

Abstract

This research serves the purpose of highlighting the major problems with the backlog of sexual assault kits that plague the United States. It will not only give a background into what a rape kit and the backlog is, but it also points out some of the major areas in the country that have the largest number of kits in backlog. Using information collected by the Joyful Heart foundation, news reports, state auditor reports, and others, I discuss the nationwide backlog across the United States. I also interviewed a member of the Missouri State Highway Patrol Crime Lab in Springfield, Missouri to determine the status of the rape kit backlog in Missouri. My results find that Missouri has a problem with a large number of rape kits that are left in backlog, consistent with the nation at large. Finally, this research examines steps that can be taken to reduce the problem with the backlog of rape kits in the United States.