

# EVIDENCE



CollegeHumor

# Two Types of Evidence

- Direct Evidence

- What is said in court by a competent witness
- Also called testimonial evidence



- Circumstantial Evidence

- Tangible items that tend to prove some material fact
- May provide a link between a suspect and a crime scene
- Physical or Biological Evidence



# Why Physical Evidence?

*Because eyewitness reports can be so easily manipulated, physical evidence becomes critical.*

Is generally more reliable than testimonial evidence

Can prove that a crime has been committed

Can corroborate or refute testimony

Can link a suspect with a victim or with a crime scene

Can establish the identity of persons associated with a crime

Can allow reconstruction of events of a crime

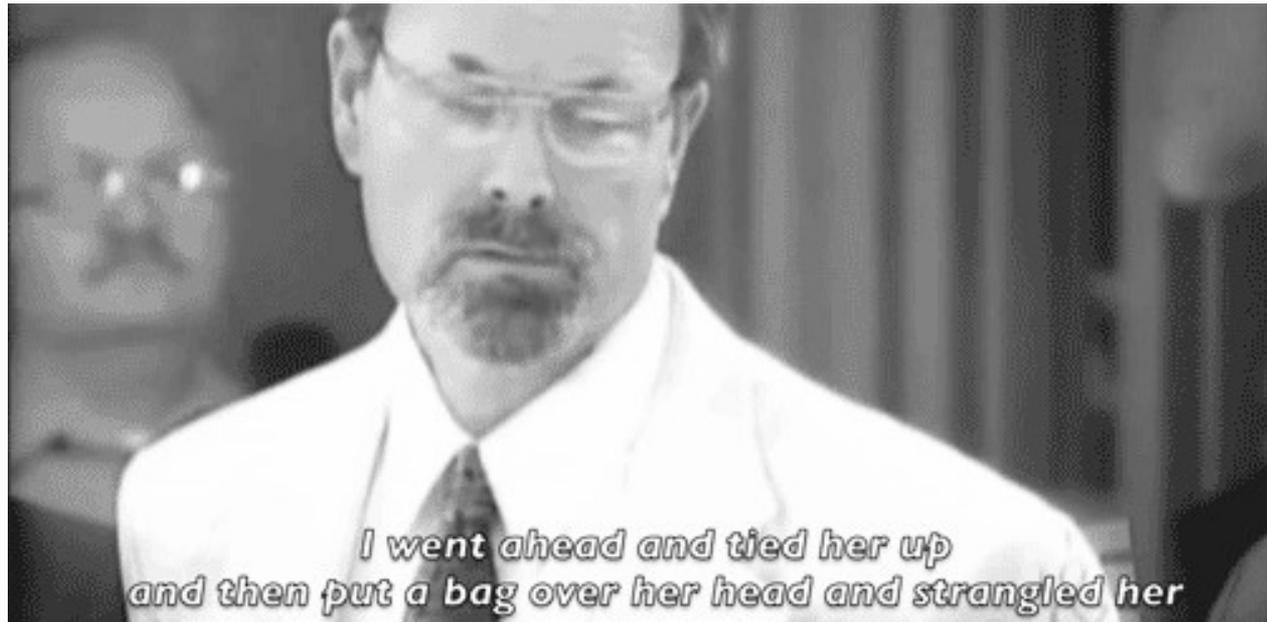
- Physical evidence can be used to answer questions about:
  - What took place at a crime scene
  - The number of people involved
  - The sequence of events

# Locard's Exchange Principle

## "Every Contact Leaves a Trace"

The Locard's Exchange Principle states that "with contact between two items, there will be an exchange."

For example, burglars will leave traces of their presence behind and will also take traces with them. They may leave hairs from their body or fibers from their clothing behind and they may take carpet fibers away with them.





# Examples of Physical Evidence

- **Body fluids**

- Blood, semen, saliva
- Liquid/dry
- Animal/human

- **Documents**

- Hand-/typewriting
- Paper, ink, etc.

