not been admitted at trial, provided that the data is reasonably relied on by experts in the field. Rule 705 permits the expert to give an opinion without first disclosing the underlying basis for that opinion. These rules are justified because the opposing party, if it so desired, could attack the basis of the opinion on cross-examination. The federal drafters acknowledged that the viability of this justification "assumes that the cross-examiner has the advance knowledge which is essential for effective cross-examination. . . . Rule 26(b)(4) of the Rules of Civil Procedure, as revised, provides for substantial discovery in this area . . . ."100 Inexplicably, the drafters failed to cite Federal Criminal Rule 16, which does not provide for substantial discovery.

Constitutional challenges to Rule 703, for the most part, have failed. In Reardon the Second Circuit found nothing wrong with the toxicologist's testimony. The court held that an expert's reliance on work conducted by others is not necessarily a violation of the confrontation clause if the expert "is available for questioning concerning the nature and reasonableness of his reliance."101 Significantly, the court added that the expert's reliance is legitimate particularly when defendants have access to the underlying sources of information by subpoena or otherwise.102 The discovery rules, however, do not provide this access. Thus, counsel cannot question the reasonableness of the reliance if unaware of it, and disclosure at trial comes too late.

97. Id.
99. M. SAKS & R. VAN DUZEND, supra note 18, at 49 (discussing Reardon, 806 F.2d at 42).
100. FED. R. EVID. 705 advisory committee note; see also Smith v. Ford Motor Co., 626 F.2d 784, 791-94 (10th Cir. 1980) (emphasizing the importance of discovery and Federal Rule 703), cert. denied, 450 U.S. 918 (1981).
101. Reardon, 806 F.2d at 42; see also United States v. Smith, 869 F.2d 348, 355 (7th Cir. 1989) (holding that "[t]he confrontation clause . . . does not forbid reliance at trial by experts upon material prepared by others").
102. Reardon, 806 F.2d at 42.
E. Types of Reports

A discovery rule on scientific evidence should entail disclosure of all scientific reports. Rule 16 requires production only of reports by experts that the prosecution intends to call at trial, or reports that are material to the preparation of the defense. Consequently, if the prosecution receives an expert's report but does not intend to call that expert to the stand—the most intriguing situation from a defense perspective—the report is discoverable only if it is "material." The problem lies not with the materiality standard, but rather with the person who first applies that standard. Leaving the initial decision to the prosecutor to determine "materiality" is fraught with unnecessary risks, which often will lead to nondisclosure and needless litigation.

An analogous problem is triggered under Brady v. Maryland by a due process tenet that requires the prosecution to furnish all material and exculpatory evidence to the defense. In United States v. Huff an inconclusive handwriting report was deemed to be "not exculpatory, but merely not inculpatory." Similarly, in Norris v. Slayton a report showing that hair from a rape defendant was not found at the scene of the crime was characterized as a "neutral" report. There is no valid reason for the prosecution to withhold such reports, and the defense is far better equipped to determine materiality. As one court has commented, "evidence such as this may, because of its neutrality, tend to be favorable to the accused." The American Bar Association Standards and rules in other jurisdictions do not limit discovery to "material" reports.

F. Other Issues

Two other aspects of the present rules deserve mention. First, discovery of scientific reports should be mandatory, as they are under Rule 16. A number of jurisdictions make this type of discovery discretion-
This requirement prevents the lack of notice problems discussed in the preceding section.

V. RELATED DOCUMENTS

A. Bench Notes

Rule 16(a)(1)(D) covers only “results or reports.” Courts have used this language to limit defense discovery. For example, in the leading case of United States v. Iglesias the prosecution produced only a laboratory report stating that the substance analyzed was “54.9% pure heroin.” The defense sought production of additional materials—log notes, protocols, and other internal documents. Although the prosecution conceded that this material was relevant, it opposed discovery on the ground that these documents were not a “result or report.” The Ninth Circuit agreed, even though recognizing the possibility that the requested materials would enable Iglesias to prepare a more effective defense.

The majority opinion justified its conclusion on two grounds. First, the majority believed that the actual laboratory report adequately provided a basis for cross-examining the prosecution expert. As discussed earlier, this conclusion is highly questionable. The dissent noted that the “one line summary submitted . . . describes only the chemist’s conclusion and certainly not a detailed description of the testing.” Second, the majority concluded that log notes, unlike a final laboratory report, “are much more likely to be distorted and misused.” The court, however, offered no further explanation, and it is difficult to discern just how log notes could be misused.

The need to review bench notes is important in some cases. In People v. Young bench notes obtained after the trial showed that the


110. See supra note 71 (discussing the Maine and Maryland discovery rules).

111. Bench notes as used in this Article refer to notes taken by the analyst during examination of evidence. They include findings, calculations, and so forth.


113. 881 F.2d at 1521.

114. Id. at 1523-24; see also United States v. Berry, 636 F.2d 1075, 1082 (5th Cir. 1981) (holding that a DEA chemist’s work notes were not discoverable); Spencer v. Commonwealth, 238 Va. 295, 303-04, 384 S.E.2d 785, 791 (1989) (holding that a DNA expert’s work notes were not discoverable), cert. denied, 110 S. Ct. 1171 (1990).

