

ESRC Research ‘Seminar series on genetics, technology, security and justice. Crossing, contesting and comparing boundaries’

Wed, 16 March 2016, 12:00 – 18:00, Department of Chemistry Room CG218, Science Site, South Road, Durham University, Durham DH1 3LE, UK

Seminar 2: Comparing stakeholder discourses about genetic technologies

The discussion in this seminar will focus on comparing and analysing the promissory narratives, expectations and experiences of various communities involved in the production and use of forensic genetic technologies, especially emerging ones such as forensic DNA phenotyping including ancestry informative markers, and next generation sequencing. Expected impacts and safety discourses form the focus of the event, and will be the core of the discussion in each session and in the seminar overall.

Security concerns – about crime, terrorism, mass death atrocities and disasters – are a key driver for the development of new technologies, and human genetics research has played an important contribution here. DNA technologies provide vital resources for the identification of human remains and the production of information that can help to provide evidence in complex crimes.

This seminar is part of a series of six interdisciplinary seminars between 2015 and 2017, which will critically examine the potential and actual contributions of forensic genetics to the production of security and justice in the UK and other contemporary European societies. The series is influenced by the commitment of the European Union ‘Europe 2020 Strategy’ to protect the security of social infrastructures and the safety and freedom of its citizens. At the strategy’s heart lies the development of scientific and technological resources to combat threats arising from natural disasters, crime and terrorism.

The series of meetings and its connected discussions will engage with the relevant biosocial research at the intersections of genetics, technology, security and justice. It will bring together academic researchers, policy makers and practitioners from policing organisations, commercial forensic service providers, public sector organisations and civil society groups, in the UK and abroad. We will discuss how such technologies can be used to support security while respecting freedom. A network of those involved will be established to help disseminate existing research, and to identify new research avenues towards informing UK policy and practice on the uses of genetic information to address the societal challenges of justice and security.

Bursaries for Early Career Researchers are available and will be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis. The bursary can cover reasonable travel costs and accommodation for together up to £250. Bursary holders will be asked to write a brief thematic summary report about the seminar discussions for the seminar series website. Please contact matthias.wienroth@northumbria.ac.uk for further information.

Confirmed seminar speakers (alphabetical order)

- Felicity Carlisle (InnovateUK)
- Aoife Dolan (DNA Services, Metropolitan Police Service UK)
- Angela Gallop (Axiom Ltd.)
- Gillian Tully (UK Forensic Science Regulator)
- Helen Wallace (GeneWatch UK)
- Sheila Willis (Forensic Science Ireland)

Programme

- 12:00—13:00 Registration & lunch
- 13:00—13:15 Welcome (Matthias Wienroth)
- 13:15—14:15 Session I – Framing the use of forensic genetic innovations
Chair: Erica Haimes
1. Gillian Tully: ‘Quality standards for forensic genetics: Current & future challenges’
 2. Helen Wallace: ‘International standards for DNA databases?’
- Discussion*
- 14:15—15:15 Session II – Providing innovative DNA services
Chair: Robin Williams
1. Angela Gallop: ‘Upsides and downsides associated with the introduction of new DNA technologies into operational forensic science’
 2. Sheila Willis: ‘DNA - what will it deliver when it's 64?’
- Discussion*
- 15:15—15:45 Refreshments
- 15:45—16:45 Session III – The use of new and emergent forensic genetic technologies
Chair: Ernesto Schwartz-Marin
1. Aoife Dolan: tba
 2. Felicity Carlisle: ‘Phenotyping: Making the technology operational’
- Discussion*
- 16:45—17:45 Plenum discussion – Opportunities, gaps and themes for research & policy work
Chair: Chris Lawless
- 17:45—18:00 Close