



Technologies of Identification and Responses to Mass Death
PEALS 15th Annual International Symposium
held jointly with Northumbria University Centre for Forensic Science
3 and 4 April 2014
Great North Museum, Newcastle upon Tyne



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Programme Day 1

12:30 – 1:30 Registration and Lunch

1:30 – 1:45 Welcome and Introductions

Jackie Leach Scully

Session 1 Chair:

Jackie Leach Scully

1:45 – 2:15 Operational aspects of DVI

Ingo Bastisch

2:15 – 2:45 The technologisation of identification: process and practice after disaster

Jenny Edkins

2:45 – 3:15 Discussion

3:15 – 3:30 Tea and Coffee Break

Session 2 Chair:

Bill Lawler

3:30 – 4:00 *Title tbc*

Louise Amoore

4:00 – 4:30 Challenges for forensic anthropology in the globalised recovery of communities

Tim Thompson

4:30 – 4:55 Discussion

Must leave venue by 5pm

Dinner 7pm onwards Caffe Vivo, Newcastle Quayside

<http://www.caffevivo.co.uk/>

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Session 6	Chair:	Simon Woods
2:45 – 3:15	The importance of identification with respect to community reconstruction: a cultural perspective	Jan Bikker
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Symposium Abstracts

Ingo Bastisch

Operational aspects of disaster victim identification

Identification of victims following natural or man-made disasters is in most countries within the responsibility of police organizations. The processes rely on a number of internationally predefined standard procedures (e.g. Interpol DVI standards or area-specific recommendations) as a DVI operation requires mainly trained personnel and often needs international cooperation. The presentation will give an overview of general operational aspects and the identification disciplines used with a focus on DNA-aided identifications.

Jenny Edkins

The technologisation of identification: process and practice after disaster

In this paper I discuss some of the political implications of contemporary methods and practices of identification. First, I look at the effect of disaster identification protocols on those searching for missing people. Once an event is declared a disaster, certain protocols and practices of identification kick in. Whilst arguably necessary, some of these can be unhelpful for the families of victims, who may feel sidelined or objectified by the systems they encounter as they search for missing relatives. I will discuss a number of examples, including the World Trade Center collapse of 2001 and the London bombings of 2005, as well as more quotidian examples. Second, I examine how the increasing sophistication of identification technologies can give rise to the expectation that all missing people should eventually be located, and if dead, exhumed and identified. Whilst improvements in identification techniques can bring welcome certainty, a never-ending search is not necessarily either feasible or desirable. I will explore examples such as the search for MIAs in Vietnam and the ICMP's work in Bosnia, and ask what is at stake. I argue that a certain technologisation of identification has taken place, and contentious political and social questions are not being addressed.

Louise Amooore

Title to be confirmed

Tim Thompson

Challenges for forensic anthropology in the globalised recovery of communities

Forensic anthropology is the application of methods and principles from biological anthropology to the medico-legal context. In recent years, the subject has become more prominent due to the publicised work of anthropologists in many humanitarian and transitional justice contexts. Key examples include the work in Argentina, Guatemala, the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Spain. Currently there is much work being undertaken in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria. However, despite the noble intentions of the forensic practitioners, there are a number of issues that may cause tension between actors involved in these contexts, particularly within local communities. These may include the increased quantification of forensic anthropology, the globalisation of forensic practice, communicating the boundaries and limits of forensic anthropology, and dangers of the misidentification of the deceased.