115. Iglesias, 881 F.2d at 1524.

116. Id. (Boochever, J., dissenting in part).

117. Id.

prosecution expert, despite his testimony, was not the only analyst who had worked on the electrophoretic testing of blood stains.\textsuperscript{119} In addition, a discrepancy appeared in the notes, but not in the final laboratory report:

At the [posttrial] hearing it was established that on June 5, 1978, an electrophoretic run . . . indicated an EsD type of 1 for the bloodstain taken from the porch of the victim's home. This result was followed by a question mark and the stain was retested on June 6, 1978. At the later testing, the same stain showed an EsD type of 2-1. Without retesting a third time, [the analyst] only reported the latter result. Defendant's blood, tested on July 7, 1978, was an EsD type 2-1.\textsuperscript{120}

The bench notes issue arises primarily because the laboratory reports themselves are so deficient. Much of the material in the bench notes should be incorporated into the report itself.\textsuperscript{121} Furthermore, if comprehensive reports were required, experts like the FBI hair analyst in \textit{Delaware v. Fensterer}\textsuperscript{122} would not have to testify about their inability to remember what method they had used in reaching their conclusions.

The prosecution's reasons for resisting discovery in \textit{Iglesias} are also perplexing.\textsuperscript{123} The question is one that permeates this entire area of law. Pretrial disclosure of the results of a reliable test often would eliminate that issue at trial and might even trigger plea bargaining negotiations.\textsuperscript{124}

\textsuperscript{119} The bench notes were produced after trial as a result of a freedom of information filing. Bretz, \textit{supra} note 96, at 519.

\textsuperscript{120} \textit{Id.} (quoting Appellant's Supplemental Brief on Appeal 50, People v. Young, 425 Mich. 470, 391 N.W.2d 270 (1986)).

\textsuperscript{121} Most crime lab reports are simply not "scientific." Professor Anna Harrison of Mount Holyoke College, during a symposium on discovery, remarked:

"Then the information you are receiving is not scientific information. For a report from a crime laboratory to be deemed competent, I think most scientists would require it to contain a minimum of three elements: (a) a description of the analytical techniques used in the test requested by the government or other party, (b) the quantitative or qualitative results with any appropriate qualifications concerning the degree of certainty surrounding them, and (c) an explanation of any necessary presumptions or inferences that were needed to reach the conclusions."

\textit{Symposium on Science, supra} note 23, at 632 (emphasis added).

\textsuperscript{122} 474 U.S. 15 (1985). The analyst testified that hair found at a murder scene had been forcibly removed. There were three methods available to make this determination, but he could not remember which method he had used. \textit{Id.} at 16-17. The United States Supreme Court ruled that this lack of memory did not violate Fensterer's right of confrontation. \textit{Id.} at 18. Nevertheless, on remand, the Delaware Supreme Court held the expert's opinion inadmissible on state evidentiary grounds. \textit{Fensterer v. State}, 509 A.2d 1106, 1109-10 (Del. 1986).

\textsuperscript{123} "In fact it is difficult to understand the government's reluctance to furnish the information sought in this case." \textit{Iglesias}, 881 F.2d at 1526 (Boochever, J., dissenting in part).

\textsuperscript{124} The Louisiana Court of Appeals took a different approach when faced with a discovery request for notes, diagrams, printouts, and other records. According to the court: "Fundamental fairness and due process require that the defense be given the opportunity, prior to trial, to examine the basis from which an expert reaches his conclusion." \textit{State v. Burgess}, 482 So. 2d 651, 653
B. Graphs

Bench notes are not the only type of laboratory document that has been sought and denied. As noted above, Wayne Williams was prosecuted for the deaths of two of thirty young black men who died in Atlanta.125 Fiber analysis was the key to the prosecution’s case. One part of the analysis employed a microspectrophotometer, an instrument designed to measure the color of microscopic material such as fibers.126 The spectrophotometer produces a graph, and graphs of fiber taken from Williams’s car and bedroom were compared with graphs of fiber taken from the victims.127

The defense requested production of the graphs, but the Georgia Supreme Court ruled against discovery because the graphs were not “scientific reports” under the discovery statute.128 Here again, there is no justification for withholding this type of information. The interpretation of the graphs formed the basis for the expert’s testimony. The court recognized this connection, but paradoxically used it as a reason to deny discovery. The court concluded:

After examining Dr. Peterson’s testimony, it is clear that the graphs appellant sought to exclude [as a discovery violation] did not contain the conclusions of Dr. Peterson, but instead had to be interpreted by him in order to attain significance. For this reason, we conclude that the graphs were not ‘scientific reports’ and were not discoverable . . . .129

Nevertheless, thirteen graphs were admitted at trial as prosecution exhibits.

Much of the instrumentation used in forensic analyses produces graphs or similar printouts130—for example, chromatographs, spectrographs, and polygraphs. The expert’s opinion is based on the interpretation of the graph, and often another expert can evaluate the validity of the findings by reviewing the graph. These graphs should be discoverable.

(See generally P. GIANNELLI & E. IMWINKELRIED, supra note 14, ch. 24 (discussing instrumental analysis)).

