

## **DETECTING BY EAR**

European police are experimenting with a surprising new technique of criminal identification -- ear prints. They base this on the contention that ears are even more distinctive than the patterns that make up fingerprints.

Michael Fooner, U.S. criminologist, in his current book "Interpol," quotes one European expert: "The ear is the most distinguishing of human features. With its many cavities and undulations, there is such a wide variety of possible structures that it is almost impossible to find two persons whose ears are identical in all their parts. Moreover, the shape of the ear does not alter from birth to death."

Of course, criminals are not going to leave ear prints strewn around as they might finger prints, though there's a Swiss case on record in which a burglar was identified through an ear print he left on a door frame while leaning hard against it in forcing the door. More likely, suspects in criminal cases would be routinely ear-printed in police stations, and a central bank of such prints would be built up for identification use in future cases.