Sarah Wagner

“It’s been 9 years, not 9 months”: the claims of memory, hope and time for families of missing persons. Srebrenica and American MIA accounting experiences compared

Defying easy assumptions of ‘closure’ and even resolution, the work of identifying missing persons in post-conflict societies – be they victims of state-sponsored violence or combatants themselves – brings no easy answers to surviving kin. In circumstances where remains go unrecovered, are incomplete or severely degraded, expectations surrounding definitive identification and the return of remains for ritual care and memorialization are often frustrated, despite the promise of the technoscientific intervention by forensic archaeology, anthropology, and genetics. How do families respond to identification efforts that span decades and thus generations? How does the passage of time affect the politics of memory and narratives of hope? Comparing two distinct communities of mourners and activists – relatives of the victims of the Srebrenica genocide and families of US service members Missing In Action (MIA) from the Korean War and Vietnam War – this paper examines commonalities and differences of experience among surviving kin. The comparison also invites a critical analysis of notions of authority, responsibility, and the burden of time as it is perceived by families awaiting news of their loved one’s fate, even decades after the conflict has ended.

Admir Jugo

Re-associating Identities: DNA and ethics of identifications in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Some 30,000 persons went missing in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) as a result of mass executions and subsequent burials in primary and re-burial in secondary and tertiary clandestine mass graves, which lead to disarticulation and commingling of remains. A DNA-led approach was developed in BiH to enable the re-association of these remains. The families of the missing are constantly waiting for more news on ‘new’ cases uncovered that will be re-associated to previously uncovered, and possibly already buried, remains of their loved ones. The DNA-led approach uncovered previous misidentifications. The ethical concerns of families, especially of the families not consenting to having the misidentified loved ones re-examined, have not generally been discussed. An important aspect for this discussion is the ossuaries in BiH. Ossuaries here describe bones that have failed to yield a DNA profile multiple times, or bones that are generally unsuccessful in providing DNA profiles. These ossuaries have been taken out of the identification and re-association procedure. Currently steps are being undertaken to try and resolve their fate and it is unclear if these bones will ever be re-associated or will stay as ‘extra bones’, and who will take responsibility for them. It is important to examine how ossuaries become another symbol for a lack of closure and how they become a part of a transition without an end, and of the politics of division through unclear claims to whom they ‘belong’, in a society which lays great emphasis on the burial and place of commemoration of those identified.

Jackie Leach Scully

“It’s for mum really”: identification of the Fromelles dead as an act of care

In many of the circumstances in which where mass fatalities occur, the rationale behind the need for rapid and accurate identification of the dead is clear. Identification can bring some kind of solace to relatives by relieving lingering uncertainty; can provide necessary clarification of legal and social status of surviving family members; and may be necessary to bring successful prosecution for terrorist acts, war crimes, or in cases of negligence. However, in other circumstances, such as historical remains, the ‘need’ for identification is less clear, yet may still

be experienced as such by family members. In this presentation I draw on some preliminary research interviewing relatives who donated DNA samples for the identification of World War I Australian soldiers who died in the battle of Fromelles in 1916, to consider identification of the long-dead as a multifaceted act of care.

Victor Toom

Technologies of care, forensic/bureaucratic logics and family emotions

Disaster victim identification (DVI) operations increasingly are organised by detailed protocols designed to mitigate challenges and to render endless complexities and contingencies manageable. Whilst celebrated by many, such detailed organisation has also attracted critical commentary by some who argue that such bureaucratisation prejudices respect and dignity owed to the deceased and their close kin. However, during my interviews with families and forensic practitioners involved in the New York Trade Center attack, I found little evidence to sustain these critical claims. For this reason, my presentation will consider (admittedly imperfect) DVI practices as a 'technology of care'.

Ernesto Schwartz-Marín

Biological citizenship, death and the 'right to the truth' in Mexico and Colombia

Beneath the tides of dead bodies piling in morgues, mass media, cemeteries and clandestine graves in Mexico and Colombia, a new mode of citizenship is taking place. A lot less visible than the gruesome practices of criminal/state terror, new subjectivities and citizens are being born amidst violence, grief and lack of punishment. Truly spectacular modes of transformation and reinvention are taking place in spaces dominated by fear and death. Mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers who were previously exclusively dedicated to office jobs, study, commerce and rural activities are now the heads of intensive care units, mainly for the families of the disappeared, experimental forensic research units, heads of community police. This paper brings forth our first ethnographic encounters with the experiences of these new citizens and resilient subjects, locating these experiences in the wider literature of biopolitics, citizenship and the biosciences. The corpus of literature on biological citizenship has been overly centred in the exploration of Europe and the US, mostly drawing on biomedicine and patient groups case studies. By looking at death as the axis of analysis we are opening a new terrain of theoretical and ethnographic exploration in which the duties to the (presumably) dead, and the bodies of the living are irremediably entangled.