125. See supra note 3 and accompanying text.
126. See P. GIANNELLI & E. IMWINKELRIED, supra note 14, at 1049 (discussing the use of microscopic photometry in fiber analysis).
128. Id.
129. Id.
130. See generally P. GIANNELLI & E. IMWINKELRIED, supra note 14, ch. 24 (discussing instrumental analysis).
C. Statistical and Novel Evidence

1. Fiber Analysis

The *Williams* case raises a far more serious discovery problem than just the failure to produce the graphs. The probative force of the fiber evidence depended on its uniqueness. As the FBI expert, Harold Deadman, wrote in an article published after the trial, "To convey the unusual nature of the Williams residential carpet, an attempt was made to develop a numerical probability—*something never before done* in connection with textile materials used as evidence in a criminal trial."\(^{131}\)

At trial Deadman testified that there was a 1 in 7,792 chance of randomly selecting this type of bedroom carpet in Atlanta. Not satisfied with this figure, the prosecutor added some of his own assumptions and argued that there was only a "one in one hundred fifty million" probability that any other Atlanta household had the same type of bedroom and automobile floorboard carpets.\(^{132}\) In order to determine the validity of these figures, the defense needed access to the underlying background studies and assumptions about carpet distribution in Atlanta. The dissenting opinion, attacking the validity of this evidence, stated that "Deadman's mathematical calculations were particularly worthless, in light of the fact that they were in several instances based not only upon hearsay evidence but also upon his own unproven assumptions."\(^{133}\) The rules, however, create no prosecutorial duty to notify the defense before trial of this novel use of statistical evidence.

2. Neutron Activation Analysis

*United States v. Stifel,*\(^{134}\) a leading case on the admissibility of neutron activation analysis (NAA), presents another discovery illustration. NAA is a quantitative and qualitative method for determining the elemental composition of substances. The prosecution charged Stifel with murdering his former girlfriend's fiancé by sending a bomb through the mail. Crucial prosecution evidence included activation analysis performed on bomb debris—vinyl tape, a metal cap, a cardboard mailing tube, and a paper-gummed label—and similar items obtained from Stifel's place of employment. The prosecution expert, James Scott, testified that the label and cardboard tube were "of the

\(^{131}\) Deadman, *Fiber Evidence*, supra note 3, at 13 (emphasis added).

\(^{132}\) *Williams*, 251 Ga. at 824, 312 S.E.2d at 98 (Smith, J., dissenting).

\(^{133}\) Id. at 825, 312 S.E.2d at 99 (Smith, J., dissenting); see also Deadman, *Fiber Evidence*, supra note 3, at 13 (setting forth assumptions underlying the probability determinations).

same type and same manufacture.” 135 Scott also testified that the metal cap and tape were “of the same manufacture” and from the “same batch”—one day’s manufacturing production. 136 The Sixth Circuit upheld the admissibility of the NAA evidence. 137

If NAA is used for comparative purposes, as it was in Stifel, the matching of certain elements, both qualitatively and quantitatively, in two samples becomes relevant only if the detected distribution of the elements differs from samples in the general population. Any similarity between tape recovered from the crime scene and Stifel’s job is not probative if most tape is similarly composed. Consequently, additional data is necessary to evaluate the significance of the NAA results. 138 In short, establishing the relevance of NAA evidence, like the fiber evidence in Williams, requires the use of statistical probabilities. 139 The background studies are critical, and testimony about “matches” and “common origin” is often misleading. 140

The defense’s main attack in Stifel appears to have focused on the general acceptance of NAA, rather than on the significance of the data produced by this procedure. One commentator has criticized this strategy for its broad-based attack on the scientific validity of NAA and has made the following recommendation:

A better defense strategy probably would have been to stipulate to the elemental composition measurement. The jury could then have focused its attention on what apparently should have been the primary issue, namely, the invalidity of the expert’s claims that “within a reasonable scientific certainty” the items measured were of the same manufacture and that he had identified the metal cap and vinyl tape fragments to within one day’s production batch. No comprehensive background studies have been published on any of the materials involved in this case. The expert was an employee of the Post Office Department Inspection Service and the case involved the United States as a party. The Sixth Circuit opinion does not say whether the expert attempted to substantiate his claims with purported background studies carried out in government laboratories, but the available evidence indicates that such studies should in any event be regarded with suspicion. 141

This “better defense strategy,” however, would have depended on prior

135. 433 F.2d at 436.
136. Id.
137. Id. at 441.
138. Comment, The Evidentiary Uses of Neutron Activation Analysis, 59 CALIF. L. REV. 997, 1014 (1971). The author explained: “In neither of these cases is the NAA evidence sufficient in itself; additional data are needed to evaluate the significance of the chemical analyses done by neutron activation techniques . . . . [T]he analysis . . . depends on the existence of sufficient background information . . . .” Id.
140. Comment, supra note 138, at 1024 (arguing that “few experts have used appropriate care in limiting their testimony”).
141. Id. at 1070-71 (footnotes omitted).
notice that such evidence would be offered at trial and the right to re-
view the background studies before the trial commenced. Neither re-
quirement is guaranteed by Rule 16.

After his conviction, Stifel filed a request under the Freedom of
Information Act (FOIA). The FOIA material revealed the existence of
another suspect in the bombing and discrepancies about the back-
ground tests on the vinyl tape. Consequently, Stifel filed a postcon-
viction petition, alleging a violation of the due process tenet of Brady.
He argued that Scott, when cross-examined, failed to disclose that addi-
tional tests had been performed on the tape. Although the court dis-
agreed that Scott had misrepresented the facts on this issue, it noted
the misleading aspect of this information in granting relief: "[H]ad the
defense known of the November 1968 tests performed by Scott on tape
obtained from Plymouth Rubber Company, it could have used this evi-
dence to further impeach the credibility of Scott’s scientific
methods." 143

3. DNA Evidence

DNA evidence also involves statistical proof as well as other com-
plex issues. It is a novel, sophisticated technique, the validity of which
has been attacked vigorously. One scientist has questioned the assump-
tions underlying the population genetics used in DNA analysis by as-
serting that "despite . . . fundamental uncertainties, forensic lab-
oratories blithely cite breathtaking frequencies: a recent report based
on the study of only four RFLPs announced that the chance of an al-
leged match occurring at random was 1 in 738,000,000,000,000." 144

