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# 1.3: Crime Labs

**SFS1.** Students will recognize and classify various types of evidence in relation to the definition and scope of Forensic Science.

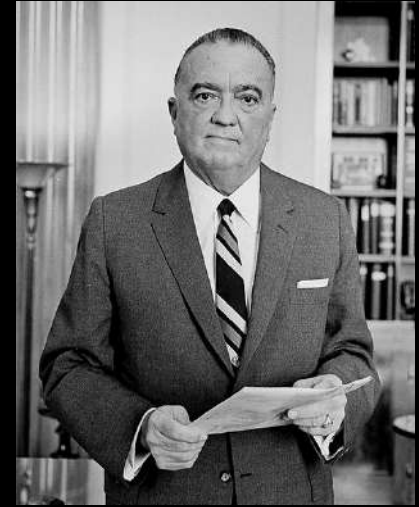
**8/4/16**

**Directions:** Read "**Modern Scientific Advantages**" (pages 12 and 13), then answer the following questions:



## Part I: History of Crime Labs in the US

- 1923: Los Angeles PD crime lab created by August Vollmer (police chief) at Univ. of California, Berkley
- 1932: FBI, under direction of J. Edgar Hoover, organizes national lab offering forensic services to all law enforcement agencies in the US
  - FBI lab is now largest in the world
  - serves a model for forensic labs across country and world
  - 1981: FBI Forensic Sci. Research and Training Center opens
- there is no national system of forensic labs in the us—each city/county/state operates their own independent crime labs



## Part II: Organization of a Crime Lab

- approx. 400 federal/state/county/municipal crime labs in the US
  - some are part of the police department, others are part of the prosecutor's or DA's offices, the lab of the medical examiner/coroner, a university, or independent government agencies
- crime labs can have a few to many people, on
- rapid proliferation of crime labs across the US can be explained by:



- rapid proliferation of crime labs across the US can be explained by:
  - Supreme Court decisions in the 1960s placing greater responsibilities on police to secure scientifically evaluated evidence
  - Miranda rights and immediate access to lawyers virtually eliminated confessions as a routine investigative tool
  - a staggering increase in crime rates since the early 1970s, especially in drug-related arrests and the resulting illicit-substance seizures that must be confirmed by chemical analysis
    - drug abuse has accelerated to nearly uncontrollable levels
    - drug-related forensic tests = 50% or more of all tests



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- drug-related forensic tests = 50% or more of all tests
- advances in DNA profiling has made possible the near-individualization of biological evidence (blood, semen, hair, saliva, etc.)
- due to the labor-intensive and sophisticated nature of drug/biological evidence analysis, the number of employees/floor space required has proliferated greatly
- biggest issue facing crime labs today is the severe backlog of DNA samples requiring analysis (57,000 casework DNA samples; 500,000 convicted offender samples)
- for crimes that extend beyond the jurisdictional boundaries of state and local forces, four major federal crime labs have been created:

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  1. FBI (Quantico, VA): general analysis
  2. DEA: drug analysis, documents relating to production, sale, transportation
  3. ATF: weapons, explosives, alcohol; also Organized Crime
  4. US Postal Inspection Service

### Part III: Services of a Crime Lab

- **basic** services provided by full-time crime labs:
  - Physical Science Unit
  - Document Examination Unit
  - Biology Unit
  - Photography Unit
  - Firearms Unit



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- **basic** services provided by full-time crime labs:
  - Physical Science Unit
  - Biology Unit
  - Firearms Unit
  - Document Examination Unit
  - Photography Unit
- **optional** services provided by full-time crime labs:
  - Toxicology Unit
  - Latent Fingerprint Unit
  - Polygraph Unit
  - Voiceprint Unit
  - Crime-Scene Investigation Unit
- **other** forensic science services:
  - Forensic Psychiatry
  - Forensic Odontology
  - Forensic Engineering
  - Forensic Computer and Digital Analysis



# CRIME LAB UNIT GROUP ACTIVITY:

Each pair will be responsible for completing one mini-poster of each Unit assigned. Please include the following:

1. Name of the Unit
2. Picture that illustrates the Unit, in color
3. Brief description of what the Unit is responsible for (write big enough so we can see it at the back of the room)

# CRIME LAB UNIT GROUP ACTIVITY:

Each pair will be responsible for completing one slide of each Unit assigned. Please include the following:

1. Name of the Unit (top)
2. Picture(s) that illustrates the Unit
3. Brief description of what the Unit is responsible for
4. Save file and send to [kmrigdon@paulding.k12.ga.us](mailto:kmrigdon@paulding.k12.ga.us)
5. Present the completed Unit info to the class (tomorrow, 1 min or less)