Claire Moon

Do bones have politics? Forensic knowledge in the politics of the past

This paper engages with a set of problems that arise when science tries to settle questions of social and political significance. On a general level the paper addresses some of the ways in which the dead register in political life. More specifically, it evaluates the performance of forensic knowledge in settling contesting interpretations of past state violence. What the paper argues, against some of the claims made by the field of forensic anthropology, is that forensic truths do not settle the past but take their place within social, political and historical interpretations by which past violence is renegotiated and reinterpreted, in ways that are both conflicted and unpredictable. The paper examines some of the ways in which forensic work is embedded within a network of actors, artifacts and institutions that have different stakes in the interpretation of the past in order to historicise the central techniques of knowledge by which

transitional justice is arbitrated and legitimized, and to demonstrate the indivisibility of scientific claims from the social and political contexts within science is operative, and upon which it claims to act with finality.

Jan Bikker

The importance of identification with respect to community reconstruction: a cultural perspective

Recent disasters in the Asian and African continents have highlighted the importance of accurate identification procedures for disaster victims. If not properly managed, natural and man-made disasters may have profound long-term consequences on the affected community and survivors in terms of economic survival and psychosocial interactions after the loss of a relative. In certain parts of the world, the application of non-scientific identification procedures and burial of unidentified bodies in mass graves are still common. Those practices and the inability to recover the body of a relative may lead to ambiguous loss and subsequent unresolved grief in surviving relatives. The presentation will discuss the importance of disaster victim identification to facilitate community resilience and reconstruction highlighting concepts of economic recovery, belief systems, community re-building and socio-legal implications. Examples of recent natural and man-made disasters will be used to demonstrate the importance of accurate identification procedures.

Erin Jessee

On exhumations and their absence: the cases of post-genocide Rwanda and post-civil war Uganda

This presentation takes a critical approach to claims that in the aftermath of mass atrocities exhumations inherently facilitate social repair and social justice. Drawing upon fieldwork conducted in Rwanda since 2007, I argue that the anonymous victims of the 1994 genocide, whose remains are exhumed and, by law, incorporated into state-funded genocide memorials around the country, are a powerful impediment to the stated purpose of local transitional justice mechanisms. Spirits associated with these human remains are believed to inflict physical and psychological suffering on Rwandans from all sides of the conflict. They serve as a constant reminder of the nation's (contested) genocidal past, and contribute to the maintenance of a dangerous reservoir of ethnic and political tensions. Yet the absence of exhumations may prove equally problematic. In neighbouring Uganda, whose northern Acholi communities endured civil war from 1986 to 2006, few exhumations have occurred. As a result, many northern Ugandans claim that social repair and individual healing remains elusive, citing the negative impacts of living among the angry spirits of the anonymous victims of the war as a primary impediment. These observations beg the following question: under what circumstances might exhumations facilitate social repair in the region?

Participant Biographies

Professor Louise Amoore

Louise Amoore is Professor in the Department of Geography, Durham University. She researches and teaches in the areas of global geopolitics, security, and political theory. She has particular interests in how contemporary forms of data, analytics and risk management are changing the techniques of border control and security. Louise is currently ESRC Global Uncertainties leadership fellow (2012-2015).