The need for extensive discovery is self-evident. 145 One court as-

143. Id. at 1542-43.
144. Lander, supra note 29, at 501.
145. In People v. Castro, 144 Misc. 2d 956, 545 N.Y.S.2d 985 (Sup. Ct. 1989), the court wrote:
The proponent, whether defense or prosecution, must give discovery to the adversary, which
must include: 1) Copies of autorads, with the opportunity to examine the originals. 2) Copies
of laboratory books. 3) Copies of quality control tests run on material utilized. 4) Copies of
reports by the testing laboratory issued to proponent. 5) A written report by the testing lab-
oratory setting forth the method used to declare a match or non-match, with actual size meas-
urements, and mean or average size measurement, if applicable, together with standard devia-
tion used. 6) A statement by the testing lab, setting forth the method used to calculate the
allele frequency in the relevant population. 7) A copy of the data pool for each loci examined.
8) A certification by the testing lab that the same rule used to declare a match was used to
determine the allele frequency in the population. 9) A statement setting forth observed con-
taminants, the reasons therefore, and tests performed to determine the origin and the results
thereof. 10) If the sample is degraded, a statement setting forth the tests performed and the
results thereof. 11) A statement setting forth any other observed defects or laboratory errors,
the reasons therefore and the results thereof. 12) Chain of custody documents.
Id. at 978-79, 545 N.Y.S.2d at 999.
serted that denying access to the opposing party of data relied on in DNA testing implicates fair trial and due process concerns. Yet in *United States v. Yee* federal prosecutors opposed discovery of DNA analysis performed by the FBI. The defense sought production of matching criteria, environmental insult studies, population data, and proficiency tests. The federal magistrate granted the motion, but based his decision on subdivision (C) of Rule 16, which permits discovery of documents and tangible objects that are material to the preparation of the defense. He ruled that “predicate materials” were discoverable under this provision. The need for discovery was underscored by the lack of “extensive independent scientific assessment and replication of the reliability of the procedures that have been developed by the F.B.I.”

The most troubling aspect of the case concerns the reason that the prosecution opposed discovery in the first place. They simply argued that these materials were not scientific reports under Rule 16(a)(1)(D). They did not argue that the material was irrelevant or that it would not aid in the defense. Interestingly, the day after the discovery motion in *Yee* was argued, the FBI wrote a letter to the *New York Times*, promoting the validity of its DNA program. The letter stated:

> The procedures employed in these tests have been carefully defined, based on extensive studies. Our procedures and test results have passed muster when subjected to close scrutiny in the scientific community and the courts. The F.B.I. has encouraged wide review of the forensic use of DNA technology through sponsorship of technical seminars and international symposiums and support to studies conducted by the Office of Technology Assessment and the National Academy of Sciences.

It seems incongruous to trumpet the scientific reliability of DNA in the press and, at the same time, oppose discovery of DNA in the courtroom. The reason for the prosecutors’ conduct, of course, is tactical, a motivation that is inherent in the adversary system. Thus, the fault lies not with the prosecutors, but with the rule.

---

148. *Id.* at 635. This holding offers a way for the defense to avoid the narrow reading of Rule 16(a)(1)(D) concerning lab reports. *See United States v. Iglesias*, 881 F.2d 1519 (9th Cir. 1989), *cert. denied*, 110 S. Ct. 1154 (1990). Indeed, the dissent in *Iglesias* raised precisely this issue. 881 F.2d at 1527 (Boochever, J., dissenting); *see also supra* notes 112-17 and accompanying text.
150. *Id.* at 630.
151. N.Y. Times, Feb. 21, 1990, at A24, col. 4 (letter to the editor). John Hicks, Assistant Director, FBI Laboratory Division, wrote the letter to the editor in response to an article on DNA that appeared on January 29, 1990 and raised a number of issues concerning the reliability of DNA testing. The FBI letter was dated February 2, 1990. The *Yee* discovery hearing was held on February 1 in Toledo, Ohio. *Yee*, 129 F.R.D. at 632.
Cases like Williams, Stifel, and Yee illustrate the need for more thorough discovery of expert information. Statistically based and technologically complex, both NAA and DNA evidence require extensive pretrial preparation, which of necessity depends on advance and complete notice. Yet the rules do not require adequate discovery, and prosecutors will not always supply it voluntarily. Something is wrong with a system in which Orville Stifel obtained greater discovery under the FOIA after his trial than he could have received under Rule 16 prior to trial. Something is equally awry when Wayne Williams, sitting in a penitentiary cell, can read an article about the novel fiber evidence used to convict him, but he was not entitled to this same information when preparing to defend himself.

VI. THE RIGHT TO TEST AND RETEST EVIDENCE

Discovery should include the right to test and retest evidence previously analyzed by prosecution experts. This right is recognized explicitly in the discovery rules of some jurisdictions. In other jurisdictions, the right to retest is implied from discovery rules that permit the inspection of tangible evidence, such as Rule 16. Nevertheless, recent cases still can be found that refuse to recognize an accused's right to retest. For example, in Frias v. State the defense sought to analyze

152. Commentators have written on the jury's ability to deal with statistical evidence as well as the need for pretrial discovery in this context. Judge Weinstein has summarized several proposals to deal with statistical evidence, including disclosure of the underlying data and the names of the persons who compiled the data. See Weinstein, supra note 17, at 483-84; see also Manual for Complex Litigation, Second §§ 21.481, 33.12 (1985); The Evolving Role of Statistical Assessments As Evidence in Courts 166-67 (S. Fienberg ed. 1989).