- **Drugs**

- Any illegal substance
- Sale, manufacture, distribution

- **Explosives**

- Devices - explosive charge
- Explosive objects/residues

- **Fibers**

- Natural/synthetic
- Establishes connections between objects/people

- **Fingerprints**

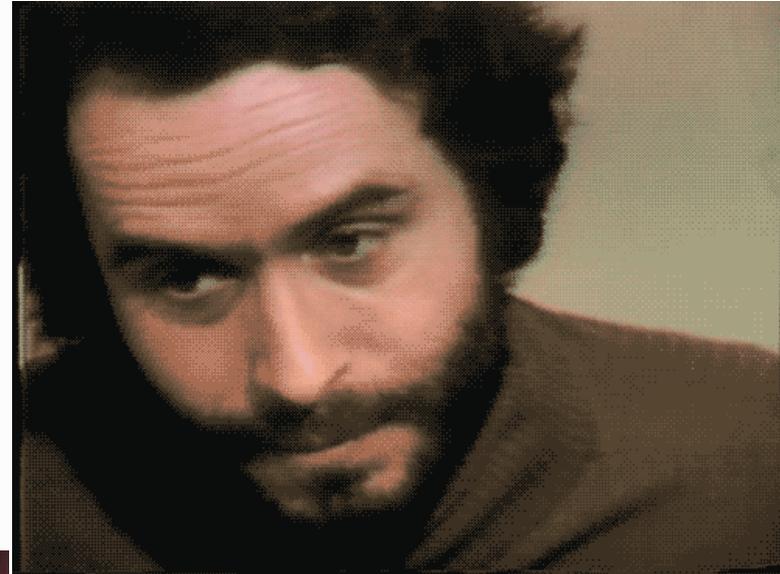
- Individual evidence
- Can be visible/latent (hidden)

- **Firearms/ammunition**

- Guns/casings/shells, etc.

# Types of Physical Evidence

- Trace Evidence
- Transient evidence
- Individual evidence
- Class evidence



# Trace Evidence

- **Trace evidence** refers to physical evidence that is found in small but measurable amounts, such as strands of hair, fibers, or skin cells.



# Transient Evidence

**Transient evidence** is temporary - easily changed or lost; usually observed by the first officer at the scene.

**Odor** — putrefaction, perfume, gasoline, urine, burning, explosives, cigarette or cigar smoke

**Temperature** — surroundings, car hood, coffee, water in a bathtub, cadaver

**Imprints and indentations** — footprints, teeth marks in perishable foods, tire marks on certain surfaces



# Class Evidence

Narrows an identity to a group of persons or things

Examples:

- Hair
- Fibers
- T-shirts
- Duct tape
- Blood Types



# Individual Evidence

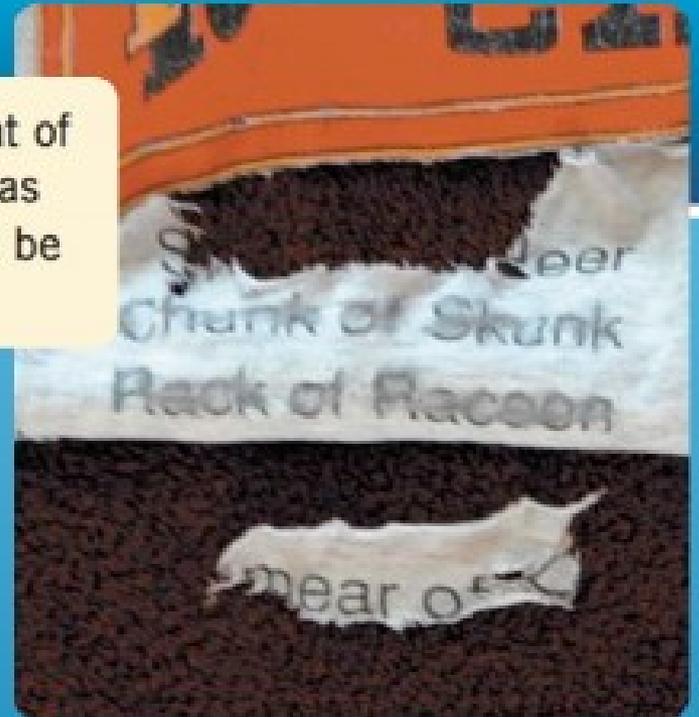
- Nailed to a single source
- Examples:
  - DNA
  - Fingerprints
  - Broken glass that matches perfectly



# Class or Individual?

1. A torn T-shirt was found in the backseat of a suspect's car. A piece of torn cloth was found at the scene of the crime. Can it be individualized to the T-shirt? Explain.

Class UNLESS the tear marks can be matched exactly



# Class or Individual?

2. A pistol was found in a theatre where a man was shot. A suspect known to have owned a Derringer like this one was apprehended. Would this gun be considered individual or class evidence?

Class UNLESS the serial number can be matched to a suspect



# Class or Individual?

Individual IF the pieces can be matched exactly



3. Pieces of a broken bottle were found at the scene of an assault. The bottom of a bottle was found in a suspect's car. Can the pieces of the bottle be uniquely associated (individualized) with what was found in the suspect's car? Explain.

# Class or Individual?

4. Some blond hairs were found on the gloves of a suspected kidnapper who has brown hair. Would they be considered class or individual evidence?