Dr Ingo Bastisch

Ingo Bastisch studied biology at the University of Cologne and took his doctorate at Hannover Medical School. He is currently head of the unit KT31 (stains of human origin) at the Forensic Science Institute of the Bundeskriminalamt (BKA), Germany. He is Chairman of the Committee "Forensik" at the Deutsches Institut für Normung (DIN, German Standards Organisation). Since 2007 he has been a member of the Interpol DNA Monitoring Expert Group, and since 2006 a member of the Steering Group on Forensic Science Programs of the International Commission on Missing Persons (ICMP).

Dr Jan Bikker

Jan Bikker is the international DVI programme co-ordinator within the Centre for Anatomy and Human Identification (CAHID) at the University of Dundee. He obtained a doctorate from the University of Sheffield on the subject of disaster victim identification (DVI). He has participated in various international disasters and conducts forensic anthropological casework in the UK. He previously assisted on the FASTID-project with INTERPOL to establish a centralised international database to aid identification of unidentified bodies and missing persons. In his current role he works with relatives of disaster victims, international DVI teams and Police organisations on DVI-related research. Dr Bikker is a Membership Secretary and council member of the British Association for Human Identification (BAHID) and a committee member of the British Association for Forensic Anthropologists (BAFA).

Professor Andrew Collins

Andrew works on theoretical, methodological and policy aspects of disaster reduction, health ecology, sustainable development, climate adaptation and human security based at the Disaster and Development Network (DDN), Northumbria University. This includes issues of environment and society, population displacement, risk, governance, education and disaster management with particular application to health and community based strategies. He advocates addressing hazard, risk, disaster and complex emergency in an interdisciplinary and cross sector manner emphasising public rights and participation. Andrew's orientation in this field was earlier developed through exposure to complex environmental and human crises such as during voluntary service in wartime Mozambique. He serves on high level advisory, review and commissioning boards for national and international organisations, conferences and research funding bodies.

Professor Jenny Edkins

Jenny Edkins is Professor of International Politics at Aberystwyth University. Her monographs include *Whose Hunger? Concepts of Famine, Practices of Aid* (Minnesota, 2000), *Trauma and the Memory of Politics* (Cambridge, 2003) and *Missing: Persons and Politics* (Cornell, 2011). In addition, she co-edits the major Routledge book series *Interventions* and the textbook *Global Politics: A New Introduction*, now in its second edition. She ran an ESRC Seminar Series on *The Politics of Emergency*

from 1998-2001 and since then has contributed to international, NGO and UK government policy discussions on missing persons, famine and emergency.

Professor Erica Haimes

Erica Haimes is Executive Director (August 2013 onwards) of the PEALS (Policy, Ethics and Life Sciences) Research Centre, where she was also the Founding Executive Director (1998-2008) and Professorial Fellow (2008-13). She is also Professor of Sociology in the School of Geography, Politics and Sociology, Newcastle University. Her research interests include: interdisciplinary research on social, ethical and legal aspects of the life sciences; reproductive and genetic technologies; socio-ethical aspects of the provision of human tissue for research, and the relationship between states, families and medicine with a focus on assisted conception. Erica has been a member of various policy and practice advisory bodies including: the Interim Advisory Group (Ethics and Governance) for UK Biobank; the Ethics and Governance Council for UK Biobank; and the MRC's International DNA Banking Advisory Committee. In 2013 Erica was appointed to the Nuffield Council on Bioethics.

Dr Erin Jessee

Erin Jessee is an oral historian and cultural anthropologist affiliated with the Scottish Oral History Centre at the University of Strathclyde. She specializes in post-genocide Rwanda and post-civil war Uganda, with particular interest in transitional justice. To date, she has published articles in *Oral History Review*, *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, and *Forensic Science International*, and a policy brief and discussion paper with the Centre for International Governance Innovation. She also has a book manuscript, *Negotiating Genocide: The Politics of History in Post-genocide Rwanda* currently under review with Palgrave MacMillan's Studies in Oral History series, and a co-authored article on popular representations of the Rwandan monarchy forthcoming with *History in Africa*.