In a recent article, Professor Thompson outlined some of the problems associated with a jury's ability to understand statistical evidence. Thompson, Are Juries Competent to Evaluate Statistical Evidence?, 52 Law & Contemp. Prosbs. 9 (1989). Some of the jury's misconceptions can be cured through argument by counsel. This outcome is possible, however, only if counsel is adequately prepared to deal with this type of evidence.


154. See, e.g., James v. Commonwealth, 482 S.W.2d 92, 94 (Ky. 1972); State v. Migliore, 261 La. 722, 737, 260 So. 2d 682, 688 (1972); State v. Cloutier, 302 A.2d 84, 89 (Me. 1973); State v. Gaddis, 530 S.W.2d 64, 69 (Tenn. 1975).

155. See, e.g., United States v. Vaughn, 736 F.2d 665, 666 (11th Cir. 1984) (finding that "[d]efendants could have obtained their own analysis of the [cocaine] samples"), cert. denied, 490 U.S. 1065 (1989); United States v. Gaultney, 606 F.2d 540, 545 (5th Cir. 1979) (stating that "[i]n cases involving a controlled substance, courts have held a concomitant part of the examination or inspection to be the right of the accused to have an independent chemical analysis performed on the seized substance"), rev'd on other grounds sub nom. Steagald v. United States, 451 U.S. 204 (1981); United States v. Sullivan, 578 F.2d 121, 124 (5th Cir. 1978) (stating that the right of inspection "includes the right to have an expert examine the narcotics before trial").

independently the cocaine exhibits used by the state at trial. The trial court refused, and the Indiana Supreme Court affirmed. The supreme court reasoned that the defense had the opportunity to cross-examine the expert, had access to the laboratory reports, and had raised no objection to the accuracy of the results. 157

This conclusion—that a person facing a substantial prison term for possession of a controlled substance does not have an unquestioned right to analyze that substance—cannot be justified. 158 The right to retest is so basic that some courts have declared it constitutionally based and a violation of fundamental fairness when denied. 159 Even a nonlawyer, one of the pathologists who testified in the Jean Harris trial, understood this point: "Should a defendant not be permitted, even encouraged, in the spirit of truth and fairness, to have other dermatopathologists examine those same fragments and offer their opinions about them?" 160

*Imbler v. Craven* 161 demonstrates the value of retesting. At Imbler's murder trial, a prosecution fingerprint expert testified that two partial fingerprints were found on a razor case that the killer had left at the scene. A positive identification could not be made because of the fragmentary nature of the prints. After the trial, a defense expert examined the razor case and discovered a third print that could be positively identified as not Imbler's fingerprint. 162 This troublesome case does not

---

157. 547 N.E.2d at 813. Other cases also have denied the right to retest because the defendant's right to cross-examine the prosecution's experts was deemed sufficient. *See People v. Anderson, 88 Mich. App. 513, 516-17, 276 N.W.2d 924, 926 (1979); People v. Bell, 74 Mich. App. 270, 275, 253 N.W.2d 726, 729 (1977); Commonwealth v. Dorsey, 266 Pa. Super. 442, 451-52, 405 A.2d 516, 521 (1979).*

158. Courts have the authority to control the circumstances under which the retest occurs. In *State v. Paraone, 425 A.2d 523 (R.I. 1981),* the court wrote:

A defendant who desires to analyze an article or substance should file a motion setting forth the circumstances of the proposed analysis, the identity of the expert who will conduct such analysis, his qualifications, and scientific background. The court may then, in its discretion, provide for appropriate safeguards, including, where necessary, the performance of such tests at the state laboratory under the supervision of the state's analyst. *Id.* at 526.

159. The Fifth Circuit stated that "fundamental fairness is violated when a criminal defendant . . . is denied the opportunity to have an expert of his choosing . . . examine a piece of critical evidence whose nature is subject to varying expert opinion." *Barnard v. Henderson, 514 F.2d 744, 746 (5th Cir. 1975); accord White v. Maggio, 556 F.2d 1352, 1357 (5th Cir. 1977); Warren v. State, 292 Ala. 71, 75, 288 So. 2d 826, 830 (1973); McNutt v. Superior Court, 133 Ariz. 7, 9, 648 P.2d 122, 124 (1982); State v. Hanson, 278 N.W.2d 198, 200 (S.D. 1979).*

160. *Ackerman, supra note 4, at 46.*


stand alone. Other fingerprint cases, as well as decisions involving other forensic techniques, highlight the importance of retesting. In 1989 an experienced firearms identification expert made an erroneous positive identification in a murder case. The error marked the third reported mistake by the Los Angeles Police Department crime laboratory. An earlier mistake occurred in the prosecution of Sirhan Sirhan for the assassination of Robert Kennedy. The number of DNA mistakes already reported further emphasizes the value of retesting in these cases. Retesting also safeguards against deliberate misrepresentation—cases in which an analyst reports results of laboratory tests that never were conducted.

An absolute right to analyze evidence should be recognized in the discovery rules. This right should not be conditioned on a preliminary showing that a retest is critical or will be favorable. The defense, as in Imbler, cannot know if the results will be favorable until after a retest.

