

“TO CATCH A THIEF”: PROPERTY CRIMES IN NEW YORK CITY

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In 2007, the New York City Office of Chief Medical Examiner Department of Forensic Biology established its Property Crimes group. This group processes evidence from robberies, burglaries, home invasions, auto thefts, and weapons cases. In the last year alone, the New York City Police Department has established over 60 patterns involving these case types. This poster will present data from patterns dating back to the inception of the Property Crimes group, examining the number of patterns that occur at the local level (found within the same police precinct), borough patterns (such as Manhattan, Brooklyn, etc), and those that occur citywide.

The number of patterns indicated by the NYPD was compared to those discovered by DNA testing and the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). Data were analyzed to reveal: whether certain geographical locations have more property crime patterns; which method is more informative (DNA vs. modus operandi) for detecting widespread patterns; and how often reported patterns yield DNA results not confirming a link.

In addition, the workflow that the group developed to handle the large volume of cases and the use of the DNA Hits program (a web-based tracking program) to disseminate information resulting from CODIS hits will be presented.

Lastly, a large burglary pattern with multiple DNA profiles which resulted in local, national, and international hits will be presented as a case example.