Class



# Class or Individual?

5. A bloody knife has been found in the backyard of a murder suspect. Under what circumstances could it be individualized? Or will it remain class evidence?

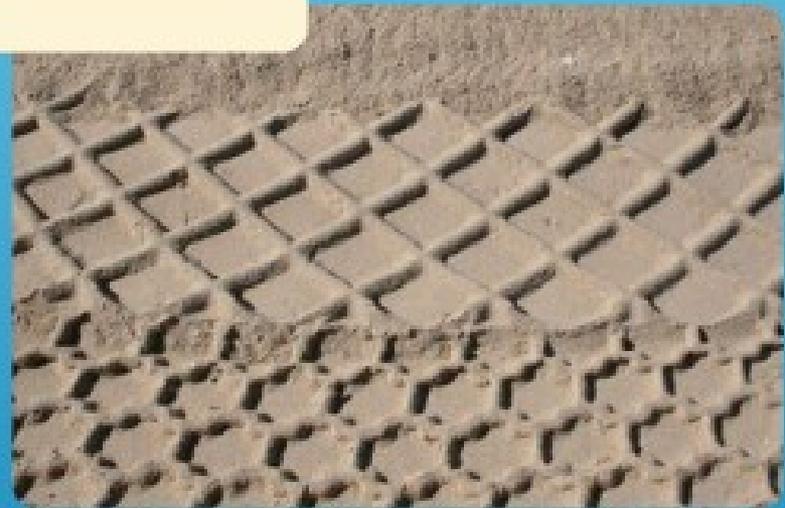
Individual IF the DNA or fingerprints can be matched to a suspect



# Class or Individual?

6. Are tire impressions such as these individual or class evidence? Explain.

Class UNLESS there's an imperfection in the tire



# Class or Individual?

7. Can it be determined whether these bullets were fired from the same gun? How can bullets be individualized to a gun? Explain.

Yes they can; Individual due to striations



# Class or Individual?

8. Some powder was found in a plastic bag in a suspect's pocket. Some similar powder was found on the victim. Can the first powder be individualized to the second powder? Explain. If the two powders were determined to be chemically identical, does that prove they came from the same source?

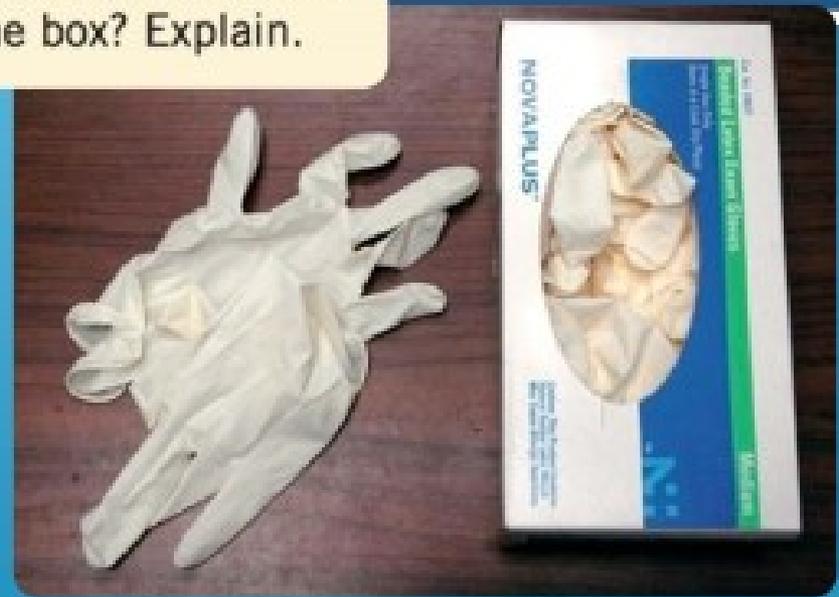
Class and No



# Class or Individual?

9. A pair of latex gloves was found at the scene of a robbery. A box of the same brand of latex gloves was found at a suspect's home. Can the gloves be individualized to the box? Explain.

Class



# Class or Individual?

10. A cigarette butt was found at the scene of a crime. Is it individual evidence? Explain.



Class UNLESS you  
can get DNA

# Class or Individual?

Class UNLESS the tear marks can be matched exactly

11. A match was found at the scene of a suspicious house fire. A suspect was found carrying a book of matches, several of which were missing. Is the single match class or individual evidence? Explain.



# Class or Individual?

12. A suspect in a B & E (breaking and entering) had shoes that were caked with soil. Is the soil class evidence, or could it be considered individual evidence? Explain.



Individual IF you can match the soil