The right to retest in DNA cases may involve significant expense. Because most defendants are indigent, the state would have to bear the cost. The issue of cost, however, is not new. NAA, also a complex and costly procedure, raised similar problems. In Stifel the Sixth Circuit

163. See, e.g., State v. Caldwell, 322 N.W.2d 574, 586 (Minn. 1982) (remarking that “[t]he fingerprint expert’s testimony was damning—and it was false”).


165. One commentator reported:

The examiners were unanimous in their findings that the identification testified to at the grand jury indictment and in the trial were misrepresented in that the purported identification of bullets lodged in victim Kennedy... with Sirhan’s gun were non-existent. In both of these cases discovery and cross-examination were lacking.


166. See supra notes 30-38 and accompanying text.


169. See State v. Koennecke, 274 Or. 169, 179, 545 P.2d 127, 133 (1976) (conditioning the right to test weapons on a preliminary showing that results will be favorable to the defendant).

reasoned, however, that if the government deems it necessary to use such an expensive fact-finding procedure, then it must provide the defendant adequate time to conduct similar tests and pay for these tests if the defendant is indigent. The potential expense of defense testing is unclear. It is doubtful that defense counsel routinely would make requests for retesting once convinced of a procedure’s reliability. Furthermore, retesting comes with a price tag. The prosecution could introduce evidence that samples had been turned over to the defense with the opportunity for defense retesting and then comment to the jury on the defense’s failure to introduce the test results.

VII. Duty to Preserve

The right to test necessarily implicates a duty on the part of the state to preserve evidence for testing or retesting. A startling amount of evidence is lost or discarded. A review of the cases reveals that drugs, bullets, blood, urine, and trace metal detection results, as well as physical evidence of arson, rape, and homicide, have not been preserved for examination or retesting. Perhaps the most bizarre illustration occurred in People v. Morgan, a case in which a severed fingertip was found at the scene of a homicide. Morgan, sans fingertip, seemed like a good suspect and was arrested. Unfortunately, the fingertip evidence could not be used, according to the Colorado Supreme Court, because "someone—the police haven't been able to determine who—threw the fingertip away."

The Supreme Court has reviewed the preservation issue twice. In its latest decision, Arizona v. Youngblood, the police in a sexual assault case negligently failed to preserve semen samples from the victim's clothes and body. According to the Court, failure to preserve

172. See P. Giannelli & E. Imwinkelried, supra note 14, at 108-09 (collecting cases).
174. Moya, The Case of the Missing Fingertip, NAT'L L.J., Dec. 21, 1981, at 11. The refrigerator where the evidence was stored apparently was not cold enough to prevent decay, and the police refused to move it to the refrigerator where they stored their "brown bag lunches."
175. 488 U.S. 51 (1988). The Court first discussed the issue in California v. Trombetta, 467 U.S. 479 (1984), in which the defendant challenged the State's failure to preserve an additional breath sample in a drunk driving case. The Court rejected the argument, holding that due process requires that the "evidence must both possess an exculpatory value that was apparent before the evidence was destroyed, and be of such a nature that the defendant would be unable to obtain comparable evidence by other reasonably available means." Id. at 489.
176. "[B]oth a criminologist for the State and an expert witness for respondent testified as to what might have been shown by tests performed on the samples shortly after they were gathered, or by later tests performed on the samples from the boy's clothing had the clothing been properly refrigerated." Youngblood, 488 U.S. at 54.
evidence is not unconstitutional unless the defendant can show that the police acted in bad faith.177

Youngblood, however, does not answer the issue of whether discovery rules should address this problem. Several jurisdictions have rejected the bad faith test as a matter of state constitutional law. On remand in Youngblood, the Arizona court, applying the state due process clause, reversed. The court explained that the semen evidence in the case "is inherently evanescent, is virtually dispositive of guilt or innocence, and collecting the evidence places only a slight burden upon the state."178 The Hawaii Supreme Court also found the bad faith test too restrictive because it precludes courts "in cases where no bad faith is shown, from inquiring into the favorableness of the evidence or the prejudice suffered by the defendant as a result of its loss."179

Moreover, Youngblood did not raise the issue of retesting evidence that the prosecution already had examined and intended to introduce at trial; the semen never was tested properly in the first place.180 A situation in which lost evidence might be exculpatory differs from one in which inculpatory evidence will be offered. A higher duty of care should be required in the latter situation.

Consumptive testing, the destruction of the evidence during analysis, is a frequently litigated problem of this type.181 Some courts have raised due process concerns, imposing on the state the duty to take precautionary measures to protect the defendant. In People v. Gomez,182 a case in which heroin residue was consumed during testing, the Colorado Supreme Court indicated that due process might demand that the state determine whether the defendant wants his expert to attend the testing procedures.183 In a later case, People v. Garries,184 the Colorado Su-

177. Id. at 58.


180. The Court's decision in Trombetta also did not involve retesting. The defendant did not seek preservation of the breath samples actually tested by an intoxilyzer, but different samples taken at the same time.

181. See Annotation, Consumption or Destruction of Physical Evidence Due to Testing or Analysis by Prosecution's Expert As Warranting Suppression of Evidence or Dismissal of Case Against Accused in State Court, 40 A.L.R. 4TH 594 (1985).


183. 198 Colo. at 112, 596 P.2d at 1197.