Mr Admir Jugo

Admir Jugo worked as a Forensic Archaeologist and Anthropologist on exhuming human remains from mass graves and other exhumation sites in the territory of the Former Yugoslavia, primarily Bosnia and Herzegovina for nearly 7 years. His research focuses on biological anthropology of human remains but also on the process of transitional justice in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Spain, forensic archaeology and scientific and social aspects of exhumations and mass graves. Admir also worked as a Research Assistant and Forensic Consultant on the four-year ERC funded project "Bosnian Bones Spanish Ghosts: 'Transitional justice' and legal shaping of memory after two modern conflicts".

Dr William Lawler

After graduating in medicine in 1971, William Lawler started training in pathology in 1972, and was appointed a Home Office Pathologist in 1984. Since then, in addition to examining over 1,350 victims of homicide, he has been involved in four DVI deployments – in Manchester, with bodies repatriated to the UK following events in Waco, Texas, 1993; in Thailand, following the 26.12.04 tsunami; in London, following the bombings on 07.07.05; and in Christchurch, following the New Zealand earthquake on 22.02.11. He is currently actively involved, with others, in reviewing the pathological findings following the Hillsborough disaster on 15.04.89.

Dr Claire Moon

Claire Moon is Associate Professor in the Sociology of Human Rights in the Department of Sociology and the Human Rights Centre. Prior to joining the LSE in 2004, she taught International Relations at the University of Kent and at the London Centre for International Relations. Her research and teaching are framed by a socio-legal perspective and address topics such as transitional justice,

truth commissions (South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission in particular), post-conflict reconciliation, apologies, reparations, war trauma, human rights reporting, and forensic knowledge in human rights. Claire Moon is a member of the Advisory Board of the Centre for the Study of Human Rights, LSE. She is also the Convener of the 'Atrocity, Suffering and Human Rights' Research Group. She is currently working on a book project on the governance of social suffering.

Ms Julie Nicholson

Julie Nicholson is a member of Disaster Action, whose members are survivors and bereaved people from over 28 disasters both in the UK and other parts of the world. Julie daughter Jenny was killed in the 7/7 London bombings. Her experience has led her to confront the nature and effect of terrorism as well as issues and procedures resulting from mass death including the process of victim identification, documented in her book *A Song for Jenny*. Since resigning her licence as a parish priest Julie has devoted her time to developing arts theatre initiatives, writing and programme making.

Mr Mark Oliver

Mark Oliver is an accredited Senior Investigating Officer on Major Incident Teams having led homicide, kidnap, and Serious and Organised Crime investigations. He formerly worked on the MPS Murder Review Group including Criminal Cases Review Commission cases and the ACPO Homicide Working Group. Mark has developed UK Counter Terrorism joint exercising and is currently head of the Humberside Police Anti Corruption Unit. Mark is the UK's most experienced Senior Identification Manager and a founder member and trainer of the UK Disaster Victim Identification (DVI) Team. He has been deployed as a SIM to Kosovo 2000, Sri Lanka 2005, Air France 447 Brazil 2008, Afriqiyah Airlines Tripoli 2010, and Philippines Typhoon Yolanda 2013. Mark currently trains members of the UKDVI team including Senior Identification Managers and Reconciliation Managers.

Dr Ernesto Schwartz-Marín

Ernesto Schwartz Marín is currently a Junior Research Fellow at Durham University, developing a comparative project between Mexican and Colombian practices of human identification using forensic genetics and forensic anthropology. He is the co-founder (with Arely Cruz) and CEO of *Gobernanza Forense Ciudadana AC*, an NGO designed to foster and promote citizen-led alternatives to help in the identification of missing persons in Mexico. Previously he was a Research Fellow at Manchester University. He did his MSc and PhD in Genomics in Society at EGENIS Exeter University, his doctoral work explored the construction of a sovereign realm around human genomic science in Mexico, and its links with notions of race and nation.