184. 645 P.2d 1306 (Colo. 1982); see also State v. Herrera, 365 So. 2d 399, 401 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. 1978) (better practice), cert. denied, 373 So. 2d 459 (Fla. 1979); Commonwealth v. Gliniewicz, 398 Mass. 744, 749, 500 N.E.2d 1324, 1327 (1986) (stating that "the defendants received no notice of the impending tests, and thus were not able to have their own expert present to observe and potentially to refute the subjective aspects of the [blood] testing"); State v. Carlson, 297 N.W.2d 170, 175 n.4 (Minn. 1978) (blood); State v. Gaddis, 530 S.W.2d 64, 69 (Tenn. 1975) (finding that
preme Court again suppressed evidence—this time bloodstains—because the stains were destroyed in testing. The state had neither photographed the test results nor provided the defense with the opportunity to have its own expert present during analysis. 185

Consumptive testing also should be addressed in discovery rules. An Ohio drug statute, for example, recognizes the defendant's right to test controlled substances. If a portion of the drug cannot be preserved, the accused has the right "to have his privately employed or court appointed analyst present at an analysis of the substance that is the basis of the alleged violation. . . ." 186 This right is equally important in DNA cases because consumptive testing is a real possibility. 187

The right to have an expert present is an important, but nevertheless narrow, right. It applies only when a sufficient quantity of the evidence would not remain after the initial testing. Furthermore, a discovery rule implies that an indictment has been handed down; thus, the right to have an expert present would not be applicable when testing is done in the early stages of an investigation when a suspect may not have been identified.

VIII. Conclusion

When Rule 16 was amended in 1966 to include discovery of scientific reports, it appeared adequate for the task at hand. Indeed, a commentator at the time wrote that the amendment assured that "to the extent that the government utilizes modern scientific techniques for crime detection, the findings will be available to the defendant." 188 Recent cases, however, have demonstrated the inaccuracy of this assessment.

A. Proposed Amendments

The current discovery rules should be amended to provide the following: (1) notice that an expert will testify; (2) the substance and basis of the expected testimony; and (3) the right to test and retest evidence. This is nothing more than what Federal Civil Rule 26 already permits

"good faith demands that no [drug] test or analysis be made except by agreement between the District Attorney and defense counsel, or until such time as defense counsel may arrange to have his own expert present at the test").

185. Garries, 645 P.2d at 1309-10.

186. Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 2925.51(E) (Anderson 1987); see also Mont. Code Ann. § 46-15-302(3)(a) (1981) (repealed 1985) (providing that "[i]f the evidence relates to scientific tests or experiments, the opposing party shall, if practicable, be permitted to be present during the tests and to inspect the results thereof").

187. See Note, supra note 170, at 524 (explaining that in the case of DNA profiling, the prosecution's testing often will consume the entire sample).

188. Rezneck, supra note 44, at 1278.
in civil litigation.\textsuperscript{189} The first and third objectives are addressed easily. Notification can be accomplished by requiring disclosure of a list of expert witnesses. The right to retest can be stated explicitly in the discovery rule.

The second objective, disclosing the substance and basis of the expert's testimony, could be achieved in several different ways. Permitting discovery depositions is one solution. Although most jurisdictions presently do not sanction this type of criminal discovery,\textsuperscript{190} the proposal is not as radical as it may appear. Many of the jurisdictions that do not recognize discovery depositions are among the thirty-four jurisdictions that have adopted the Federal Rules of Evidence. Rule 706, which governs the appointment of court-appointed experts, contains a deposition provision.\textsuperscript{191} This rule could be applied to all expert witnesses. At the very least, the trial court's authority to permit a deposition in a particular case should be recognized.

Specifying the required contents of laboratory reports in the discovery rule is another approach.\textsuperscript{192} The procedures employed, the specific findings, the ultimate conclusions, the bases for the opinion, and the qualifications of the expert all should be required. If a written report is not prepared, then the substance of any oral report should be produced.\textsuperscript{193} Discovery also should extend to any related documents used or made by experts in reaching a conclusion. This requirement

\textsuperscript{189} See Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(4)(A)(i). Rule 26 provides in pertinent part:
A party may through interrogatories require any other party to identify each person whom the other party expects to call as an expert witness at trial, to state the subject matter on which the expert is expected to testify, and to state the substance of the facts and opinions to which the expert is expected to testify and a summary of the grounds for each opinion.

\textit{Id.} Interestingly, a number of commentators have questioned whether Rule 26 is adequate in civil cases. See McLaughlin, Discovery and Admissibility of Expert Testimony, 63 Notre Dame L. Rev. 760 (1988); Rothstein, The Collision Between New Discovery Amendments and Expert Testimony Rules, 14 Litigation 17 (Spring 1988).

\textsuperscript{190} See supra note 56 and accompanying text.

\textsuperscript{191} Fed. R. Evid. 706(a) (requiring that "[a] witness so appointed shall advise the parties of the witness' findings, if any; the witness' deposition may be taken by any party").

\textsuperscript{192} One court has taken this position. In United States v. Cadet, 727 F.2d 1453 (9th Cir. 1984), the trial court ordered discovery of:
The reports of any scientific tests, examinations or experiments, or physical or mental examinations, or copies thereof, including, but not limited to: (1) a statement of all material or other information or sources considered by the examiner in arriving at an opinion, the methodology used, and the findings and conclusions of the examiner, (2) a resume and curriculum vitae of the examiner's qualifications, experience, subject matter of the examiner's testimony, and prior occasions of testimony as an expert, and (3) any worksheets, photographs, notes, or other things used to assist the examiner in reaching an opinion and recording the process or methodology of reaching an opinion.

\textit{Id.} at 1459-60.

\textsuperscript{193} E.g., Md. R. Crim. P. Code Ann. § 4-283(b)(4) (1991) (requiring the production of "the substance of any such oral report and conclusion").
should be supplemented by a right to propound interrogatories to an expert. If this requirement were thought to be too burdensome, the number of interrogatories could be limited to twenty-five. The prospect of interrogatories may encourage experts to write more complete reports.

These proposals are consistent with guidelines promulgated by the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors, which contain sections on casework documentation and reporting. Proper documentation requires a system of note keeping that records the basis for any findings, conclusions, and interpretations, and requires the retention of all notes, charts, photographs, or diagrams. The guidelines advise that "[t]he documentation should be such that a knowledgeable analyst or supervisor, in the absence of the primary analyst, would be able to evaluate and interpret the data." The guidelines require laboratory reports to include: (1) an accurate summary of important material appearing in the case notes; (2) interpretive information and examination results whenever possible; and (3) identification of the analyst or analysts and, if appropriate, the testing methodology. Moreover, the adoption of the proposal would eliminate often-criticized reports that keep information at a minimal level to avoid disclosing any ammunition for cross-examination, that state findings with no accompanying interpretation, and that omit significant points from a report to "trap an unsuspecting cross-examiner."

B. Rationale

Fairness and reliability support these proposals. An accused should not have to defend against expert testimony without the means necessary to do so. Any other system is fundamentally unfair.

The reliability argument has two premises. First, full pretrial discovery of scientific evidence permits the defense to challenge its validity at trial through cross-examination or the presentation of defense experts. Second, requiring written and thorough documentation of laboratory tests ensures, to some extent, that proper procedures will be followed. Analysts will know that a comprehensive, permanent record of

194. See State v. Rolls, 389 A.2d 824, 830 n.5 (Me. 1978) (propounding interrogatories to an FBI expert who performed enzyme blood analysis).
195. See Ohio R. Civ. P. 33(A) (requiring that "[a] party shall not propound more than forty interrogatories to any other party without leave of court").
197. Id. at 43.
198. Id.
their work will be available to the opposing side. Currently, there are few checks on the analyst. Most crime laboratories are unregulated and do not participate in proficiency testing programs. Because crime laboratory personnel testify only in approximately ten percent of all the cases for which they examine evidence, the prospect of testifying at trial is an inadequate check on unreliable work. Moreover, in most of those cases no opposing expert testifies. Thus, comprehensive written reports are a quality-control device. An expert who changes or modifies his opinion would be required to change the report, as did the pathologist in the Jean Harris trial. He also would have to explain the change.

Finally, comprehensive discovery eliminates subsequent litigation over Brady issues; whether a particular test result is material or exculpatory no longer would be an issue. The defense would have an absolute right to know of the evidence prior to trial, and the risk that counsel

---

200. Peterson, supra note 57, at 45; see also Peterson, Mihajlovic & Bedrosian, supra note 54, at 15 (reporting that “on the average, crime laboratory examiners testified in 8% of drug cases (the percentage ranged from 0 to 86%) and 10% of criminalistics cases (the percentage ranged from 0 to 87%) where evidence was examined”).

201. See H. Kalven & H. Zeisel, The American Jury 139 (1966). The authors wrote: “Again, the imbalance between prosecution and defense appears. In 22 percent of the cases the prosecution has the only expert witness, whereas in only 3 percent of the cases does the defense have such an advantage.” Id.; see also On the Theory and Practice of Voice Identification 49 (National Academy of Sciences 1979) (noting that a “striking fact about the trials involving voicegram evidence to date is the very large proportion in which the only experts testifying were those called by the state”).

202. Professor Joseph Peterson has remarked:

Only a small percentage of the cases in any jurisdiction go to trial, so the technicians or scientists in the crime laboratories seldom are called upon to justify their procedures or conclusions under rigorous cross-examination. I think the realization that their work will not be reviewed—either by an independent scientist or by opposing counsel and expert in court—decreases the care and completeness with which examiners process evidence. Symposium on Science, supra note 23, at 643.

203. In the New York murder trial of Robert Golub, a bite mark expert made a positive identification at trial. His pretrial report, however, stated only that the defendant’s teeth were “consistent” with the mark found on the victim. On cross-examination, the expert testified that “his report was not meant to be his final conclusion and that he continually re-evaluated his cases.” N.Y. Times, Mar. 14, 1990, at B6, col. 5.

204. Dr. A. Bernard Ackerman reports:

Dr. Roh changed his opinion about the findings in the wound in the chest of Dr. Tarnower time after time:

March 21, 1980—Autopsy report. No palmar fragments in the wound in the skin of the chest, only “large amount of fresh hemorrhage” and “coagulation necrosis of collagen fibers.”

Jan. 8, 1981—Addendum to the autopsy report. There were “three fragments of tissue in the bullet track in the subcutaneous tissue of the chest wound” and “these tiny fragments are . . . histologically consistent with stratum corneum, stratum lucidum, and portions of stratum granulosum of epidermis of skin.”

Ackerman, supra note 4, at 51.
will render incompetent representation in a case involving scientific proof thereby is reduced.

One final comment should be made. Although this Article focuses on defense discovery, most of the same arguments apply to prosecution discovery. The only distinction would be to limit discovery to defense experts who will testify. This would exclude experts whom the defense consulted but did not intend to call as witnesses. Such a limitation would remove any possible self-incrimination, attorney-client privilege, right to counsel, or work product issues.205

---


In addition, case law supports the use of nontestimonial identification procedures on less than probable cause. Rules authorizing this practice should be adopted. See P. Giannelli & E. Imwinkelried, supra note 14, § 2-4(A)(2).