Professor Jackie Leach Scully

Jackie Leach Scully is Professor of Social Ethics and Bioethics at Newcastle University, and one of the Co-Directors of PEALS. Following a PhD in molecular life sciences, she has pursued research interests in bioethics, focusing on the construction of moral understandings of a range of new biomedical technologies, and the bioethics of the body, especially the disabled body. She is the author of *Disability Bioethics: Moral Bodies, Moral Difference* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2008) and co-editor of several volumes, including *Feminist Bioethics: At the Center, On the Margins* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010). Her recent research explores the ethical and social aspects of using new technologies of identification and recovery in various situations involving mass fatalities.

Dr Tim Thompson

Before coming to Teesside, Tim Thompson studied for his PhD at the University of Sheffield (Faculty of Medicine) and was a Lecturer in Forensic Anthropology at the University of Dundee. Tim's main areas of research focus on the human body and how it changes, particularly in the modern context.

He is interested in the relationship between the biological and social body and the role of forensic anthropology/ists in the world at large. Tim has published over 35 papers in peer-reviewed journals and books, including the books *Human Identity and Identification* with Dr Becky Gowland (Durham University) and *Forensic Human Identification*.

Dr Victor Toom

Victor Toom (Northumbria University), a sociologist of science and law, empirically scrutinizes the uses of new and emerging forensic DNA typing technologies in contexts of law enforcement and mass human fatality investigation. Victor's work blends extensive knowledge of forensic (genetic) technologies with state-of-the-art social scientific methodologies and theories. He is currently conducting a project related to the identification of the victims of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, particularly those in NYC. The research is funded by the British Leverhulme Trust.

Professor Sarah Wagner

Sarah Wagner is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at George Washington University and author of *To Know Where He Lies: DNA Technology and the Search for Srebrenica's Missing* (University of California Press, 2008), and co-author with Lara Nettelfield of *Srebrenica in the Aftermath of Genocide* (Cambridge University Press, 2014). Her research focuses on forensic science, post-conflict intervention, and memory. Other publications include: "The Making and Unmaking of an Unknown Soldier," *Social Studies of Science* 43(5): 631-656, and "A Curious Trade: The Recovery and Repatriation of US Missing In Action from the Vietnam War," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* (forthcoming).

Professor Robin Williams

Robin Williams is Professor Emeritus in the School of Applied Social Sciences at Durham University, Professor in the Faculty of Health & Life Sciences at Northumbria University, and a Visiting Professor at the Policy, Ethics and Life Sciences Research Centre, Newcastle University. He was a member of the UK Nuffield Council of Bioethics Working Party on the Police Uses of Bioinformation and co-author of their report published in 2008. More recently he worked (together with Carole McCartney and Tim Wilson) on the Nuffield Foundation project on 'The Future of Forensic Bioinformation'. His published work includes (with Paul Johnson) *Genetic Policing: The Use of DNA in Criminal Investigations* (Willan, 2008) and (edited with Jim Fraser), *The Handbook of Forensic Science* (Willan, 2010). He is currently the holder of a Wellcome Trust grant to support a study of the use of 'familial searching' in serious crime investigations, and is also the NUCFS (Northumbria University Centre for Forensic Science) lead investigator on 'EUROFORGEN', a FP7 'Network of Excellence which includes some of the leading groups in European forensic genetic research.

Dr Simon Woods

Simon Woods is Senior Lecturer and one of the Co-Directors of PEALS. Simon has a longstanding interest in the ethics of research; he is former vice-chair of an NHS research ethics committee (REC) in Newcastle and is a member of the National Research Ethics Service National Ethics Advisors' Panel. Simon holds bachelor and doctoral degrees in philosophy and over the past 10+ years he has pursued a career of teaching and research within bioethics. Simon has considerable expertise on the ethical issues around genetics research and the use of human tissues in research and a long-standing interest in end of life ethics including ethical issues related to the dead.

